

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, FEAR BASED SILENCE AND TRUST TO MANAGER: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract: In this study it is aimed to point out the interrelationships between emotional intelligence, trust to manager and fear based silence from the point of employees. A sample of 157 health personnel from different professions working in a dental clinic was included to the research. According to findings, there is a positive and significant relationship between employees' emotional intelligence and their trust to manager. Also the negative insignificant relationship between emotional intelligence and fear based silence and the positive insignificant relationship between employees' trust to manager and fear based silence were found. At the end of the study suggestions are made to the practitioners and future researchers. A part of this study was presented in 3rd Multidisciplinary Academic Conference in Prague 2014.

Key words: emotional intelligence, employee silence, fear based silence, organizational trust, health personnel

Introduction

It has been emphasized trust has a considerable effect on the quality of relationships between subordinates and superiors, and especially between individuals in organization (Derin, 2011). In literature trust to managers as a dimension of organizational trust is analyzed within the context of interpersonal trust (Koç and Yazıcıoğlu, 2011). Trust to manager defined as “*subordinate's voluntarily exposing to manager's uncontrolled behaviors and actions*” (Mayer et al., 1995). According to another definition trust to manager is stated as subordinate's belief that superior will keep his/her promises, will behave consistently and fairly and will answer clearly and accurately (Reinke and Baldwin, 2001). It is also stated that trust process must be initiated by managers (İslamoğlu et al., 2007; Arı, 2003) because of the reason, trust to manager is attributed to whole organization by employees (Tan and Tan, 2000). Mc Allister (1995) states there is a relationship between the interaction frequency of employee-manager and employees' level of trust to manager. Interaction frequency means communication, but the quality of communication between employee and manager is also important as well as it exists. Employee is able to express himself/herself obviously and easily when communication is qualified and healthy. But sometimes employees choose to withhold their ideas, opinions and concerns about organizational issues (Pinder and Harlos, 2001; Morrison and Milliken, 2000). This phenomenon is called employee silence. Character of relationship between employee and manager

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is an important factor affecting employee silence (Lu and Xie, 2013). Three motives (resignation, fear and cooperation) are identified that underlie employee silence (Dyne et al., 2003; Vlăduțescu, 2014). As a result of these motives, three types of silence may occur. Resignation motive can cause acquiescent silence, while cooperation motive can cause proactive silence. And with fear motive, employees are inclined to exhibit defensive silence (self-protective and based on fear). Dyne et al. (2003) defined defensive silence (fear based silence) as “*withholding ideas, information or opinions as form of self-protection, based on fear*”.

Emotions play an important role on individuals’ work life as well as on their daily life and social relationships. Emotional intelligence as a notion which was initially and clearly put forward by Salovey and Mayer (1990) has been handled as a sub subject of social intelligence along history (Weng, 2008; Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Emotional intelligence is defined by Goleman (1996) as “*being aware of one’s own feelings and reading others’ emotions effectively. In simple manner emotional intelligence can be expressed as using emotions cleverly*” (Satija and Khan, 2013). Interest in emotions’ and emotional intelligence’ role on organization atmosphere is growing every passing day (Saathoff, 2009; Satija and Khan, 2013). In many studies it is stated employees with high emotional intelligence are more successful to overcome necessities related to work (Bar-On, 2002; in Karimi et al., 2014). Emotional intelligence is essential for work performance, leadership (Drogalea and Cotirlea, 2011) and emotional and physical health (Humphrey, 2013).

In this study it is aimed to find out the interrelationships among emotional intelligence, fear based silence and trust to manager. Three motives have been effective in carrying out this study. First, trust as an important phenomenon for individuals and organizations should be associated with all recent variables (emotional intelligence, silence, engagement, etc.), because trust theory has not reached a holistic structure yet (Ari, 2003). Second, whereas there are researches handled the relationship between emotional intelligence and trust to manager from the point of managers or leaders, there is a lack of research which handled this relationship from the point of employees. Third, there is no research in literature which examines this three variables together even all are essential for individuals and organizations. For this purpose a quantitative research was planned in a dental clinic in İstanbul. By carrying out this research it was aimed to make contribution to literature and health management field.

