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Studying the Organizational and Intra-Organizational Factors Affecting the Faculty Members' Organizational Silence in Islamic Azad University

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Abstract

Purpose: This research was conducted with the aim of explaining the effect of organizational and intra- organizational factors affecting the faculty members' organizational silence in branches of Islamic Azad University. **Methodology**: The statistical population of this study was all faculty members of Islamic Azad University. The sample of this study was 380 ones according to the Cochran formula. After completing 380 questionnaires, analyzing the questionnaires was done using SPSS-23 software at the descriptive level of demographic characteristics including mean and standard deviation, minimum and maximum score of research variables and at inferential level using AMOS-23 software, multivariate analysis of variance and side findings by single-t and t-dependent tests. **Findings**: analysis of the results using SPSS-23 and AMOS-23 software showed that all factors of the organization had coefficients or impact factors higher than 0.3 at the level 0.001, and six dimensions related to the organizational factor and eight dimensions related to the intra-organizational factor, all affect the faculty members' organizational silence. Among the organizational dimensions, the human resources management and among the intra-organizational dimensions, the type of community culture had the highest impact on the organizational silence in Islamic Azad University. Two models with good fitting were presented for the organizational and intra-organizational factors. **Discussion:** All dimensions of human resource management, the characteristics of faculty members, the organization's characteristics, the organization culture, organizational climate, and organizational structure are effective in the organization factor. Human resource management has the most impact on silence and the organization type has the least impact on the silence.

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1. Introduction

Organizations need to have more initiative and creativity, access to new ideas and recognize their internal and external stimuli to respond quickly to the environmental changes, compete with competitors, meet the customer expectations, and succeed in achieving goals and increase productivity. Azad University as a research organization requires more practical application of external and internal information in order to meet the challenges inside and outside of the university. The use of human resources ideas, especially faculty members are needed to learn about the vulnerabilities and environmental changes affecting the university performance; on the other hand, universities have a significant role in each community due to the numerous missions such as the training of specialist forces, the engine of thinking and creating knowledge, the development of cultural relations, economic relations, and the solution of basic problems of society (Niaz Azari & Taghvaie Yazdi, 2010).

Therefore, the heads of Azad University should be careful to determine what they choose in the formulation of strategies, be comply with the current status of the Azad University, and to effectively eliminate the shortcomings, disturbances and the inadequacies and have a positive effect on the process of improvement. Heads should be fully aware of the process of environmental changes that their strategies have the least harm and the highest interest (Taslimi, 1999). Good news spread at high speed in silence sovereignty, but bad news is distorted and stylized to meet the heads' expectations. In the collective phenomenon of organizational silence, it is difficult for heads to access real information because individuals in the organizations pretend to be unaware of some of the organization's procedures and issues. They are passive to problems and challenges, and do not involve in solving them. The phenomenon of silence is common in the most organizations (Amah, Okafor, 2008).

The organizational silence is also common at Azad University, while for addressing the challenges ahead, it requires a systematic approach and comprehensive information, and also the effective interaction with faculty members. However, the organizational silence of the faculty members of Azad University has led to a large deprivation of access to the first-hand realities that the faculty members have recognized and understood. Management would feel danger, if the employees, as the producers of organizational knowledge and the largest organizational capital, keep silent (Henriksen and Dayton, 2006). Azad University needs quick identification of problems, finding solutions and enhancing the creativity and innovation to find the potential of competition with the other universities. The organizational silence is a very important phenomenon due to the unfortunate consequences such as the loss of innovation, the weakening of morale and the defect in the provision of services (Çınar et al. 2013). Reducing the faculty members' comment leads to a reduction in the effectiveness of decisions and changes in Azad University. This organizational behavior can prevent the organizational transformation with creating stress, pessimism, dissatisfaction in the staff to prevent the negative feedback. Therefore, the organization loses the ability to check and correct the errors (Zareie M. et al. 2011). The disappearance of silence will lead to an increase in the sense of belonging and motivation of the faculty members and enhance the innovation in Azad University. How to break the silence atmosphere and create a free atmosphere that encourages employees to talk is a big challenge for the heads (Beheshtifar et al. 2012).

