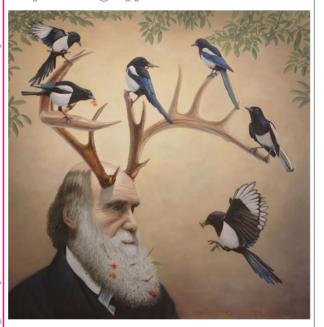# opción

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The Effect of Organizational Silence on Occupational Burnout.
An Analytical Study on Heads of Departments of the Baghdad's General Directorate of Education / Second Rusafa

Hadeel Kadhim Saaed[1], Salma H.Raheemah[2], Uday Hussein Shaalan[3]

[1]Assistant Prof. Dr. College of Administration & Economics, University of Baghdad; Dr.hadelkadim@coadec.uobaghdad.edu.iq
[2]Dr. College of Administration & Economics – University of Baghdad salmahatytaraheemah@coadec.uobaghdad.edu.iq
[3]Assistant Lecturer Ministry of Education audayalhelaly@gmail.com

Abstract
The research aims at testing the relationship of influence and correlation between organizational silence as the independent variable along with its reasons adopted in the study namely (the administrative and organizational reasons, the lack of experience, work-related concerns, as well as the fear of social isolation) and their influence on and correlation with the occupational burnout syndrome along with its three dimensions of (emotional exhaustion, blunting and personal accomplishment) As a dependent variable, and that through the implementation of the descriptive analytical approach. The study was carried out on (78) officers (i.e. government servants) from Second Rusafa's Directorate General of Education, collectively representing the research community. A relevant questionnaire was used as a main tool to collect data and which was distributed across the studied sample of people and then recollected as being valid for the statistical analysis needed. The (spss) program was also used in the study along with the appropriate statistical methods including (the arithmetic mean, the standard deviation, correlation and regression, as well as Chronbach's Alpha Coefficient and the Split-half method). The most prominent conclusions reached were seen in the existence of a silent organizational behavior of the individuals sampled in this study as well as a consensus on the opinion regarding the burnout syndrome, and the existence of a relationship of significance between the organizational silence and its dimensions with burnout syndrome except for the lack of experience/expertise dimension,

as well as the existence of an effect relationship of the independent variable of organizational silence along with its dimensions (except for the lack of experience dimension) on the dependent variable of occupational burnout syndrome.

Keywords: Organizational Silence, Burnout Syndrome.

Introduction

Both the Organizational Silence, (regardless of its causes, being administrative in nature or organizational, or being driven by lack of experience or fear from social isolation and the like)and the occupational burnout syndrome with all its three dimensions that have driven consensus among the majority of authors and researchers as being the (emotional exhaustion, blunting and personal accomplishment)are classified as part of the problems and obstacles that public (i.e. state-run) organizations are facing today due to the negative impacts they might have on the working individuals across the levels whether among the administrative class, the middle class or the lower class alike. Cush impacts can include weakening of performance as well as diminishing of production rate, a raise in absentees, shifting works and the possibility of affecting the psychology of the employees and their behaviors, besides impeding the achievement of the goals the organizations are looking to achieve (especially that the human capital is considered the pillar upon which the organizations are leaning on in achieving their goals since they depend on it in accomplishing their works and carrying out their different activities since people (workers) represent the dynamic energy responsible for stirring everything including the administrative jobs, the technical ones, running the machinery and equipment involved in carrying out works regardless of the simplicity of complexity of the technology involved. Now in order for the worker to be able to carry out his or her work assigned, the organization they are working for must provide them with the an appropriately sound and functional occupational environment, in addition to qualify those workers or individuals in every level, being psychological, physical and mental alike and in a way enabling them to carry out the tasks with the utmost performance. It is through the implementation of such parameters by means of this research that was tried on the sections officers (government servants) of the Second Rusafa Directorate General of Education of Baghdad governorate of the Ministry of Education, that the effects of those variables on the perfor-

mance of those administrative individuals that make up the link between the upper and the lower management.

First Part: Theoretical Side

The research is made up of two variables: organizational silence as the independent variable and the occupational burnout as the dependent variable. In applying the vocabulary relevant to the variables in the study, the researchers relied on the available scientific books, researches, theses, journals, and scientific magazines as sources of the theoretical literature involved, and that as follows:

First: Organizational Silence

The world of organizations today is the world of creativity, innovation and survival in competition. This is true since the organizations that aim to achieve and maintain success should go after creative development. This is mainly achievable through motivating the employees to express their opinions and ideas as well as to share their knowledge, value, creatively and innovation, are achieved. Likewise, poor support for expressed ideas would result in a reduction of the commitments of the staffers, which would result in lack of information and confidence in the expression of ideas, which in turn would lead to failure of the programs designed to improve innovation and creativity (Hesam & Raeesi, 2016: 2933).