Literature Review and Hypotheses

Milliken et al. (2003) investigated why employees choose silence in organizations and found out that employees frequently remain silence because the fear of being viewed or labelled negatively, damaging relationships with co-workers and fear of job loss. Also Çakıcı (2008) stated that fear is a common factor at understanding the reasons of employee silence. According to Morrison and Milliken (2000) fear is

also a key element in nurturing the silence climate in organizations. In accordance with the studies mentioned above, fear can be regarded as one of the most important factor that cause employee silence, and also fear can give rise to silence culture in organizations. As mentioned above, fear motive can damage the relationship between employees and managers. According to research of Xiaotwao et al. (2008), level of employee trust to manager affects employee silence in negative way. Nikolau et al. (2011) also determined negative relationship between employees' trust to manager, leader, organization and organizational silence. Based on the research about the relationship between organizational silence and trust to manager it can be stated that when trust to manager increases employee fear based silence decreases and when trust to manager decreases employee fear based silence increases. In the light of these relations the following hypothesis is generated.

Hypothesis 1: By the level of employees' trust to manager increases, their level of fear based silence decreases.

It is observed that emotional intelligence has positive relationship with organizational commitment (Anari, 2011), organizational citizenship behavior (Chin et al., 2011), job satisfaction (Kafetsios and Zampetakis, 2008), job performance (Carmeli, 2003), team performance (Jordan et al., 2002), leadership (Kiyani et al., 2013), altruistic behavior (Lee, 2013) and wellbeing (Austin et al., 2005). In contrast, emotional intelligence has negative relationship with exhaustion and job stress (Lopes et al., 2006). Also Sidiqui and Hassan (2013) states emotionally intelligent employees can regulate their own behaviors and can increase the level of job-life quality, job satisfaction and motivation. In teams with emotionally intelligent employees, negative circumstances like miscommunication, misunderstanding and conflict emerge lower level (Jordan and Lawrence, 2009). The variables above mentioned have the same relations with trust to manager like emotional intelligence. It may be said trust to manager and emotional intelligence show a parallelism that is why a positive relationship between these two variables is expected. In their research Barczak et al. (2010) reached the result that emotional intelligence had a positive relationship with team trust. Thereby it is expected highly emotional intelligent employees trust their manager higher level. In the light of these relations the following hypothesis is generated.

Hypothesis 2: By the level of employees' emotional intelligence increases, their level of trust to manager increases.

Emotional intelligent individuals not only perceive emotions correctly but also they use emotions to shape judgment and behaviors as well (Satija and Khan, 2013). Silvia (2002) states high emotional self-awareness serves as "buffer" over highly positive or negative intense emotions. In other words individuals with high emotional self-awareness exhibit more moderate reactions. In many researches it was stated that emotional intelligence served as a buffer in stressful situations (Field, 2010). In her research Saathoff (2009) found that emotional intelligence

served as buffer between manager's abusive supervision and employee's job satisfaction and in this manner employee would satisfy even she/he encounter with abusive supervision. Here, it is easy to see that emotional intelligence plays an important role on whether or not employee is affected or less affected by negative circumstances arising from manager. Fearing from manager and keeping quiet may also be considered as a negative circumstance in organization. It can be asserted emotional intelligence has preventative effect on employees' fearing from manager because of its buffer portfolio. Eventually emotionally intelligent employees can manage and motivate themselves in negative circumstances. In this respect, a negative relation between increasing emotional intelligence and keeping silence from fearing of employees is expected. Based on the relations above mentioned the following hypothesis is generated.

Hypothesis 3: By the level of employees' emotional intelligence increases, their level of fear based silence decreases.

Materials and Methods

Design and Sample

This study was conducted to employees working in a dental hospital operating in İstanbul. Occupational groups in this hospital can be classified as dentists, nurses, dental clinic assistants, IT personnel, data entry operators, technicians and others (cleaning staff, security staff, hospital clerk, information desk staff, and medial secretaries). The sample of this study contained all employees working in the hospital, regardless of occupation or position.