Since the Azad University as one of the largest non-profit organizations plays an important role in education of a large population of experts in the country, solving the problems in the Azad universities play a valuable role in the fundamental reforms of society. Silence in universities is affected by its external and internal factors. The first step in reducing the organizational silence of faculty members in Azad University

is to identify the internal and external factors that affect the silence. Most studies have been done in the field of organizational silence in non-educational organizations; at the same time, all limited studies done at the university focus on the silence of staff; there is no study on the silence of faculty members, and in the most studies, the translated questionnaires are used and there is no comprehensive study and comprehensive framework which is common. The study of organizational silence in the university is very important because the university reflects the level of community development, and the predictive index for the development of the future society (Ghahremani, 2011). Faculty members can help identify and resolve the challenges faced by the University through their valuable insights, due to their expertise and direct understanding of the university's problems. Therefore, the study of this phenomenon and the identification and elimination of its roots will enable Azad University, and the society that follows, to accelerate its path of development, excellence and success. Therefore, the present study was designed and explained to determine the organizational factors affecting the organizational silence in Azad universities of the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to determine the effect of each of these dimensions on silence.

2. literature Review

Early studies of organizational silence began in 1970s under the concept of voice, and from the 1980s to the end of 2000, these researches continued under the title of "speaking up". During this period, the punitive mechanisms and disregarding the employees' opinions led to their reluctance to comment on organizations and a new era of researches on organizational silence began in 2000. The term "Organizational silence" entered the literature of organizational behavior management by Millikan and Morrison. They introduced corporate silence as a collective phenomenon in which employees refuse to provide information, ideas, and concerns about potential job issues (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). They introduced the organizational silence as a collective phenomenon in which employees refuse to provide information, ideas, and concerns about the potential job issues (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Henriksen and Dayton consider the silence in the organization as a mass phenomenon, in which people show very little involvement in issues and problems. Dyne et al. consider the organizational silence as an organizational behavior in which employees deliberately refrain from commenting on ideas, information, and ideas related to work. Silence is something more than being neutral and passive. (Tangirla & Ramanujam, 2008). Pinder and Harlow described the employees' silence as their intentional refusal to express any honest expression on the behavioral, cognitive and effective assessments of the organization conditions for those who are able to make changes or compensate for the damage (Pinder & Harlos, 2001).

Dyne et al. stated that there are three types of motives associated with the silence, the withdrawal behavior based on the satisfaction to everything, self-defense behavior and altruistic behaviors due to the interest in others and the opportunity to partner with them (Dyne, et al, 2003). Avery, and Quiñones introduced three types of silence: acquiescent silence, defensive silence, and parsimonious silence (Avery, and Quiñones, 2002) and Pinder and Harlow (2001), introduced two types of silence: off silence and acquiescent silence (Zehir & Erdogan, 2010). Perlow and Williams have argued that contingency of the emergence factor is a complex type of organizational silence; individuals refrain from expressing differences in order to keep themselves from trouble or lack of understanding. They refer to these conditions as the silencing conflict (Perlow & Williams, 2003).

3. Methodology

This research was done with the aim of achieving deep and comprehensive cognition from organizational factors affecting the faculty members' silence with descriptive survey and using a researcher-made questionnaire. The content validity of the questionnaire was done in two qualitative and quantitative ways.

The reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated using SPSS software. 47 items were related to organizational factors and 9 items were related to intra-organizational factors and respondents expressed their agreement on 5-point Likert scale. The research community was the faculty members of Islamic Azad University.

According to the Cochran formula, the sample size was 380 ones. 430 questionnaires were distributed among the faculty members of 8 branches including Shiraz, Mashhad, Science and Research Branch of Tehran, Najaf Abad, Shahrekord, Khorasgan, Khorramabad and Urmia which were selected by simple sampling method. The distribution of questionnaires was mainly made in person and a number were sent to the e-mail addresses. After completing 380 questionnaires, analyzing the questionnaires was done using SPSS-23 software at the descriptive level of demographic characteristics including mean and standard deviation, minimum and maximum score of research variables and at inferential level using AMOS-23 software, multivariate analysis of variance and side findings by single-t and t-dependent tests. It should be noted that in the first stage, the measurement models of two factors of organizational silence were investigated and after confirmation of these models, they were entered into the main model; finally, the answer to research questions was studied using the structural equation model. Therefore, using these models, it was possible to simultaneously assess the quality of the variables and the acceptability of direct and indirect effects as well as the interactions defined among the variables. It is worth noting that in these methods, determine fitting indices was used. Three types of fitting indices are absolute, comparative and parsimonious (Ghasemi, 2010).

