

Mediating Effect of Perceived Organizational Support on the Relationship between Organizational Silence and Organizational Commitment

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Abstract

This study aims at examining the mediating effect of perceived organizational support on the relationship between organizational silence and organizational commitment using quantitative research that employs a descriptive survey design. The population for the study consists of 452 employees of Seplat Petroleum Development Company Plc, a Nigeria-based company. Using Taro-Yemani's formula, 212 employees were randomly selected and participated in the study. Path coefficients obtained from structural equation modeling were used to test the hypotheses. The findings indicate that there is a negative and insignificant relationship between organizational silence and organizational commitment. Whereas the association between organizational silence and perceived organizational support is positive and significant, the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment is significantly negative. Furthermore, findings affirm that perceived organizational support fully mediates the relationship between organizational silence and organizational commitment. It is recommended that the management of Seplat Petroleum Development Company Plc establish measures to reduce organizational silence, thus increasing employee voice behavior, which will eventually improve organizational commitment and enhance organizational performance. Finally, factors that will improve employees' perception of organizational support should be enhanced, as this will make employees feel important as well as part of the organization.

Keywords: Organizational silence, perceived organizational support, organizational commitment, structural equation modeling

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1. Introduction

Employees are essential to an organization's success and are acknowledged as its sources of change, creativity, learning, and innovation (Ispurwanto, Murti, Yunanto, Abraham, Nainggolan, & Nugroho, 2021). However, research has shown that when requested by their management, employees frequently feel hesitant to share their ideas because they fear that their suggestions and remarks may disrupt the organization's delicate balance. Employees' sense of uneasiness causes them to speak less, whether intentionally or unconsciously (Deniz, Noyan, & Ertosun, 2013). This scenario can negatively affect employees' loyalty to their companies. Organizations require workers who can communicate their ideas, adapt to changing circumstances, share expertise and information without fear, and show loyalty to their employers (Cetin, 2020). However, a worker's dedication to the company can have both good and bad results depending on whether they choose to voice their opinions or keep quiet. Additionally, if employees perceive that their employers are supportive and dedicated to them, they are more likely to feel the same way about the firm. Despite the fact that earlier studies have established a connection between organizational silence (OS), organizational commitment (OC), and perceived organizational support (POS), some of these studies have produced contradictory results. Of utmost importance is the fact that no study was found that investigated the mediating effect of POS on the association between OS and OC. This study aims to close this gap in the body of knowledge.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Conceptual Review

The three constructs or variables that this study examined are discussed in this section.

2.1.1 Organizational Silence

Studies in the area of organizational behavior (OB) have increasingly emphasized the incidence of OS as a significant construct that needs investigation. With the study conducted by Morrison and Milliken (2000), the idea of OS—which refers to the conduct of employees who do not share their feelings, thoughts, ideas, concerns, and recommendations regarding their workplaces, the tasks they are assigned, or other activities of the organization—entered the literature of OB and management. These scholars contend that OS is a common occurrence that represents individuals' deliberate withholding of ideas, information, and thoughts. OS, according

to Pinder and Harlos (2001), is when an employee purposefully withholds from those who can affect change and corrections the true nature of their behavioral, cognitive, and emotional evaluations pertaining to their organization. The nonexistent nature of an employee's desire to alter the organization's existing state and the failure to communicate thoughts to those who are empowered to alter the current situation are thus the two circumstances in which OS manifests. These definitions demonstrate that OS is an active, deliberate, and intentional activity. OS might manifest as acquiescent silence (AS), defensive silence (DS), or pro-social silence (PS). The deep acceptance of the current circumstances and organizational conditions based on obedience as a passive act of indifference is known as AS (Van Dyne, Ang, & Botero, 2003). Based on strong negative emotions like wrath, fear, and cynicism, DS is expressed as a type of self-protection that manifests as keeping ideas, information, and thoughts hidden from other coworkers within the organization (Blensinkopp & Edwards, 2008). PS is described as the withholding of opinions, information, and thoughts while taking into cognizance its advantages to the company and other employees, reckoning on each employee's motivation to defend another employee or the company (Brinsfield, 2009). Even though these are all distinct behaviors, they can eventually generate the same outcome.