Despite their self-confidence, studies show that employees are usually hesitant to express their views since they believe that engaging in discussions and simply speaking out their minds are risky, indicating that employees are generally not willing to speak (ERİGÜÇ. Et al. , 2014: 133)

1-   Definition of Organizational Silence: Authors and researchers dealt with many definitions, depending on their views of what the term organizational silence mean in addition to what they saw in reality in regards to this term in organizations. Following are a bunch of definitions arranged in table (1) that have been adopted by a number of researchers all arranged chronologically.

Table (1) – Definitions of Organizational Silence

Henriksen, Dayton, (2006)	refers to a collective-level phenomenon of saying or doing very little in response. (1539)
ZEHIR, ERDOGAN, (2011)	the withholding of any form genuine expression about the individuals behavioral , cognitive and/or affective evaluations of his or her organizational circumstance to persons who are perceived to be capable of effecting change or redress. (1391)
Elçi. Et al, 2014	behavioral issue where individuals do not express their thoughts, opinions and suggestions that will help revealing the disruptions, improving the organizational activities and creating new process / product /service .(456)
Eriguc, Et al, 2014	as individuals who work within an organization deliberately and intentionally not telling behavioral, cognitive and emotional evaluations about organizational conditions to the individuals (managers/leaders) who are perceived as capable of making any change or correction.(151)
Acaraya , Akturanb, 2015	withholding their work-related opinions, ideas and information, based on resignation.(474)
Fard1 , Karimi 2015	social phenomenon created in an organizational level and is affected by most of organizational features as decision making processes, management, culture and perceptions of employees.(220)
Akbarian , Et al, 2015	employee's choice to withhold their opinions and concerns about organizational problems and when most members of organizations choose to keep silent about organizational matters, silence becomes a collective behavior, which is referred to as organizational silence .(178)
Elbeyi .Et al , 2015	a phenomenon on a collective level which is characterized by employees keeping their knowledge, views or concerns about work related issues, problems or challenges to themselves . (85)

2- Dimensions of Organizational Silence: Researchers attribute organizational silence to a number of reasons that represent the scientific structure of which it can be measured, as follows:

A-   Administrative and Organizational Reasons: in studying the organizational silence, it was found out that the most common cause leading to that behavior was administrative and organizational in nature. This was referred to by the study of (Cakici, 2008) which indicated that the main reasons behind the organizational silence were the administrative and organizational beliefs and procedures, as well as the characteristics of the organizations, and the co-workers. (OWUOR, 2010: 10).

B-   Work-related Issues: It is difficult to remain silent upon seeing violations or irregularities being committed within the work environment

in general, especially that the executives expect that their staffers would disclose the situation to them, but the staffers want to be safe from the authorities. This is called the disclosure of violations (Karaca, 2013: 41).

C-   Lack of Experience: Many managers who lack experience and efficiency feel a need to avoid embarrassment and threat, hence they tend to avoid information that may suggest weakness or may raise questions about the ongoing work processes. This is an important factor in facilitating a climate of silence (MORRISON & MILLIKE, 2000: 708).

D-   Fear of Social Isolation: The source of fear of social isolation stems from the idea that "the expression of the problems within the organization is due to cause other problems." This is true since the characteristics of organizations do not allow that the staffers express the problems related to the organization and its hierarchical structure, which in turn requires the greater amount of silence. Likewise, negative feelings can cause organizational problems such as lack of trust and respect for the employee which can also lead to poor social relations to the extent of social exclusion within the organization (Harbalioğlu & Gültekin, 2014: 154).

E-   Fear of Damaging the Relation: There are some situations that employees cannot express their views and opinions about nor can they make recommendations about and therefore they are obliged to keep silent simply to avoid being described as being negative or to avoid (others) losing trust in their recommendations. This kind of behavior results in a damage of the relationship between the employees and their superiors or even between employees themselves.(Lu & Xie, 2013: 49).