In total 450 employees are working at the dental clinic, 300 questionnaires were distributed after all permissions obtained from hospital administration. 180 out of 300 employees responded to the survey, with a response rate of 60%. 23 questionnaire forms were cancelled because of large shortcomings and haphazardly filling. Thus a total of 157 questionnaire forms were decided to suitable for analysis.

Survey Instrument

Questionnaire used in this study was composed of four sections. The first section of questionnaire consists of 16 items about emotional intelligence (IE) on four subscales (Wong and Law, 2002); self-emotional appraisal (4 items), others' emotional appraisal (4 items), regulation of emotions (4 items) and uses of emotions (4 items). Each item is rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)". High scores taken from this part indicates a high level of emotional intelligence (EI). The second part of questionnaire was developed by Dyne et al. (2003) and includes 5 items about fear based employee silence. Each item is rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)". High scores taken from this part indicates a high level of fear-based silence. The third part of the questionnaire was developed by Erdem and Aytemur (2009) and consists of 40 items about trust

to manager on three subscales; proficiency, mentoring and justice. High scores taken from this part indicates a high level of trust to manager.

Results

Before beginning to main analysis (differences and correlation analysis) firstly validity and reliability analysis were performed in order to testing effectiveness of research. According to reliability statistics, Cronbach's Alpha values obtained as "0.979" for trust to manager, "0.889" for fear based silence and "0.909" for emotional intelligence variables. These values show that measurement tool is quite reliable. For validity of research factor analysis was conducted and cumulative total variance values obtained as "65.436%" for emotional intelligence, as "69.574%" for fear based silence and as "68.690" for trust to manager. Also it was observed the dimensions of variables extracted in factor analysis were almost the same with the original dimensions in used measures. Thus conducting research has been accepted as reliable and valid.

Demographic features of 157 participants were examined and it is observed most of participants are females (58.0%), have 2000 TL¹ or below monthly income (54.8%), graduated from basic education (24.8%) and are 31-45 years (54.1%) age interval. Most of participants have been working in this dental clinic for 0-8 years (88.5%) and most of them are working as dentist (28%). Demographic features of participants and their scores of emotional intelligence fear based silence and trust to manager are presented in table 1.

Table 1. Frequency distribution and percentages of participants' demographic features and their mean scores of emotional intelligence, fear based silence and trust to manager

Demographic Feature	N	%	Emotional Intelligence* Mean (SD)	Fear Based Silence* Mean (SD)	Trust to Manager* Mean (SD)
Gender			t=1.03: P=0.304	t=-2.19: P=0.030	t=-2.00: P=0.047
Female	92	58.6	3.85 (0.62)	2.15 (0.92)	2.97 (0.87)
Male	65	41.4	3.74 (0.70)	2.49 (0.97)	3.26 (0.85)
Age			F=1.36: P=0.108	F=1.41: P=0.13	F=0.85: P=0.759
18-30	64	40.8	3.81 (0.70)	2.25 (0.86)	3.05 (0.94)
31-45	85	54.1	3.78 (0.63)	2.36 (1.02)	3.10 (0.87)
46 or above	8	5.1	4.06 (0.58)	1.97 (0.99)	3.32 (0.87)
Education Level			F=1.07: P=0.373	F=1.53: P=0.083	F=0.84: P=0.773
Basic Education	91	58.0	3.83 (0.69)	2.44 (1.00)	3.18 (0.93)
Associate Degree	35	22.3	3.78 (0.76)	2.13 (0.92)	2.97 (0.78)
Bachelor	25	15.9	3.78 (0.35)	1.91 (0.65)	2.91 (0.88)
Graduate	6	3.8	3.62 (0.43)	2.56 (1.04)	3.15 (0.87)
Duration of work			t=0.08: P=0.082	t=-1.78: P=0.72	t=-0.32: P=0.299
0-8	139	88.5	3.81 (0.68)	2.24 (0.94)	3.09 (0.88)
9 or above	18	11.6	3.80 (0.39)	2.68 (1.02)	3.16 (0.77)

*Higher scores indicate a higher level of emotional intelligence, fear based silence and trust to manager.