2.1.2 Organizational Commitment

Numerous academics have tried to pinpoint the important function of OC within the organizational environment, including how commitments develop (Aruoren & Tarurhor, 2023) and how they help mold attitudes and actions. The concept of OC has attracted a lot of attention over the last decade (Aruoren & Oboreh, 2020). The perspective that highlights that OC is the employee's affective tie with the organization is perhaps the one that has received the most research (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). According to this view, OC is distinguished by three things: (a) "a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and ideals; (b) a readiness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and (c) a strong desire to associate with the organization" (Mowday et al., 1982, p. 27). The relative strength of a person's recognition by, and engagement with an organization was previously termed OC (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979). Committed people have outstanding loyalty and are less likely to leave the company (Allen & Meyer, 1990). As a result, commitment is a benchmark for employees who understand the organization they work for and are eager to give it their all (Noe, 2017). Additionally, OC is the expectation that one can always be a member of an organization in order to fully utilize one's skills, foster strong confidence, and promote acceptance of a certain organizational purpose (Roy, 2018). OC is a crucial component of the organizational environment and has an immediate impact on how the organization functions. Employees with high OC are therefore better able to perceive corporate goals and show that they have clear motivations for accomplishing them (Nguyen & Tu, 2020). Employees who are devoted to the organization are more enthusiastic and work harder to accomplish the organization's objectives. Additionally, OC should be viewed as the organization's biggest competitive advantage if human resources are its most valuable assets (Nehmeh, 2009).

Three dimensions of OC were conceptualized by Allen and Meyer (1990), and these dimensions are affective commitment (AC), normative commitment (NC), and continuance commitment (CC). The employee's identification with and attachment to an organization is represented by AC. People with high AC levels stay employed by a company because they want to. NC alludes to the moral duty to keep working for the company. High NC employees feel they have an obligation and responsibility to stay on the payroll at their current firm. Finally, CC shows the extent to which workers remain with a company due to the high costs of quitting. Because they believe that what they have invested in the company (such as time and energy) would be "lost" if they left their current employer, or because they perceive their job options outside the company as being limited, employees who are essentially bound to their organization on the basis of CC remain in their job.

2.1.3 Perceived Organizational Support

Since it is a significant predictor of many organizational characteristics, POS has generated a great deal of attention among researchers in the management and psychology fields since the early 1990s. According to the organizational support theory, employees form ideas about how much their employer values their contributions and is concerned about their welfare in order to satisfy their socio-emotional needs and gauge the organization's willingness to reward additional job effort (Kurtessis, Eisenberger, Ford, Buffardi, & Stewart, 2015). The concept of POS measures how much employees believe their employer cares about and values their contributions to the company. It relates to the extent to which workers believe their employer is prepared to fairly compensate them for their job, assist them in times of need (such as illness or issues at work), make their work exciting and stimulating, and provide them with suitable working circumstances (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). In a nutshell, employees develop a general perception of the support offered by the company. Thus, according to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), employees see the assistance offered by their employer as a sign of dedication to them, which tends to strengthen their loyalty to the company. Employees that feel supported by their employer exhibit improved performance, proactive actions, decreased absenteeism, and a decreased intention to leave their jobs (Caesens, Marique, Hanin, & Stinglhamber, 2016; Giorgi, Dubin, & Fiz Perez, 2017).