Second: Occupational Burnout:

The burnout syndrome has become a topic of interest to writers and researchers due to its negative impacts on both employees and organizations alike. The interest in this phenomenon started increasing since the seventies of the last century and that through the works of the American psychoanalyst Herbert Freudenberger and Crins, whose major works were focused on the occupational burnout the workers suffer from at their workplace. Furthermore, they considered the phenomenon as a state of exhaustion occurs as a result to the mounting pressure of the excess requirements of the tasks burdening their shoulders at the expense of their physical and psychological energy. Then researchers examining and analyzing this phenomenon started following (Boudoukha, 2009: 12)

The Definition of the Occupational Burnout:

The definitions and concepts that deal with the occupational burnout subject are as varied as the number of ideologies and philosophies adopted by writers, researchers and thinkers. Furthermore, studies and researches indicate that the burnout psychology is a relatively modern concept that was coined by Herbert Freudenberger who first used the term as a scientific terminology adopted in the social care field where he used it to refer to the individual's psychological and emotional response to work pressures, in addition to the widespread of the terminology among social workers in the United States despite the fact that in the beginning the occupational burnout was not seen as a practically scientific subject but rather started to spread in the beginning of the eighties of the last century as the number of articles dealing with it raised in the year 1980 to more than 200 article per year after being around 5 at the beginning of the last century. (Magdalena & others, 2015: 1128-1129). Table (2) illustrates the definitions of this concept.

Table (2) – Definitions of Occupational Burnout

Maslach & Jackson,1981:109	A person's sense of emotional stress and weak personal achievements of the individual and sagging feelings and thus the individual's loss of capacity to deliver the required performance and the sense of increased requirements for work.
Perlman & Hartman, 1982;284	Responding to emotional stress resulting from stress, low functioning performance and other dry handling
Matteson & Ivanceveich,1982;9	The physiological and psychological response of the individual to a situation or external situation.
Levi:1984,2	The non-specific body response to all the influences, demands and pressures of the individual and his attempt to adapt to them
Maslach & Leiter,1996:4	A state of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion in the absence of resources necessary for the individual in the work environment, which leads to the weakness of his participation and interest and enthusiasm in the work
Jari & others,2006:498	A state of chronic stress leads to: physical and emotional exhaustion, separation, inefficiency and lack of achievement
Bilge,2006:48	A state of emotional and physical exhaustion of the individual's stress and inability to meet the requirements of his profession
Carter,2013:1	A state of chronic stress leads to: physical and emotional exhaustion, separation, inefficiency and lack of achievement
Taetske & others:2014,157	The exhaustion or breakdown phase after long-term or intense stress, when the body's reserves are depleted and physical or emotional breakdown happens ... especially if [people] work in taxing areas involving violence, abuse, and serious illness. However, even the strongest, most experienced, best-trained, and most positive person has a limit to her capacity to deal with stress and could burn out unless protective measures are put in place". Burnout is an important variable affecting engagement as well as job turnover

That was true since the term of burnout started to be used as a synonym for emotional exhaustion especially in services and works of humanitarian nature as psychological therapy and teaching and other careers where a person usually suffers from personality effacement or a decrease in personal achievement level as a result of the individual's belief that he or she cannot offer more and cannot achieved the desired goal in an active way because of the traits of the people he or she is serving or dealing with. It is worth mentioning that the burnout phenomenon does not occur at a rapid pace but rather it is the result of a long and slow process that could take years (to manifest) and that due to the demanding nature of the continuous work coupled with the worker's inability to meet the ongoing demands till the stage of emotional exhaustion starts to manifest, which in turn leads to withdrawal. (Korunka & others, 2010: 6-7).

3-Dimensions of the Occupational Burnout:

The specialists conclude that occupational burnout has three main dimensions, which were referred to by a joint study conducted by the researchers (Maslach & Jackson) that were agreed upon by (Perlman & Hartman). They are as follows:

A-   Emotional or Psychological Stress/Exhaustion: It is also called emotional exhaustion and refers to the depletion of the resources of the individual's strength as well as excessive stress as a result of his or her dealing with a particular group or people or field (Rahim: 2000: 23). Among common symptoms of the emotional exhaustion is the feeling of fear and panic a worker feels when thinking that he is going to go to work every morning, not to mention physical stress, digestion system disturbances, stamina, low motivations, mood swings, the decrees in self-confidence level, turning, rejection to engage in discussions, postponing of meetings, low performance, and conflicting relations with family members and friends (Magdalena & others, 2015: 1128-1129). Those symptoms occur as a result to the individual feeling that he is no longer able to carry on, to give and to shoulder his or her responsibilities toward their clients in the same level he or she is required of (Maslach & Jackson, 1981: 109).