¹ TL: Turkish Lira. 1 TL equals to approximately 0.36 Euro. (02.11.2014)

Table 1. (Cont.)

Demographic Feature	N	%	Emotional Intelligence*	Fear Based Silence*	Trust to Manager*
			Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Monthly Income (TL)			F=0.69: P=0.906	F=1.35: P=0.163	F=0.81: P=0.818
2000 or below	86	54.8	3.83 (0.71)	2.50 (1.00)	3.15 (0.93)
2001-4000	43	27.4	3.74 (0.66)	2.07 (0.93)	3.24 (0.81)
4001 or above	28	17.8	3.85 (0.47)	1.97 (0.66)	2.69 (0.66)
Personnel Status			F=0.86: P=0.693	F=1.67: P=0.047	F=0.87: P=0.725
Dentist	44	28.0	3.81 (0.47)	1.96 (0.73)	2.90 (0.80)
Data processing staff	27	17.2	3.52 (0.90)	2.42 (0.90)	3.05 (0.79)
Nurse	11	7.0	3.79 (0.50)	1.76 (0.49)	3.21 (0.78)
Technician	11	7.0	4.00 (0.57)	2.20 (1.03)	2.94 (0.84)
Data entry personnel	22	14.0	3.82 (0.83)	2.26 (0.81)	3.13 (1.00)
Other (Secretary etc.)	42	26.8	3.94 (0.57)	2.73 (1.15)	3.31 (0.95)

*Higher scores indicate a higher level of emotional intelligence, fear based silence and trust to manager.

Independent t-test and one-way ANOVA analysis were performed in order to investigate whether main variables (emotional intelligence, trust to manager and fear based silence) differentiate or not depending on demographic variables (gender, age, income, education level, personnel status and duration of work in related organization). According to t-test findings fear based silence ($t=-2.19$, $P: 0.030$) and trust to manager ($t=-2.00$, $P: 0.047$) differentiated significantly depending on gender of employees. Female employees are more silence than male employees and they trust their manager more than male employees. On the other hand emotional intelligence didn't differentiate depending on gender of employees ($t=1.03$, $P: 0.304$). According to another t-test result, no variable differentiated depending on participants' duration of work. When one-way ANOVA analysis is examined it is seen that only fear based silence variable differentiated depending on personnel status ($F=1.67$, $P: 0.047$). However, emotional intelligence and trust to manager didn't differentiate in respect to any demographic features including more than two groups (age, monthly income, educational level).

In order to estimate interrelationships among emotional intelligence, trust to manager and fear based silence, correlation analysis were performed. Correlation analysis is presented in table 2.

Table 2. Correlations between Emotional Intelligence, Fear Based Silence and Trust to Manager (n=157)

Variable	Mean	SD	Emotional Intelligence	Fear Based Silence	Trust to Manager
Emotional Intelligence	3.81	0.65	(0.909)	-	-
Fear Based Silence	2.29	0.95	-0.52	(0.889)	-
Trust to Manager	3.09	0.87	0.345*	0.91	(0.979)

* $P<0.01$. The scale reliability coefficients are presented in parentheses. There was a positive significant correlation between emotional intelligence and trust to manager.

When results are analyzed it is observed there is a positive and weak ($r: .091$) but insignificant ($P: 0.258 > 0.05$) relationship between trust to manager and fear based silence. This result shows that hypothesis 1 rejected which is “by the level of employees’ trust to manager increases, their level of fear based silence decreases”. Also a positive, moderate ($r: 0.345^{**}$) and significant ($P: 0.000 < 0.05$) relationship between emotional intelligence and trust to manager was achieved. It shows that hypothesis 2 accepted which is “by the level of employees’ emotional intelligence increases, their level of trust to manager increases”. This result may be interpreted as emotionally intelligent employees trust to their manager more than other employees who have low level of emotional intelligence. So this finding is evidence for that emotional intelligence may be considered as an important factor affecting employees trusting to their manager. Another finding of this study is the relationship between emotional intelligence and fear based silence. A negative and quite weak ($r: -0.052$) but insignificant ($P: 0.517 > 0.05$) relationship was found between these variables. So hypothesis 3 rejected which is “by the level of employees’ emotional intelligence increases, their level of fear based silence decreases”.