In other words, POS is every employee's attitude and conduct, both positive and negative, based on whether or not their workplace values and respects their contributions to the firm (Meyer, Allen, & Gellatly, 1990). While POS refers to employees being aware of their organization's contribution to them, feeling safe, and having a sense that the organization is supporting them (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990), organizational support refers to the organization taking into account the well-being of employees and increasing their happiness (Eisenberger et al. 1986). The attributes of a supportive organizations can be summed up as follows: (i) encouraging and supporting employees' creativity; (ii) valuing employees; (iii) rewarding them; (iv) attempting to foster positive internal communication; (v) being fair; (vi) fostering a culture of trust; (vii) doing organizational tasks and activities voluntarily; and (viii) being consistent with organizational policies and practices (Nayir, 2012; Eisenberger et al, 1986; Meyer et al., 1990). The conceptual model illustrating the connections between the research variables is shown in Figure 1.

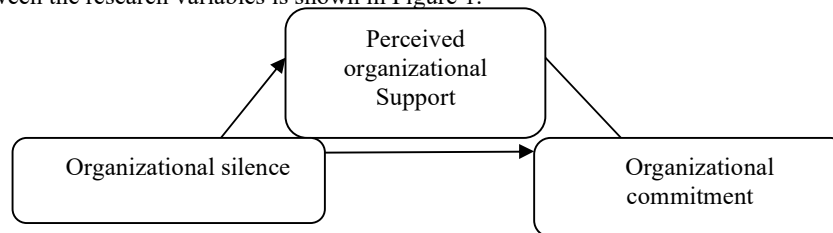


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

2.2 Empirical Review

This section evaluates empirical research related to the study's variables. Prior research primarily indicated a negative association between OC and OS within organizations. To scrutinize the consequences of OS perception on OC behavior, for instance, 294 professional staff representatives from sports organizations in Istanbul, Turkey, were interviewed for Cetin's (2020) study. The findings showed that affective commitment (AC), normative commitment (NC), and continuance commitment (CC) were all negatively impacted by OS. PS, however, had a beneficial effect on CC. Aflatoon, Mahdi, Ahmad, and Reza (2018) explored the affinity between OC and OS among 276 workers at the Iranian University of Medical Sciences in Shiraz. The findings confirmed a negative and substantial link between these variables. By limiting organizational rumors, Hozouri, Yaghmaei, and Bordbar (2018) explored the affinity between OS and OC. Employees that worked for an Iranian municipality corporation participated in the survey. The result indicated that, by reducing organizational rumors, OS had a detrimental effect on OC. Helmiati, Muhammad, Rizqa, Leny, and Nor (2018) examined how organizational trust (OT), job satisfaction (JS), and OS among 309 academics working in private colleges and universities in Indonesia affected OC. OT adversely impacted OS, and OS adversely impacted JS and OC, based on an investigation using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). In an investigation by Rayan, Ali, and Abdel Moneim (2020) exploring the affinity between OS behavior and OC, 365 employees of Egypt's Assiut University took part. The findings revealed a negative relationship between OC and OS behavior. From this review, we propose that:

H1: Organizational silence is negatively related to organizational commitment.

In their 2017 study, Akçin, Erat, Alniaçik, and Çiftçiöğlü looked at the affinity between OS and POS. 502 academicians from Turkish Universities participated. The outcomes revealed that POS had a negative association with both AS and DS, but pro-social silence had a positive link with POS. Taheri (2020) investigated how employees felt organizational support relates to speaking up, with emotional commitment serving as a mediating factor. 273 government workers from Iran's Qom city took part. The findings revealed a favorable correlation between OS and POS. The findings also indicated that the association between POS and OS is mediated by emotional commitment. Singh and Malhotra (2015) examined the connection between the POS and OS of 268 academics from the public and commercial sectors employed by 11 institutes of higher education in North India. They found that trust had a mediating impact. Findings showed a negative correlation between OS and POS, and mediation analysis showed that trust mediates this association between POS and OS. Karakas (2019) explored the connections between 229 employees' opinions of the assistance of their managers and OS in the Turkish region of Antalya. The results show that there is a correlation between supervisor support and acquiescent and quiescent silences that is both positive and statistically significant. From this review, we propose that:

H2: Perceived organizational support is negatively related to organizational silence.

