

# Impact of Effectiveness of Employees' Voice with Self-leadership Strategies (Case Study: Iran Insurance Company of Isfahan)

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the impact of Effectiveness of employees' sounds with self-leadership strategies in Iran Insurance Company of Isfahan. Research methodology is descriptive and correlational, and the statistical population of research is 174 members of Iran Insurance Company employees from Isfahan province and a questionnaire was used to collect information. We used Van Dyne et. al., questionnaire (2003) to measure the sound of employees and Houghton J D, Neck C P (2002) questionnaire to measure the self-leadership strategies. The validity and reliability of questionnaire have been studied and their standardization has been confirmed. And for data analysis, nonparametric statistics and Spearman correlation coefficient were used. The results revealed that sound altruism with a coefficient of (-0.607) and considering that the error level under 5%, has negative and a significant correlation with self-leadership strategies. And also The Sound of defensive by a coefficient of (-0.612) and considering that the error level under 5% has a significant and negative correlation with self-leadership strategies. Finally the voice of abiding by coefficient (0.584-) and considering that the error level under 5% is a significant and negative correlation with self-leadership strategies.

**Keywords:** Sounds of altruistic, the voice of abiding, the voice of defensive, self-leadership strategies.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Efficiency and development of any organization largely depends on the use of human resource. Whatever the companies and organizations are larger, consequently the problem of this massive force will also be added. The Managers in relation to various issues trying to continually monitor their employees and less attention is paid to the voice of employees. Although today because employees are under great financial pressure, more attention and their tendency are towards the economic issues of work. But gradually employees are

interested to do meaningful work and calling for greater job autonomy in their work. So this gives them self-esteem and if these employees face obstacles in their job demands or in other words, if managers do not pay attention to them, they will suffer from job frustrations and isolation in their organization which in turn leads to phenomena such as the voice of Silence employees (Van Dyne et. al., 2003). The silence voice of employees is related with many facts: Humility, respect for others, precaution, politeness and... (Perlow, Leslie, Williams, Stephanie, 2003). According to various causes employees do not express their views and opinions. While they are concerned about many issues that occur in their organizations, (Dan Liut, Jun Wu, Jiu-cheng Ma, 2009). Organizations increasingly are asking their employees to move toward Self- leadership strategies. Because due to the more competition of higher customer expectations and the more focusing on quality which is indicative of a changing world, they should have a strong sense of responsibility (Quinn, R. and Spreitzer, G. (1997). Thus according to presented explanations, in this study we are in search for the impact of Effectiveness of sounds of employees with self- leadership strategies in Iran Insurance Company in Isfahan province.

## 2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

### 2.1. The Voice of Employee

In order to achieve organizational goals in today's competitive environment, the relationship between managers and employees should be in a manner in which subordinates can express their constructive ideas and views simply and without concerns in order to improve the output of organization Hames, K.M. (2012) Those who fail to explain their ideas, comments and their information and silenced often suffered from stress, anxiety, frustration and depression and finally their interest in work and job commitment decreases. Therefore, in order to benefit of employees helpful views and ideas, appropriate and necessary infrastructure for this should be provided. (naghavimoghadam & Fahima, 2013: 42-39). in this context Edmond Sun (2003) states that one characteristics of successful learning in a variety of team work is all organizational members willingness to presentation of thoughts and ideas in work process which called organizational voice (Detert, J.R. & Burris, E.R., 2007: 869-884). Organizational sound includes dialogue about the problems with supervisors, providing solutions and suggestions to HR departments, in bringing ideas to change the policy or consultation with unions or organizational experts (Travis, DJ. & Gomez, J.R., & Mor B., 2011: 1831-1841). In this study, Van Dyne et. al., (2003) questionnaire is used.

**Altruistic sound:** Basically, This behavior emphasizes on providing benefit for People and organizations. Altruistic sound like silence altruistic needs the knowledge and vision and may never be needed by organization to confirm it. . In fact, frankly speaking and offer suggestions for change may require personal risk. This is because many employees in the organization (especially those in positions of authority) are satisfied with the way they are and prefer maintaining the status quo. Therefore altruistic sound necessarily by its recipients will not be considered as a positive phenomenon (Nemeth and Staw, 1997).