In examining the model fitting, the absolute indices including Chi-square (CMIN), degree of freedom (df), significance level (p), chi-square ratio to degree of freedom (CMIN / df), adaptive fitting indices including TLI, CFI, and parsimonious fitting indices including PCFI, CMIN\DF, and RMSEA, were used. Also, in examining each measurement model, along with examining the indices of general fitting of models, the multivariate normalization was also determined with the MARDIA coefficient. To determine the adequacy of the sample size for the model fitting, Holter coefficient was calculated. The fitting indices were used in structural equation modeling. To do this, the root mean square error approximation or RMSEA were used in the most of confirmatory factor analyses and structural equation models. If this value was less than 0.1, the model fitting was considered great, and if it was between 0.1 and 0.5, fitting was good, and if it was between 0.5 and 0.8, the model fitting was modest.

4. Findings

Reliability of the questionnaire was performed using SPSS software. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for organizational factor was 0/939 and for intra-organizational factor was 0/736. Then 380 completed questionnaires were analyzed. In order to illustrate and introduce the research sample, table 1 describes the descriptive findings of demographic characteristics, including the frequency and percentage of frequency of people participating in the research. In table 2 and 3, the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum score of the research variables are presented. The general indices of the model fitting and the results of normalization of data, multivariate normality and general fitting indices, and two models for measuring silence factors and silence model were calculated and Holter coefficient was determined, which the results are presented in tables 4 to 7.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage frequency of demographic characteristics of participants in the research

Variables		frequency	Percentage
Age	Younger than 30 years old	2	1
	30-40 years old	85	41.1
	40 to 50 years old	85	41.1
	Older than 50 years old	32	15.5
	No answer	3	1.4
	Total	380	100
Degree	Instructor	46	22.2
	Associate professor	116	56
	Associate professor	23	11.1
	Professor	14	6.8
	No answer	8	3.9
	Total	380	100
Faculty	Humanities	62	30
	Fundamental science	37	17.9
	Engineering	44	21.3
	Medical science	33	15.9
	Other	26	12.6
	No answer	5	2.4
	Total	380	100
Gender	Female	50	24.2
	Male	146	70.5
	No answer	11	5.3
	Total	380	100
Employment Status	Official	111	53.6
	Contractual	67	32.4
	No answer	29	14
	Total	380	100

According to the results in table (1), most individuals are between 30 and 50 years old. Most of the samples were male 70/5% and 56% associate professors and most of them were from the Faculty of Humanities. 53/6% were official in terms of employment status.

Table 2. Descriptive findings of organizational and intra-organizational factor and its dimensions

indices / variable	numbers	mean	Standard deviation	Minimum score	Maximum score
organization	380	3.786	0.513	2.19	5.00
Organization characteristic	380	3.519	0.636	1.86	5.00
Organization Culture	380	3.872	0.840	1.00	5.00
Organization atmosphere	380	3.93	0.770	1.75	5.00
Organization Structure	380	3.669	0.689	2.00	5.00
faculty members' characteristics	380	3.739	0.654	2.13	5.00
Human resources management	380	3.865	0.513	2.14	5.00
Human resources supply	380	3.989	0.691	1.75	5.00
Designing work	380	3.584	1.070	1.00	5.00
Compensation of Work	380	3.705	0.980	1.00	5.00
Human resource education and development	380	3.637	1.014	1.00	5.00
Guidance and recognition of talents	380	3.843	0.750	2.00	5.00
Complaints handling system	380	3.775	0.722	1.00	5.00
faults in performance evaluation	380	3.972	0.672	2.33	5.00
Maintenance and dismissal	380	3.975	0.695	1.75	5.00
Intra-organization	380	3.77	0.68	1.50	5.00
faults in rules and standards	380	3.84	0.74	1.00	5.00
Society beliefs	380	3.38	1.17	1.00	5.00
democracy level of government	380	3.79	1.01	1.00	5.00
Economic level	380	3.73	1.21	1.00	5.00
Human resource management in society	380	3.85	1.11	1.00	5.00
Political factors	380	3.65	1.08	1.00	5.00
Culture governing society	380	3.95	0.94	1.00	5.00
society education	380	3.91	0.97	1.00	5.00

According to the results obtained in table (2), the mean of organizational factor is 3/78 and among the organizational dimensions, human resources management dimension is higher than the other dimensions and in human resource management dimension, human resources supply is higher than the other, and the mean of organizational characteristics dimension was less than the other dimensions. The mean of intra-organization factor was 3/77 and among the intra-organization dimensions, the mean of society culture dimension was greater than the others and among the dimensions of this factor, the mean of society beliefs was less than the others. The model of organizational factor measurement in figure (1), the general indexes of model fitting and the results of the normalization of data in this factor are presented in table (3).