Kaur and Aneet (2017) did research to look at the connection between AC and POS. 120 employees from India's banking industry participated. The findings showed that AC was positively correlated with POS. Through the mediating influence of OC, Abraham, Renaud, and Saulquin (2016) investigated the effects of POS on high-potential individuals' desire to remain with their company in the short-, medium-, and long-term. Participants included 221 high-potential employees from businesses in the Centre-Val de Loire region of France. The results

showed that POS had a favorable impact on OC, indicating that high-potential individuals' commitment to the organization increased when they felt strong POS. In their 2016 study, Mabasa, Ngirande, and Shambare looked at the connections between OC, JS, and POS among 302 academic employees from a South African postsecondary institution. The findings revealed a substantial correlation between AC, CC and POS but not a significant correlation between POS and NC. In their study in 2021, Iqbal, Zia, and Khizar sought to understand how job experience affected the relationship between POS and OC among 128 employees at the Institute of Southern Punjab in Multan, Pakistan. According to the findings of the regression analysis, OC is significantly impacted by POS. Also, in their 2018 study, Bibi, Khalid, and Hussain looked at how 85 special education teachers from several special education facilities in Punjab, Pakistan, evaluated POS, OC, and JS. The results showed a strong correlation between POS, AC, NC, and JS, but no relationship between POS and CC. Further, in their 2020 study, Astuty and Udin examined the connections between 103 employees' job performance and four different variables: AC, POS, transformational leadership (TL), and employee performance (EP). The study was conducted in Central Java, Indonesia. The findings showed that POS significantly impacted EP, TL, and AC. From this review, we propose that:

H3: Organizational commitment is positively related to perceived organizational support.

Prior research on the mediating impact of POS on other organizational characteristics has demonstrated that POS either fully or partially mediated these associations. 202 employees from a large international IT company in South Africa served as the subjects of Vermeulen and Scheepers' (2020) investigation into the mediating role of POS on the relationship between authentic leadership (AL) and job engagement (JE). Regression analysis results demonstrated that POS had a role in mediating the relationship between AL and JE. Isa and Ibrahim (2020) used POS as a mediator to investigate the relationship between employee engagement and talent development. In this study, 164 workers from government-affiliated enterprises (GLCs) in Malaysia were sampled, and the results of PLS-SEM showed that POS strongly mediates the relationship between talent development and employee engagement. The relationship between the notions of job stress, POS, and occupational commitment for 270 nurses working in a foundation university hospital in Istanbul, Turkey, was the subject of research by Koçoğlu, and Görmezoğlu in 2021. The study's findings indicate that POS fully mediates the impacts of occupational commitment and job stress. Purwaningrum, Suhariadi, and Fajrianti's (2020) study tested middle managers' commitment to organizational change and used POS as a mediator. 227 middle managers at a government institution in Indonesia that was undergoing change provided research data for this study. The findings of the study suggested that POS may play a partial mediating function between commitment to change and engagement throughout a period of transition. The 2020 study by Djatmiko, Prasetyo, and Azis sought to determine how Indonesian employee engagement was affected by human resources practices (HRP) through the use of POS. 250 employees from both public and private businesses in Bandung participated in the survey. Results showed that the link between HRP and employee engagement was mediated by POS. 400 nurses working in both public and private hospitals in Lahore, Pakistan, were studied by Zaman, Qureshi, and Butt (2020) for their association between leader-member exchange (LMX) and innovative work behavior (IWB), as well as the mediating effect of POS. The findings indicated that POS only partially mediated the relationship between LMX and IWB. The purpose of Baykal's study (2020) was to determine whether organizational support perceptions of organizational members serve as a mediator in the relationship between the leader's authentic actions and the followers' OC. Participants were 255 white-collar workers in Istanbul's service sector. The study's findings supported the idea that perceptions of organizational support among followers mediate the relationship between AL and OC. According to the review mentioned above, the researchers were unable to locate any study that looked at the mediating role of POS on the relationship between OS and OC, particularly in the setting of Sub-Saharan Africa and with particular reference to Nigeria. Therefore, we suggest that:

H4: Perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between organizational commitment and silence within the organization.