B-   Weakness in Personal Accomplishment: This can be explained by the weakness of the values adopted by the individual as he starts suffering from a lack of self-confidence and self- abilities, which results in a decrease in their productivity which in turn leads to failure as well as to a decrease in oneself abilities and achievements in his career and then his or

her self-estimation(Canoui, 2000: 254). Likewise, it leads to weakness of interaction with others and the loss of personal commitment in work relationships. Among the symptoms involved in this dimension are the negative expectation felt by the employee because of his or her sense of failure like expecting severe punishment from the President, for example (Cords & Dougherty, 1993: 623).

C-   Blunting: This dimension refers to the indifference, the ruining of an individual's personality, as well as depression, boredom, and repulsing oneself as well as others while feeling indifference towards them (Korunka & others, 2010: 9). The dimension represents an exaggerated negative response since the individual tens to isolate himself from others and in sometimes building a barrier between them and oneself so they become merely something in his life as he gets himself excluded emotionally. The dimension also becomes vivid as the individual starts feeling oversensitivity towards others which in turn could lead to hostility, violence and staying aloof (Canoui, 2000: 254). Furthermore, the dimension is characterized by harshness, pessimism, excessive criticism and excessive blame directed by the worker to his colleagues at work and to the organization and its clients, till the worker reaches a state of coldness, breading negative feelings toward clients or beneficiaries, so starts treating them with less care as well as with a sense of indifference (Maslach & Pines, 1977: 107)

Second Part: Methodology of Research
First: hypothetical chart
The descriptive chart illustrates the nature and direction of the relationship between the two variables of the research along with their dimensions so as to illustrate the hypotheses of the research as shown in Figure (1):

Figure (1) – Hypothetical Flowchart for the Research Variables and their sub-dimensions (Organizational Silence & Occupational Burnout)

Source: Researchers
Second: Research hypotheses:

The following hypotheses were formulated depending on the problem of the study:

1- The first hypothesis: a correlation of significance exists between the organizational silence and the occupational burnout along with its dimensions.
2 - The second hypothesis: a relationship of effect of a significant function exists between organizational silence and occupational burnout along with its dimensions.

Third: problem of the study (research):

The employees in any organization are regarded collectively as its main pillar as it is through them that the desired and planned goals of the organization are usually achieved as a result of their interaction with whatever is surrounding them as being part of the surrounding environmental and organizational circumstances especially in organizations where systemic repetitions and routines prevail particularly within state-run organizations (since the current study was carried out within one of the state-run organization), where regulations, orders, instructions, decisions by official authorities rule and where a climate of the culture of the public organization along with its common customs and traditions prevail therein, not to mention the details that may reach the point of boredom. all these things and similar stuff have their negative impact on the psychological, physical and occupational wellbeing of the staffers, which then take its toll on their performance, hence giving rise to a number of organizational (occupational) illnesses that lead to the imperfection in achieving what has been put forward as a public goal or service. Accordingly, it is not unexpected that the occupational burnout syndrome starts to show up as a result to the circumstances the employees are passing through in the process of carrying out their tasks. Additionally, it is quite possible that those employees become divided into those rejecting and thus rebelling against all the unsound routine procedures and quiet staffers who appear in supportive of such procedures and who rarely speak out and exceptionally nagging while they rarely offer developmental solutions or suggesting methods aiming at

minimizing the routine in order to lessen the intensity of the measurements taken. They may likewise abstain from decision-taking practices or even practices whose aim is to share information and expertise within the organization which is called the organizational silence. That is why both writers and researches have paid a lot of attention to these phenomena as having a great impact on the productivity of organizations as well as on their employees, hence arises the problem of the current study that could be summarized through the question (to what extent the phenomena of occupational burnout and organizational silence have spread among the administrative staff of the Baghdad's Directorate General of Education/ Second Rusafa and what have been the impact of those phenomena on the performance of those staffers?) the question gives birth to the following group of sub-questions:

1-   Are occupational burnout and organizational silence obvious to those watching the employees? What is their impact on their performance at work?

2-   What are the most significant dimensions of the two variables researched on the studied organization? Are their differences in terms of response of the sampled group about those dimensions? And do they care about those differences?