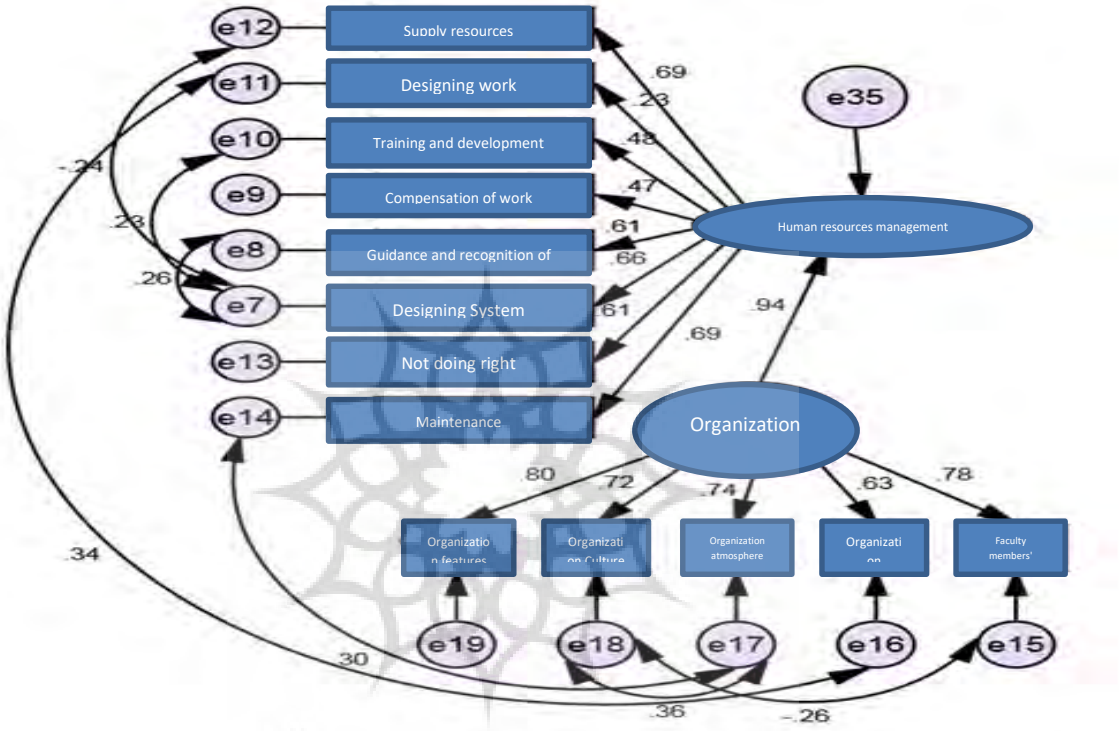

Fig. 1. Measurement Model of Organizational Factor

Table 3. Investigating the multivariate normalization and overall fitting indices of organizational factor measurement model

Multivariate normalization		Fitting indices								
MARDIA coefficient	Critical ratio	Absolute			Comparative		Parsimonious			others
		CMIN	DF	P	TLI[1]	[2]CFI	PCFI[3]	[4]CMIN\DF	RMSEA	Holter
43.41	21.42	215.964	57	0.001	0.9	0.927	0.677	3.78	0.079	249

According to the results in table (3), the relative chi-square index in the model is 3/78, which shows that the index is in a desirable state. The level of TLI and CFI adaptive indices is above 0/9. The PCFI value as

[1] Tucker & Lewis Index or non-normalized Fitting Index

[2]Adaptive fitting index to 0.90 up

[3]Adaptive fitting index to 0.60 up

[4]The ratio of chi-square to the degree of freedom is 1 to 5, and the values close to 2 to 3 are very well interpreted (Schumacher and Lumex, 2009).

[5]Root mean square error of approximation

good fitting index is over 0/5 and desirable. The value of RMSEA as the most important index of overall fitting index is 0/079 and indicates that the model has a general good fitting. The Holter index is 249 and shows that the sample size is sufficient to examine the fitting of the model. Regarding the multivariate normalization in table 3, the MARDIA coefficient in this model is 43/41 (critical ratio 21.24), which shows that the pre-hypothesis OF multivariate normalization for this model is not confirmed. Therefore, the results of the bootstrapping test are also used for more accurate estimation of the parameters. The results are presented in Table (4).