3. Methods

3.1. Participants

Seplat Petroleum Development Company Plc's employees, a Nigeria-based company, made up the population for this study, numbering 452 in total. Using Yemani's (1967) formula and a 5% level of significance, a sample size of 212 was calculated from this population. Therefore, the study included 212 employees who were selected at random. A standardized questionnaire was distributed to the employees during working hours, and it was then collected when it was completed. Eventually, 184 viable copies of the 212 distributed surveys were collected, representing a response rate of 87 percent. These were coded and employed for additional analysis.

3.2. Measures

The items on the structured questionnaire were taken from earlier investigations. OS was assessed using 15 items from Dyne, Ang, and Botero (2003), whereas OC was assessed using 18 questions from Meyer, Allen, and Smith

(1993). Eight items from Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, and Rhoades (2002) were used to gauge employees' perceptions of perceived organizational support. Both OS and OC were assessed on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, whereas POS was assessed on a seven-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The study also measured socio-demographic factors such as gender, age, marital status, highest level of education attained, tenure, and kind of employment.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Respondents' Demographic Profile

184 questionnaires were completed and found useful by the researchers. The study had 122 male volunteers (63.30%) and the remainder were female (36.70 percent). The respondents' ages are distributed as follows: Ages 20 to 29 made up 30.43 percent (N = 56), 30 to 39 made up 38.59 percent (N = 71), 40 to 49 made up 14.13 percent (N = 26), and those above 50 made up 16.85 percent (N = 31). In terms of marital status, there were 48 (26.09%) single employees, 117 (63.59%) married employees, 9 (4.89%) separated employees, 2 (1.08%) widowed employees, and 8 (4.35%) divorced employees. Regarding the highest level of education acquired, 91 respondents (49.45 percent) had degrees below the bachelor's degree, 82 respondents (44.57 percent) had bachelor's degrees, and 11 respondents (5.98%) had postgraduate degrees. Regarding the type of employment, 46 (25.00%) employees were temporary or casual workers, while 138 (75.00%) were permanent employees.

4.2: Correlation Matrix

The findings in Table 1 reveal the relationships between the research variables. According to Table 1, there was a modest, positive, and insignificant connection between os and oc ($r = +0.055, p > 0.05$), but a medium, positive, and significant correlation between os and pos ($r = +0.392, p < 0.05$). Additionally, the relationship between oc and pos had a weak, unfavorable, and negligible association ($r = -0.074, p > 0.05$).

Table 1: Correlation coefficients among study variables

	gender	age	ms	hel	tenure	nj	os	oc	pos
gender	1.000								
age	0.016	1.000							
ms	-0.012	0.559*	1.000						
hel	-0.023	0.197*	0.098	1.000					
tenure	-0.022	0.456*	0.273*	-0.086	1.000				
nj	0.000	-0.132	-0.249*	-0.042	-0.199*	1.000			
os	0.129	0.248*	0.271*	-0.001	0.103	-0.081	1.000		
oc	-0.106	0.187*	-0.053	0.284*	0.028	0.102	0.055	1.000	
pos	0.116	0.286*	0.228*	0.093	0.424*	-0.353	0.392*	-0.074	1.000

Source: Researcher's compilation; ms = marital status; hel = highest educational level; nj = nature of job; os = organizational silence; oc = organizational commitment; pos = perceived organizational support; *significant at 0.05; N = 184

4.3 Measurement Model

Principal component analysis (PCA), composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and Cronbach's alpha were used to evaluate the measurement model. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity were used to evaluate the fundamental premises of PCA. According to Table 2, the sample was sufficient for PCA because the value of KMO was 0.817, which was higher than 0.7 (Lloret, Ferreres, Hernandez, & Tomas, 2017). The original correlation matrix's status as an identity matrix is also tested using Bartlett's measure. Table 2 demonstrates this test to be significant (Kaiser, 1974). These findings demonstrated the factorability of the study's data.