3-   Do the researched group (sampling group) prefer to keep silent about the problems and obstacles that they face during their carrying out their works?

4-   What is the scope of the occupational burnout that the sampled participants (sampling group of employees who took part in the study) are facing? Do they know the reasons behind it and also the reasons behind the organizational silence?

Fourth: Research Sample:

The research sampled community included all the officials of the Baghdad's Directorate General of Education/second Rusafa, who were (78)in number, both males and females. The study adopted the purposive sample method and 78 questionnaires were distributed to the participants making up the research sample. The distribution percentage was (100%) as shown in table (3) below:

Table (3) – The Demographic Variables for the Research Sample

Demographic Variables		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	57	73.1%
	Female	21	26.9%
Academic Level	High school	2	2.6%
	Diploma or less	15	19.2%
	Bachelor degree	56	71.8%
	High Diploma	1	1.3%
	Master degree	3	3.8%
	P.H.D degree	1	1.3%
age	30 or younger	7	9%
	31-40 years old	38	48.7%
	41-50 years old	24	30.8%
	Older than 50	9	11.5%
Job Title/Position	Director General	0	0
	Director	0	0
	Head of Department	0	0
	Head of Section	78	100%
Years in Service	Less than 5	13	16.7%
	5-10 years	36	46.2%
	11-15 years	23	29.5%
	More than 15	6	7.7%

The results of the demographic data of the sampled research showed that among the(78) participants of the mentioned General Directorate sections,(73.1%) were males and (26.95) were females which is an indication that the majority of the jobs were being taken by men. In regards to their academic qualifications the data showed that the highest academic level obtained was the bachelor degree with (71.8%) of the individuals involved which is an indication that the majority of the sections officials of the organization had bachelor degrees. In regards to age, the data showed that employees whose ages were between (31-40) and (41-50) achieved the highest percentage of (48,7% – 30,8%) respectively which indicates that the organization has a mixed range of young ages among its employees.

The questionnaire: it is considered the main tool used in the research that was adopted in collecting data as the main source of information. Moreover, it was also used in testing the hypothesis of the study samples so as to complete covering the scientific side since it was designed according to a number of parameters directly or indirectly related to the subject of the research, and then was adjusted to suit the variables as well as the dimensions involved in the study, depending on the five-point Likert's scale weights of (1,2,3,4,5). The questionnaire that was consisted of three parts.

The first part covered the personal information of the participants represented by (gender, scientific qualification, age, job title, years of working under a certain job title or post). The second section included questions related to the independent variable of the organizational silence along with its dimensions, while the third section was designed to cover the questions related to the dependent variables of the occupational burnout along with its dimensions as is shown in the table below:

Table (4) – Questionnaire makeup and its Sources

Ref.	Main variable	Sub-variable	Points counts	Number of points/items	Scale Reference
1	Identifying variables	Gender, academic level, age, job title/position, number of years in service		1-5	
2	Organizational Silence	Administrative & organizational reasons	4	1-4	Van Dyne & others,2003
		Lack of experience	4	5-8	
		Work-related fears	4	9-12	
		Fear of social isolation	4	13-16	
		Fears of damaging relation	4	17-20	
3	Occupational Burnout	Emotional exhaustion / stress	9	1-9	Maslach & Jackson 1981
		Blunting	5	10-14	
		Personal Accomplishment	8	15-22	

Fifth: Honesty and stability of the scale:

The researchers used methods of measurements to indicate the stability of the questionnaire. The methods included the following:

1. (Cronbach's Alpha): It achieved stability for both variables involved in the study (organizational silence and occupational burnout). Using this "Cronbach's Alpha" measurement, the stability value was (0.82) covering (42) points, which is an indication that the points or items of the scale were highly consistent.
2. (Split-half): which was used to estimate the stability between the two halves of the scale by calculating the value of the correlation between them. It achieved a stability value of (0.80) covering (42) points, which is a value indicating a high degree of consistency among the points of the

scale.

Part Three: The Practical Side
Table (5) reveals descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables involved in the study, with the median for the organizational silence being (2,7), and the standard deviation (0.55), which indicates the convergence and coherence in the participants responses (as being the sample of the study) about the adoption of organizational silence behavior by the research sample (participants). Furthermore, the median for the occupational burnout was (3.1), while the standard deviation for the same variable was (0.48), which indicates coherence in opinions concerning the occupational burnout.