Table 4. Comparison of approximations obtained in maximum likelihood and bootstrapping method for the main parameters in the organizational factor measurement model

parameter		Maximum likelihood					Bootstrapping			
		Standard Approximation	significance	Non-Standard Approximation	standard error	Critical ratio	mean	standard error	low limit	High limit
Organization features		0.85	0.001	0.996	0.061	16.29	0.803	0.089	0.755	0.858
Organization Culture		0.716	0.001	1.18	0.094	12.68	0.716	0.12	0.656	0.784
Organization atmosphere		0.736	0.001	1.079	0.074	14.64	0.734	0.108	0.671	0.788
Human resources management		0.945	0.001	0.876	0.07	12.31	0.943	0.102	0.914	0.974
Organization Structure		0.629	0.001	0.849	0.069	12.317	0.66	0.099	0.56	0.692
faculty members' characteristics		0.784	10.00	1.000			0.783	0.041	0.728	0.844
Human resources management	Human Resources supply	0.667	0.001	1.009	0.096	10.506	0.699	0.105	0.618	0.761
	Designing work	0.235	0.001	0.526	0.124	4.252	0.229	0.158	0.127	0.338
	training resources	0.478	0.001	1.03	0.11	9.366	0.477	0.152	0.384	0.581
	Compensation of work	0.472	0.001	0.977	0.118	8.273	0.474	0.146	0.373	0.569
	Guidance and recognition of talents	0.609	0.001	0.967	0.08	12.099	0.609	0.113	0.532	0.679
	designing System	0.664	0.001	1.000			0.662	0.057	0.578	0.748
	performance evaluation	0.611	0.001	0.872	0.084	10.409	0.61	0.101	0.524	0.696
	Maintenance	0.692	0.001	1.004	0.087	11.55	0.691	0.106	0.596	0.746

As observed in table (4), the standard error in the main parameters in the maximum likelihood method is lower than the bootstrapping method. The approximated standard value for all main parameters of these variables in bootstrapping method shows that the approximated parameters and their significant difference has the adequate accuracy. Also, all coefficients or impact factors in organizational factor were higher than 0.3 and significant at the level 0.001.

The measurement model of intra-organizational factor is presented in figure (2), the general indices of model fitting and the results of normalization of data in this factor are presented in table (5).