Table 2: Bartlett Test and KMO

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.817
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square Degree of Freedom Significance
	6081.325 780 0.000

Source: Researchers' compilation

To narrow down the list of questionnaire items to those with high loading on each component, PCA was run on the data using the varimax orthogonal factor rotation approach. Only items with factor loadings greater than 0.60 were kept for further analysis, as can be seen in Table 3 (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). The retained items' factor loadings ranged from 0.67 to 0.86. (Table 3). OS, OC, and POS all had AVEs of 0.53, 0.56, and 0.62, respectively (Table 3). These numbers exceeded the threshold of 0.50 (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2012). The respective Cronbach's coefficients for OS, OC, and POS were 0.83, 0.78, and 0.81 (Table 3). Taber (2018) argued that these values were high because they were higher than 0.70. Additionally, Table 3 displayed the

composite reliability of OS, OC, and POS (i.e., 0.90, 0.92, and 0.91, respectively), all of which are greater than the acceptable cut-off point of 0.70 as advised by Hair, Sarstedt, Matthews, and Ringle (2016). Fornell and Larcker's (1981) technique was used in the study to establish discriminant validity. The square roots of the AVEs are displayed along the diagonal in Table 4, while the correlations between the research variables are shown on the off-diagonals. The square roots of the AVE of the constructs are bigger than the correlations of the other constructs, which agrees with the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Table 4). This supports the measurement model's discriminant validity.

Additionally, Table 4 displays the means for OS (3.247), OC (3.188), and POS (3.823), all of which were higher than the midpoints of 2.50 for OS and OC, as well as 3.50 for POS. The standard deviations of OS, OC, and POS were 0.624, 0.549 and 1.098, respectively (Table 4), which indicated a good spread from the mean of each construct. Since the data for this study were obtained from a single source at a single point in time, common method bias could become a challenge. We conducted a Harman single-factor test (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) to investigate this likely problem. The result obtained from PCA indicated that one factor (OS) accounted for 39.79 percent of the variance, far less than the 50% criterion (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Hence, common method bias was considered not to be a significant issue in the study.

Table 3: Retained questionnaire items, factor loadings, cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted.

Retained Questionnaire Items	Factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Organization silence (os)		0.83	0.90	0.53
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this organization, employees passively keep ideas to themselves about solutions to problems at work (os3). • In this organization, employees keep ideas for improvement at work to themselves, because of lack of self-confidence to make a difference (os4). • In this organization, employees withhold solutions to problems because they are motivated by fear (os10). • In this organization, employees withhold confidential information, based on cooperation (os11). • In this organization, employees protect proprietary information in order to benefit the organization (os12). • In this organization, employees withstand pressure from others to tell organizational secrets (os13). • In this organization, employees refuse to divulge information that might harm the organization (os14). • In this organization, employees protect confidential organizational information appropriately, based on concern for the organization (os15). 	0.75 0.67 0.71 0.73 0.69 0.76 0.73 0.80			
Organizational commitment (oc)		0.78	0.92	0.56
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not feel like 'part of my family' at this organization (oc3)* • I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization (oc4)* • I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization (oc6)* • Too much of my life would be disrupted if I leave my organization (oc8). • Right now, staying with my job at this organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire (oc9). • I believe I have too few options to consider leaving this organization (oc10). • One of the few negative consequences of leaving my job at this organization would be the scarcity of available alternative elsewhere (oc11). • One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice (oc12). • I do not feel any obligation to remain with my organization 	0.77 0.69 0.74 0.72 0.82 0.75 0.71 0.80 0.70			