**Defensive Sound:** Defensive sound is based on self-protection.

The incidence of this type of behavior requires less self-responsibility and decisions without any risk. Therefore, if people are afraid of the punitive consequences due to the discussion of organizational problems, generally they demonstrate defensive behaviors due to protection. These behaviors including redirect attention, blaming on others, apologizing, justification and deny as self-protective strategy, in which sound

occurs as a reaction to fear and threat. Due to these features, defensive sound as stated ideas, information or opinions that are related to work - on the basis of fear\_ is Self-protection (Morrison & Milliken, 2000).

Submissive voice: this type of sound is a non-cooperative behavior based on the feeling that he is not able to modify the conditions. Therefore this type of Sound, leads to statements to the approval and supporting the status quo with regard to proposed motivation (Avery & Quinones, 2002). Like the two previous sound, the Sound is also based on deliberate statements of ideas, information and work-related opinions. But the difference with the two previous sounds is that it is less passive than they are. (Van Dyne, et. al., 2003).

Some researchers defined Sound as an opportunity to express their views to decision-makers while others exclusively considered it in response to job dissatisfaction. (Liu et. al., 2010: 190). Then studies on this concept and its effective factors have expanded in management works and different views were expressed about it (Doostar and Ismail-Zadeh, 1392: 143-163).

Van Dyne and Lipayn (2001) introduced sound as Cross-functional behavioral that is optional and conscious and out of job expectations and therefore it is behavioral extension that emphasizes to express the producer views with the aim of improving conditions, instead of mere criticism.

Applause dimension in the organizational sound refers to employees insights of support and encourage from vocal behavior of superiors. In other words, to what extend the manager encourage and support staff producer ideas and opinions (Humas, 2012). Safety dimension is concerned the consequences of vocal behavior in the organization. This dimension of organizational sound is concerned the possibility of supervisor's reprimand and blame for expressing opinions and views by staff that may threaten his job security (Morrison, E.W. & Wheeler-Smith, S.L. & Kamdar, D., 2011: 183-191).

Effective dimension has also referred to how much employees' vocal behavior in organizational decision making is welcome (Humas, 2012). Anyway, understanding the vocal atmosphere organization can be complex and problematic, So that managers often expressed their employees' vocal behavior situation with different characteristics (Landau, J., 2009: 4-12).

However, it should be noted that the organizational sound from conceptual view distinguished from related structures such as psychological security, group effectiveness and participative atmosphere (Farndale, E., Van Ruiten, J., Kelliher, C. & Hope-Hailey, V, 2011: 113-129). Also may be expressing ideas (organizational sound) or withholding from providing them (organizational silence) from behavioral view seem two contrasting activities, because silence requires unaddressed while Sound needs to express the problems of organization. But the reality is that silence necessarily is a phenomenon in contrast to the organizational sound. In fact the difference between silence and sound is not in speaking, but it is in individuals' motivation in refusing to impart information, ideas and opinions (Zarei Matin, and Taheri and Sayar, 1392: 77-104). From the theoretical dimensions, the leadership affects the organizational sound for two main reasons. First, staff for speaking and expressing ideas need a person who has the ability to understand the organization as a whole and grants sources to implement the idea and the raised the issue. Therefore, Leaders inherently are important in the process of organizational sound, because the leader is the linchpin of organization (Detert, J.R. & Burris, E.R, 2007: 869-884). The second reason is that the leaders have power of encouragement and punishment and this power can lead to higher pay, promotion and job assignments of the leaders to exchange ideas, opinions as a prominent source in exchanging thoughts and ideas.

Therefore, when the leaders show their interest of expressing the opinions of employees and subordinates, subordinates are excited to express their opinions and views. (Farndale et. al., 2014: 113-129). But in the absence of such features of the organization's leaders, subordinates may think the risk to express ideas is lesser than its benefits and to refrain from expressing views (Detert & Burris, 2007). An important variable in the context of organizational sound is atmosphere and environmental conditions. The organizational vocal atmosphere refers to an environment in which employees' understand and believe is to the point that they see the organizational environment as a safe environment for any vocal behavior Including criticism, suggestions, opinions, etc. And are encouraged for their vocal behavior and are efficient and effective in the workplace. (Morrison, E.W. & Wheeler-Smith, S.L. & Kamdar, D, 2011: 183-191). Organizational sound is related to different individual, organizational and social factors. Therefore, it is important to identify the factors that cause Sound in organization and breaks stuff's silence and finally guides the organization toward innovation and creativity and dissolve organizational problems and development (Afkhami and Khalili Sadrabad; 1391: 65-83). Using this approach, organizational researchers have shown their interest of studying of employees commenting facilitator factors. In this context, one factor that researchers found significant in the development of sound employees is organizational leadership (Detert & Burris, 2007).