Discussion and Conclusions

In this study, interrelationships among emotional intelligence, trust to manager and fear based silence were analyzed. For this purpose, a research was conducted in a dental clinic in Istanbul. Three hypotheses were generated on the basis of related literature. As a result of testing these hypothesis; there is a positive and weak but insignificant relationship between trust to manager and fear based silence. This finding seems contradictory to literature, but in this sample cultural factors might play a significant role. In collectivist cultures, employees can respect to their managers or bosses even though they fear from them. This can explain the positive but weak relationship between trust to manager and employee silence. Also a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and trust to manager was determined. As a support, Barczak et al. (2010) detected a relationship between emotional intelligence and team trust. Furthermore, Sidiqi and Hassan (2013) stated; emotionally intelligent employees can regulate their own behaviors. As a result we can suggest that emotionally intelligent employees can attribute their managers’ untrustworthy and harsh behaviors to external factors more. It means they have ability to make a distinction between their managers’ personality and the situation their managers serve. So they may handle their relationship with their managers in a more trust based frame. Another finding of this study is the negative relationship between emotional intelligence and fear based silence. Although this relationship supports the literature in terms of direction but was not found statistically significant. This finding may emerged due to small sample size. If enough sample size was obtained, the result would be more statistically significant. It is the evidence that emotional intelligence is an outstanding factor in creating trust climate in workplace, it can be suggested to

practitioners to take into account emotional intelligence of employee candidates during the selection process. In further studies, fear based silence and trust to manager can be analyzed via other positive organizational behavior variables (i.e. well-being, resilience, engagement etc.). Also these variables can be tested with bigger samples for different organizational settings. More complex methods (i.e. Structural Equation Model) can be applied to data to uncover the prospective relationships among these variables.

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INTELIGENCJA EMOCJONALNA, CISZA OPARTA NA LĘKU I ZAUFANIE DO KIEROWNIKA: STUDIUM PRZYPADKU

Streszczenie: Niniejsze badanie ma na celu zwrócenie uwagi na wzajemne powiązania pomiędzy inteligencją emocjonalną, zaufaniem do kierownika i ciszą opartą na lęku z punktu widzenia pracowników. Do badań włączona została próba składająca się z 157 pracowników służby zdrowia różnych zawodów pracujących w klinice dentystycznej. Według ustaleń istnieje pozytywna i znacząca zależność pomiędzy inteligencją emocjonalną pracowników i ich zaufaniem do kierownika. Istnieje również negatywna nieznacząca zależność pomiędzy inteligencją emocjonalną a ciszą opartą na lęku i pozytywna nieznacząca zależność pomiędzy zaufaniem pracowników do kierownika i ciszą opartą na lęku. Na końcu badania zamieszczone zostały sugestie dla praktyków i przyszłych badaczy.

Słowa kluczowe: Inteligencja emocjonalna, cisza pracownika, cisza oparta na lęku, zaufanie organizacyjne, pracownicy służby zdrowia

情緒智力、和平基于恐惧和信任关系管理器：个案研究

摘要：本研究的目的是基於恐懼但從工人的一點提醒大家注意情商之間的相互關係，信任管理和沉默。這項研究包括了在牙科診所工作的各種專業的157醫務工作者組成的樣本中。根據調查結果有員工的情商和他們的經理之間的信任產生積極和顯著的關係。也有輕微的負面情緒智力和基於沉默的恐懼和信任的相關員工之間有輕微的正相關關係，以基於恐懼的經理和沉默。在研究結束時已提交的從業者和未來的研究提出建議。

關鍵字：情緒智力，員工沉默，沉默的基礎上的恐懼，信任，組織，衛生