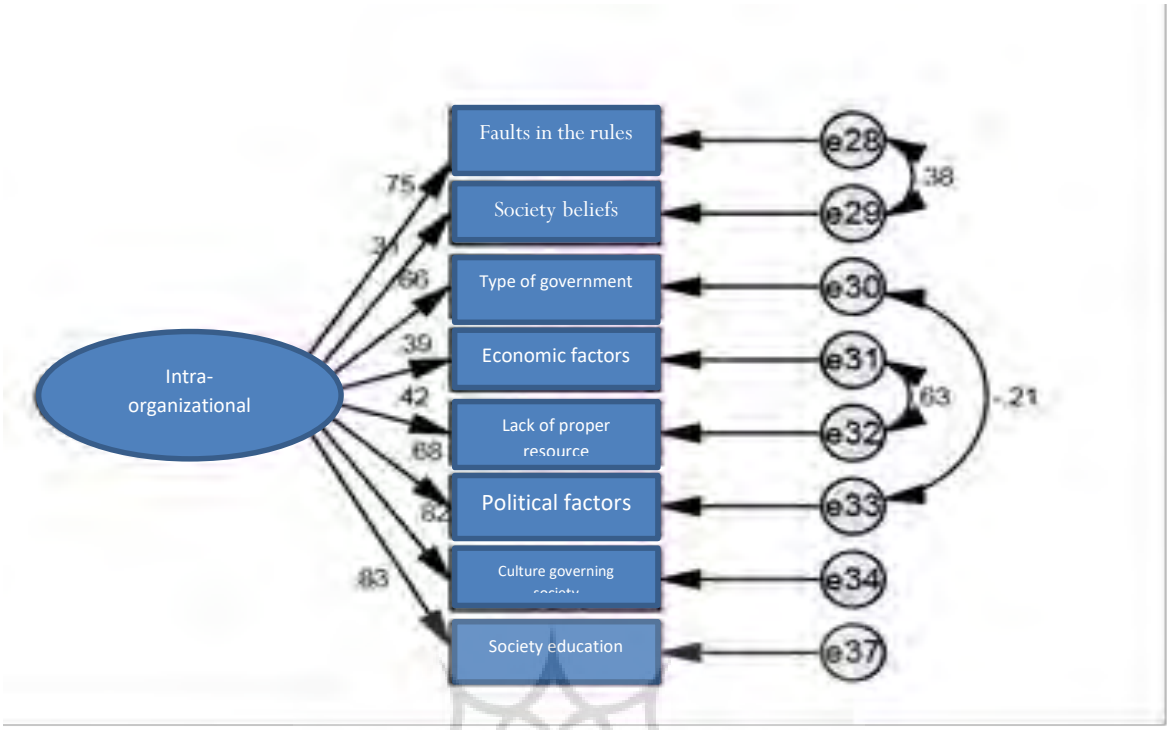

Fig. 2. The Measurement Model of Intra-Organizational Factor

Table 5. Investigating the multivariate normalization and overall fitting indices of intra-organizational factor measurement model

Multivariate normalization		Fitting indices								
MARDIA coefficient	Critical ratio	Absolute			Comparative			Parsimonious		others
		CMIN	DF	P	TLI	CFI	PCFI	CMIN\DF	RMSEA	Holter
21.92	16.89	67.714	17	0.001	0.935	0.96	0.583	3.98	0.08	199

According to the results obtained in table 5, in the model of the relative chi-square index, the comparative indices TLI and CFI, PCFI as well as the fitting goodness index and RMSEA as the most important index of overall fitting, all showed that the model has a good fitting. Holter index showed that the sample size was sufficient to examine the fitting of the model. Comparison of MARDIA coefficient with critical ratio 16.18, indicates that pre-hypothesis of multivariate normalization for this model was not confirmed. Therefore, the results of the bootstrapping test were used for a more accurate evaluation of the parameters. The results are presented in table 7.

Table 6. Comparison of approximations obtained in maximum likelihood and bootstrapping method for the main parameters in the intra-organizational factor measurement model

parameter	Maximum likelihood					Bootstrapping			
	Standard Approximation	significance	Non-Standard Approximation	standard error	Critical ratio	mean	standard error	low limit	High limit
faults in the rules	0.753	0.001	1.000			0.754	0.03	0.689	0.805
society beliefs	0.31	0.001	0.646	0.059	6.35	0.317	0.102	0.174	0.415

Type of government	0.657	0.001	1.186	0.038	12.319	0.658	0.096	0.552	0.72
Economic factors	0.443	0.001	0.839	0.057	7.207	0.388	0.116	0.263	0.497
Lack of proper resource management	0.416	0.001	0.824	0.052	7.727	0.418	0.107	0.306	0.514
Political factors	0.678	0.001	1.313	0.037	12.757	0.673	0.103	0.598	0.74
Culture governing society	0.816	0.001	1.375	0.028	15.694	0.816	0.088	0.742	0.859
society education	0.832	0.001	1.448	0.024	6.35	0.833	0.102	0.778	0.876

As observed in table (6), the standard error in the main parameters in the maximum likelihood method is lower than the bootstrapping method. The approximated standard value for all main parameters of these variables in bootstrapping method shows that the approximated parameters and their significant difference has the adequate accuracy. Also, all coefficients or impact factors in organizational factor were higher than 0.3 and significant at the level 0.001.

Does The Final Model of Organizational Silence Have the Desirable Fitting? The overall indices of model fitting and the results of the normalization of data in this factor are presented in table 8.

Table 7. Investigating the multivariate normalization and overall fitting indices of model of factors affecting the organizational silence

Multivariate normalization		Fitting indices								
Mania coefficient	Critical ratio	Absolute			Comparative		Parsimonious			others
		CMIN	DF	P	TLI	CFI	PCFI	CMIN\DF	RMSEA	Holter
83.28	36.5	735.091	179	0.001	0.849	0.867	0.733	4.11	0.079	202

According to the results obtained in table 7, the relative chi-square index, the comparative indices TLI and CFI, PCFI and RMSEA all showed that the model has a good fitting. Holter index showed that the sample size was sufficient to examine the fitting of the model. Comparison of MARDIA coefficient with critical ratio 36.5, indicates that pre-hypothesis of multivariate normalization for this model was not confirmed.