## **2.2. Self-leadership Strategies**

In fact, Self-leadership strategies are facilitator of psychological empowerment through improving the image of meaningful, goal-orientation, autonomy, competence and efficacy. (Lee M, Koho J, 2001: 64-95). Increase Self-leadership led to increase collaboration, improve flexible thinking, decision-making skills and psychological empowerment. In fact, Self-leadership is a process in which individuals to affects themselves in order to achieve self-guided and self-motivation to practice (Houghton, 2006: 270-95). In this study, in order to measure Self-leadership Houghton & Nek 2002 questionnaire will be used. The questionnaire components are including behavior-based strategies, natural reward strategies and strategy paradigm Producer. In fact Self-leadership is a process in which individuals to affects themselves in order to achieve self-guided and self-motivation to practice (Houghton, 2006: 95-270).

- **Behavior-based strategy:** In fact, this strategy is based on the behavior and ethics. This strategy includes the ability to see the behavior, identifying and evaluating effective and ineffective behaviors to improve performance (ibid).
- **Natural reward strategies:** This strategy refers to performance of Self-leadership based on both material and spiritual rewards. Natural reward strategies are the ability on receiving the positive aspects of duty and focusing on its intrinsic rewards. (Houghton and Nek, 2002: 672-91).
- **The strategy of constructive thinking:** This strategy focuses on the impact and the relationship between individual thinking on their behavior. In fact this strategy is profitable for organizations because it will lead to the development of progressive, positive and constructive thought for the organization (Manz C C, Neck C P, 2004).

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research is applied in terms of purpose, and descriptive in terms of data collection, for that purpose we used questionnaires, sampling and description of variables and its type is correlation that according to the type of research we used correlation coefficient to evaluate the correlation between variables with

each other. The population of the research is employees of Iran Insurance Company in Isfahan province. The number of employees is 982 people. The sampling method used is appropriate group. According to the calculated sample size (223), and also due to volume of the target population, samples specified for each center and secondly in each section employees were selected randomly and relevant questionnaires were distributed among them. In this study, the data obtained and analyzed by using SPSS software. In the inferential analysis in order to assess the significance, type and severity of the correlation between variables was used correlation analysis and regression testing. In this study in order to prove the validity of questionnaire, the content validity was applied. The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by experts, that's mean the validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by content validity. In content validity to test the validity of this questionnaire, the questionnaire was placed in the hands of some experts. All of which confirmed the validity of the questionnaire and its constituent questions. As well as we used Cronbach's alpha to determine the reliability. As the alpha value was more than 7/0, reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed. Table 15.1 shows Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the research variables.

**Table 15.1**  
**Cronbach's alpha coefficient variables**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of questions</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha coefficient</i>
Behavior-based strategy	6	71/0
Natural reward strategies	5	79/0
The strategy of constructive thinking	6	83/0
Altruistic Sound	7	87/0
Defensive Sound	7	78/0
Abiding Sound	7	91/0

## 4. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

### 4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Studying the mean of components of the independent variables shows sound defensive components as one of the subscales of the staff's sound with an average of 3.984 had the highest rating. This means that people tend to be less involved in affairs, and that tend to escape responsibility and accept no responsibility for their decisions.

**Table 15.2**  
**Descriptive statistics**

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<i>Sounds of staff</i>				
Altruistic Sound	3.394	0.773	1	5
Defensive Sound	3.984	0.886	1	5
Abiding Sound	3.638	0.614	1	5
<i>Self-leadership strategies</i>				
Behavior-based strategy	3.394	0.773	1	5
Natural reward strategies	3.701	0.578	1	5
The strategy of constructive thinking	3.681	0.627	1	5

Also natural reward strategies have achieved highest average among the components of their strategy leadership. This means that they seek material and spiritual rewards to move towards their self-leadership and consider it as an appropriate stimulus. The results show, Iran Insurance Company has faced lack of accountability. And also for self-leadership needs they should considered rewards that in this field rewards can work.

#### 4.2. Test Data Distribution

As in Table 15.3 can be seen all variables in the Z-statistic significance level of 5 percent, less than 5% is significant ( $0.05/0 > \text{Sig}$ ), thus 95% assuming H0 rejected and the assumption of normal distribution of data H1 was accepted. In other words, it was determined that data is not normal and to test hypotheses we have to apply nonparametric test.