Table (5) – Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

Variables	Median	Standard Deviation
Organizational Silence	2.7	0.55
Occupational Burnout	3.1	0.48

First: Testing the hypothesis of correlation between the organizational silence along with its dimensions and the occupational burnout:

Through the implementation of "Pearson" method of finding out the correlation between the two variables, it was shown that a correlation of significance existed between the independent variable of (organizational silence) with all its dimensions (except for the – lack of experience – dimension which appeared to have no correlation value of significant) and the dependent variable of (occupation burnout). Table (6) below shows the relevant values of correlation.

Table (6) – The Correlation between the Organizational Silence with its Dimensions and the Occupational Burnout

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable & its Dimensions	Coefficient of Correlation	Level of Significance	Significance
Occupational Burnout	Organizational Silence	** 0.521	0.00	Significant
	• Administrative & Organizational Reasons	** 0.313	0.00	Significant
	• Lack of Experience	** 0.204	0.07	Insignificant
	• Work-related Fears	** 0.445	0.00	Significant
	• Fear from Social Isolation	** 0.298	0.00	Significant
	• Fear of damaging relation	** 0.456	0.00	Significant

** Correlation is at a significant value at (0.01) level.

* Correlation is at a significant value at (0.05) level.

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Second: Testing and analyzing the simple effect size between organizational silence along with its dimensions and the occupational burnout:

Table (7) illustrates the big and positive effect the organizational silence and its dimensions have over the occupational burnout. Likewise, the table reflects a summary of the organizational silence analytical indicators on the occupational burnout, and that via a value of significance, which was less than (0.01) except for the "lack of experience" dimension at a significance value of (0.074). The value for the (F) test was (28,364) which was greater than the ($R^2 = 0.272$) value, thus indicating that the existence of the organizational silence explains the (27,2%) value of the occupational burnout which is the highest value as an overall variable. The ($\beta = 0.461$) means that changing the organizational silence by one unit would lead to a (46.1%) change in the occupational burnout. This is a result that provides big support towards accepting the second hypothesis, which states that the organizational silence has a significant positive effect on occupational burnout within its sides (dimensions), which is an acceptable influence. The strength of the regression model is as follows:

(Organizational Silence) 0.241 + 2.505 = Y Occupational Burnout

Table (7) – Analyzing Simple Effect between the Organizational Silence with its Dimensions and the Occupational Burnout

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable & Its Dimensions	Coefficient of Determination R	Value of Marginal Propensity a	Value of Marginal Propensity b	The Calculated F Value	Sig	Significance
Occupational Burnout	Organizational Silence	0.272	1.926	0.461	28.364	0.000	Significant
	Administrative & Organizational Reasons	0.098	2.508	0.191	8.278	0.005	Significant
	Lack of Experience	0.041	2.856	0.150	3.290	0.074	Insignificant
	Work-related Fears	0.198	2.554	0.251	18.727	0.000	Significant
	Fear of Social Isolation	0.089	2.696	0.174	7.412	0.000	Significant
	Fear of Damaging Relation	0.208	2.505	0.241	19.948	0.000	Significant

Part four: Conclusions and Recommendations

First: Conclusions:

The practical side of the research resulted in the following:

1. The existence of an organizational silence behavior among the sampled participants, which came to be a result produced by the the practical side of the sampled group.
2. The existence of a relationship of significance between the organizational silence with all its dimensions and the occupational burnout, except for the lack of experience dimension.
3. The existence of occupational burnout within the research sample (participants) about which the practical side showed coherence about of opinions.
4. There is a significant and positive effect of the independent variable of organizational silence along with its dimension (except after lack of experience) on the dependent variable of occupational burnout.
5. The research sample showed a level of experience in the field of the works they perform in within the organization.

Second: Recommendations:

1 - The managements of the departments of the researched section within the organization should pay attention to the risks driven by the organizational silence and occupational burnout and their negative impacts at work. Sound strategies should be set in order to confront such risks as well as to provide the suitable environment for the workers (employees) whom the organization should take care of by means of amusement programs and scientific and intellectual forums so that to a little bit divert their attention from being focused on the work environment as well as to help breaking the daily routines.
2 – Allowing the (employees) to express their thoughts and opinions as well as share the information and taking part in the decision making processes, in addition to open official and unofficial channels of communication across the different administrative levels within the organization, as well as the adoption of sound viewpoints that are good and in the interests of work and workers so that to achieve the goals set and thus achieve more.

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