Table 8. Comparison of approximations obtained in maximum likelihood and bootstrapping method for the main parameters in the model of factors affecting the organizational silence

Organizational silence parameter	Maximum likelihood					Bootstrapping			
	Standard Approximation	significance	non-standard approximation	standard error	Critical ratio	mean	standard error	low limit	High limit
In-organizational	0.981	0.001	1.05	0.03	11.887	0.944	0.044	0.935	0.995
Intra-organizational	0.814	0.001	1.063	0.031	14.276	0.815	0.074	0.738	0.86

As observed in table 6, the standard error in the main parameters in the maximum likelihood method is lower than the bootstrapping method. The approximated standard value for all main parameters of these variables in bootstrapping method shows that the approximated parameters and their significant difference has the adequate accuracy. Also, all coefficients or impact factors in organizational silence factor were significant at the level 0.001.

5. Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of the internal and external factors of the university on the organizational silence of faculty members of Azad Universities. In the research sample, 80% of the participants were between the ages 30-50 years old. Academic degree for most people was the assistant professor, 70% men, 53% official, and faculty members from the Faculty of Humanities.The findings of this study showed that all dimensions of the organization's factor had coefficients or impact factor was higher than 0.3 and significant at the level 0.001. In other words, all dimensions of human resource management, the faculty members, the organization's characteristics, organizational culture, organizational atmosphere, and organizational structure were effective in the organization factor. Human resource management has the most impact on silence and the type of organization has the least impact on silence.

The effectiveness of organizational culture on silence is approved in the researches done by Tanhaie et al. (2018), and Afkhami Ardekani et al. (2015). Effectiveness of structure of the organization on silence is approved in the researches done by Ahmadi et al. (2015), Tanhaie et al. (2018), and effectiveness of the atmosphere on silence is approved in the researches done by Afkhami Ardakani et al. (2015), Donaghi (2011), Yordakul (2016), Danaifard et al. (2011). The results of this study showed that in addition to culture, atmosphere and structure, the important dimension of human resource management has a greater impact on the organizational silence. In other words, faults in supplying human resources, rewards and compensation, performance evaluation, and lack of knowledge management, which are components of human resources management, have a greater impact on the silence than the other dimensions.

All coefficients or impact factors in the dimensions of intra-organization were higher than 0.3 and significant at the level 0.001. In other words, all dimensions of the faults in rules and standards, the type of beliefs, the type of government (the degree of democracy), the economy level, the lack of proper management of human resources in society, the political factors, the culture governing society and the type of education in society were effective in intra-organization. The most impact was related to the society culture and the least impact was related to the type of beliefs in the society. The advantage of the present research is to pay attention to the organization's atmosphere, i.e. the intra-organization that were not seen in the other studies.

The results of structural equations show that the models of measurements of organizational silence factors have a good fitting. The desirability of the model fitting indicates the model confirmation in the research; on the other hand, the obvious indices in the measurement model can measure the hidden variables of the silence in a verifiable way. The coefficients or impact factors of organizational and intra-organizational factors were higher than 0.3 and significant at the level 0.001. In other words, both organizational and intra-organizational factors influence the organizational silence of faculty members and the organizational factor has a greater impact on the organizational silence of the faculty members at Azad University.

The evolution of intra factors is problematic and requires long and proper planning. At the same time, the results of this research showed that the importance of intra factors in relation to in-organizational factors is greater, therefore, it is suggested: 1) to increase the interactions in the organization, movement should be done from high organizational structures to flat structures. 2) Rebuilding the reward system to change the organization's culture and change society's culture towards the criticism. 3) Recruiting the professors who, in addition to the commitment, intelligence, and extraversion, have the necessary scientific capacity and skills. 4) observing the rules and the existence of certain criteria in all aspects of the management of resources such as recruitment, the transformation of the payment system based on the performance of individuals and the observance of justice and fairness, governing quality management systems and conducting audits with observing the standard, creating systematic channels for attracting ideas, collecting, recording and sharing information, respecting the ownership rights for owners of ideas, and providing in-service dynamic courses.

5) Use the faculty members with a clear strategy for university development, and holding free-thinking seats.
6) Creating a dynamic and friendly atmosphere.

It is also suggested that the external factors should be used to: 1) improve the economic conditions and livelihoods of the pressured staff to reduce getting bribery; 2) establish fair administrative rules for all departments, in particular the attention to education and improvement of the cultural situation; 3) Correction of errors in human resources management in the community.

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