**Table 15.3**  
Normal test results of variables

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Absolute value</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Z Statistic</i>	<i>Significant level</i>
Altruistic Sound	0.124	0.124	-0.121	2.003	0.001
Defensive Sound	0.170	0.170	-0.122	2.748	0.000
Abiding Sound	0.148	0.148	-0.095	2.393	0.000
Behavior-based strategy	0.125	0.125	-0.097	2.020	0.001
Natural reward strategies	0.094	0.090	-0.094	1.516	0.020
The strategy of constructive thinking	0.210	0.094	-0.210	3.406	0.000

#### 4.3. Statistical Analysis Assumptions

First hypothesis: the sound of altruism has a significant relationship with self-leadership strategies of the insurance company's staff.

**Table 15.4**  
Spearman correlation coefficient test

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Correlation coefficient</i>	<i>Significance level</i>
Altruistic Sound with self-leadership	-0.607	000/0
Defensive Sound with self-leadership	-0.612	004/0
Abiding Sound with self-leadership	-0.584	0.002

As shown in Table 15.4; 0.000 significant level achieved less than  $0.05/0 = \alpha$ , and thus assumes of the voice of existence relationship between altruistic Sound and their self-leadership strategies has accepted and this test is significant. The correlation coefficient between altruistic sound and self-leadership strategies is  $-0.607$  which represents significant negative correlation between the variables and also show great strength of this relationship. It also achieved a significant level of 0.004, less than  $0.05/0 = \alpha$ , Therefore, the relationship between defensive Sound and self-leadership strategies has confirmed. The correlation coefficient between defensive Sound and self-leadership strategies is  $-0.612$  that reflects the significant negative correlation between the variables and also shows the great strength of this relationship. Finally, the third hypothesis according to Table 15.4 was determined, a significance level of 0.000, less than  $0.05/0 = \alpha$  was obtained and thus the assumption that the relationship between abiding sound and self-

leadership strategies has accepted and this test is significant. In other words, obedient sound by (-0.584) correlation coefficient has significant negative relationship with self-leadership strategies.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Paying attention to the factors of job characteristics and their needs and considering individual differences of each employee is one of the most important factors that In labor productivity can be achieved and one of the key conditions to achieve this goal in everything stimulate and motivate people to do that work (Grant et. al., 2010). In this context, recognizing the needs of employees and the role that human resources plays in the productivity and working environment, has attracted the attention of many psychologists and efficient managers. According to the description given and the aim of this study the summary of the results is as follows:

In analyzing the obtained results it must be said, when people do not express much participation and if they do so, is merely on the basis of a friendly relationship with their supervisor and their partner and leads not to promote Self-leadership strategies in insurance Company in Isfahan in Iran. In fact, this result is an alarm, because guides the insurance company to paralysis and then people would not expressing criticism and weaknesses of the system, because they do not like bothering an official. This friendly relation for organizations in particular for Iran insurance companies will be extremely troubling because it reduces organizational dynamics and stuff experience illusion of effectiveness and the role of self-leadership strategies has greatly reduced. Also defenses sound that happens because of stuff's fear for various reasons lead to a reduction in self-leadership strategies. In fact, people for various reasons such as fear of loss of position, fear of the Director, fear of loss of financial benefits, etc. are silent. The root of fear in this people lies in their past and that's why they show defensive behavior. In most cases, they prefer to hide their fear behind a series of views so that others are not criticized them. The other point is that defenses sound strongly affects the self-leadership strategies, because this stuff due to their fears they prefer follow others and they make decisions for them. In this case self-leadership strategies do not reinforce. Finally, it was found that there is a significant negative relationship between abiding Sound and self-leadership strategies so that it must be said existence of abiding Sound in employees of Iran insurance Company is the worst state to create lack of dynamism in company in competition with other companies. In this way stuff foster as obedient and they do not move towards self-leadership. Self-leadership strategies and implementing the necessary programs in this field is really important for company, because it leads to creativity and innovation in Iran insurance Company but it must be said existence of abiding Sound in company create unmotivated employees that do not have motivation and Self-leadership ability and skills. In this case the company makes decisions based on a set of past experiences and event and does not have any creativity and innovation. The result of this study corresponded with the study conducted by Dootar & Esmael Zade (1392) and Whiteside & Barclay (2012) which confirmed the results from the conceptual point.

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