(oc13).				
Perceived organizational support (pos)		0.81	0.91	0.62
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization strongly considers my goals and values (pos1). • Help is available from the organization when I have a problem (pos2). • The organization really cares about my well-being (pos3). • The organization is willing to help me when I need a special favor (pos5). • If given opportunity, the organization would take advantage of me (pos6)* • The organization cares about my opinions (pos8). 	0.85			
	0.79			
	0.72			
	0.86			
	0.76			
	0.75			

Source: Researcher's compilation. *Reversed coded items

Table 4: Discriminant validity, mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values of study variables

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	os	oc	pos
os	3.247	0.624	1	5	(0.728)		
oc	3.188	0.549	1	5	0.055	(0.748)	
pos	3.823	1.098	1	7	0.392	-0.074	(0.787)

Source: Researcher's compilation; os = organizational silence; oc = organizational Commitment; pos = perceived organizational support

4.4 Structural Model and Testing of Hypotheses

Before the hypotheses were tested, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to check the variables' construct validity. Using the cut-off criteria proposed by Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, and Müller (2003), we compared our data set with the theoretical model using a number of fit indices, including χ^2 / df , RMSEA, NFI, CFI, GFI, AGFI, and SRMR (Table 5). The fit indices supported a three-factor model for OS, OC, and POS, as shown in Table 5, with values of $\chi^2 / df = 0.07$, RMSEA = 0.06, NFI = 0.93, CFI = 0.95, GFI = 0.93, AGFI = 0.94, and SRMR = 0.03. These outcomes provide even more evidence that the three variables can be distinguished for analytical purposes.

Table 5: Model fit Test

Goodness-of-Fit Indices	χ^2 / df	RMSEA	NFI	CFI	GFI	AGFI	SRMR
Cut-off Criteria	> 0.05	< 0.08	≥ 0.90	≥ 0.90	≥ 0.90	≥ 0.90	< 0.05
Estimated Result	0.07	0.06	0.93	0.95	0.93	0.94	0.03

Researcher's compilation; χ^2 / df = Chi-square and its associated *p* value; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; NFI = normed fit index; CFI = comparative fit index; GFI = goodness-of-fit index; AGFI = adjusted goodness-of-fit index; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) in STATA 13 was used to evaluate the proposed hypotheses using Baron and Kenny's (1986) four step procedure. There exist a weak negative direct correlation between OS and OC with = -0.171, as indicated in Table 6 and Figure 2, which displays the path coefficients. So, H1 cannot be rejected. The results of Cetin (2020), Aflatoon et al. (2018), and Rayan et al. (2020), who also observed a negative connection between OS and OC, agree with this conclusion. Therefore, employees' commitment levels decline when they keep silent at work, which eventually has an impact on organizational performance.

Additionally, OS and POS were shown to have a direct association that was both significant and positive, with $\beta = +1.470$. H2 was rejected. This conclusion varies from those of Singh and Malhotra (2015), who reported a negative connection between OS and POS, but it is in agreement with those of Taheri (2020) and Karakas (2019). Additionally, a negative and substantial association between POS and OC was discovered, with $\beta = -0.243$. H3 is therefore rejected. This result contradicts the findings of Kaur and Aneet (2017), Abraham et al. (2016), Iqbal et al. (2021), and Bibi et al. (2018), who claimed that POS and OC have a positive connection.

The standardized estimates for the causal pathways leading to the indirect and direct effects are shown in Figure 1. While the direct influence from OS to OC was judged to be close to zero and not statistically significant, the indirect effect estimated path was statistically significant with a value of $\beta = +0.357$. As a result, POS completely mediate the association between OS and OC. The full mediation effect of POS is further confirmed by the Sobel test's significant value (Table 7). The study's findings are consistent with those of earlier research by Koçoğlu, and Görmezoğlu (2021), Vermeulen and Scheeper (2020), Isa and Ibrahim (2020), Djatimiko et al. (2020), and Baykal (2020), which found that the POS fully mediated a number of organizational relationships.

Table 6: Path Coefficients for Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

Path	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Std Err	z	p > z	95% Conf. Interval	
os → pos	1.470*	-	1.470*	0.290	5.08	0.000	0.903	2.038
pos → oc	-0.243*	-	-0.243*	0.072	-3.37	0.001	-0.384	-0.102
oc → os	-0.171	0.357*	-0.528*	0.169	-3.13	0.002	-0.858	-0.197

Source: Researchers' compilation, * $p < 0.05$

Table 7: Significance Testing of Indirect Effect (Unstandardized)

Estimates	Delta	Sobel	Monte Carlo
Indirect effect	-0.357	-0.357	-0.357
Std. Err.	0.123	0.127	0.120
z – value	-2.899	-2.809	-2.983
p – value	0.004	0.005	0.003
Conf. Interval	0.598, -0.116	-0.606, -0.108	-0.588, -0.131

Source: Researchers' compilation

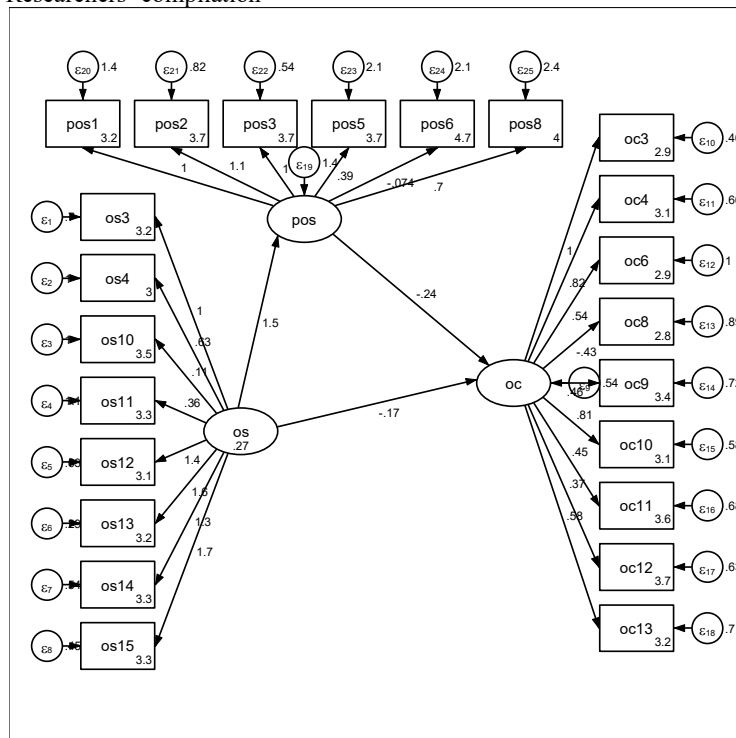


Figure 2: Structural model showing path coefficients

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study used data from chosen employees of Seplat Petroleum Development Company Plc in Nigeria to evaluate the empirical model that seeks to examine and demonstrate the mediating influence of POS on the link between OS and OC. A very little negative link between OS and OC was found via SEM, whereas a substantial negative association between POS and OC was found. OS and POS had a strong and positive relationship. Additionally, it was noted that POS completely mediated the link between OS and OC. Considering the results of the study, the following suggestions were made:

1. The management of Seplat Petroleum Development Company Plc should take steps to reduce organizational silence behavior while enticing employees to express their concerns and observations about organizational activities, as this will increase employees' level of commitment, which will improve organizational performance.
2. To be able to lessen the negative impact of OS on OC, it is essential to improve how positively employees view organizational support.

Considering that this study focuses solely on one organization limits the applicability of its findings to other organizations. Future studies should take into account a couple of business organizations in Nigeria. Additionally, the study applied a descriptive survey approach in which information was gathered simultaneously from the same source, which made it difficult to draw casual connections. Future longitudinal investigations are suggested.

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