Alida Susanna (Suné) Du Plessis, Leon T. De Beer*

The Relationships Between Work-Related Rumination, Employee Voice and Silence, Turnover Intention, and Job Satisfaction**

Abstract

How employees think about their work after the end of their working day has received renewed emphasis recently. Work-related rumination could affect employees' voice behaviour. Some employees could prefer to speak up about ideas or concerns that bother them on an ongoing basis, and other employees can choose instead to remain silent. This could further impact specific organisational outcomes, such as employees' satisfaction in their job and their intention to leave the organisation. The objective of this study was to investigate the relationships between work-related rumination, employee voice and silence, turnover intention, and job satisfaction. A cross-sectional research design was used to collect data from a general sample of employees (n = 332). Structural equation modelling methods were used for data analysis. The results showed the proposed direct relationships between the research constructs, except between affective rumination and employee voice, and also employee voice and job satisfaction. Indirect relationships also showed how employee voice and silence played mediating roles in the relationships between work-related rumination and turnover intention. Organisations should be aware of the dynamics between work-related rumination and employee voice and silence behaviour within their organisation as this affects outcomes.

Keywords: rumination, employee voice, employee silence, turnover intention, job satisfaction
(JEL: J24, M12, M54)

Introduction

In today's world of work, job-related tasks and actions influence approximately over one-third of people's time awake. Work is thus an essentially significant, core aspect of people's lives, unsurprisingly consuming thoughts even when individuals are away from the workplace (Cropley & Zijlstra 2011). This phenomenon can be explained by the term rumination, which derives from the Latin phrase 'ruminare', meaning "turning over in the mind" (Cropley et al., 2016, p. 1).

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Some of the outcomes of ruminating-prone individuals include becoming more passive. Therefore, individuals could refrain from speaking up about a potential concern and/or seeking help (Nolen-Hoeksemaet al., 2008). This study aims to expand to the workplace, suggesting that ruminating-prone employees can delay speaking up about concerns or opinions in the workplace. In contrast, employees who do not experience negativity and dysfunctional ruminative thoughts may speak up more freely.

The notion of speaking up or remaining silent about ideas, concerns, or problems in the workplace prompts the concepts of employee voice and silence. The study of employee voice and silence has paved one way for investigating the communicative relationship between organisational members (Botero & Van Dyne, 2009). Furthermore, organisations are asking more and more from employees regarding employee voice due to a dynamic, fast-changing world (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005). To ensure a sustainable organisation, employees should react to issues they encounter from their surroundings and not be hesitant to speak up where necessary (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005).

Studies have found that employee voice behaviour can be linked to increases or decreases in turnover intention and satisfaction levels that employees experience within their jobs (Alfayad & Arif, 2017; Knoll & Van Dick, 2013). Noting the importance of each of these organisational elements mentioned above, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between the organisational components of work-related rumination, employee voice and silence, job satisfaction, and turnover intention within a South African sample of employees. This is an essential contribution as most of the studies on this topic have been conducted in the global North. This study also provides evidence from the global South, South Africa, arguably a non-WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, and Democratic) context.

Literature Review

Work-Related Rumination

Perhaps the most straightforward way to explain the term 'work-related rumination' is by referring to "consciously recurring thoughts about work-related issues in the absence of work demands to necessitate these thoughts" (Kunninen et al., 2017, p. 514). Cropley and Ziljstra (2011) identified three work-related rumination elements: affective rumination, problem-solving pondering, and detachment.

Affective rumination is a type of recurrent thinking - usually dysfunctional and rather negative - characterised by repetitive thoughts that are not inherently focused on problem-solving (Kinnunenet al., 2017). During this type of affective rumination, recurring thoughts about distress are fuelled and focused on the secondary effects of the distress and outcomes, causing people to refrain from engaging in active behaviour concerning their problems. Moreover, affective rumination increases

negative thoughts, can lower solution-focused initiatives, affect critical behavioural efforts, alienate people, and harm employee well-being (Hamesch et al., 2014; Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2008).

According to Langan-Fox and Cooper (2011), most studies concerning work-related rumination have focused on the adverse elements. Hamesch et al. (2014) stated that studies have distinguished between dysfunctional and functional ruminative styles. The concept of problem-solving pondering can explain the more functional ruminative style. Here the focus is away from the purely negative - it does not involve the same emotional patterns. It focuses more on thoughts aimed at preparing and identifying those steps needed to resolve an issue, ultimately having less of a negative impact on the well-being of the individual (Hamesch et al., 2014; Langan-Fox & Cooper, 2011).

Detachment can be explained as how individuals realise that they no longer are in their working situation, leading to an improved work-life interface, less exhaustion, improved health, and higher levels of well-being (Cropley & Ziljstra, 2011). Detachment in this study refers to the ability to detach oneself from work-related issues or responsibilities during non-working hours. It refers mainly to a psychological or mental distancing process instead of merely being physically remote from the workplace (Sonnentag & Kruel, 2006).

Employee Voice and Silence

Over the last 20 years, scholars have presented different conceptualisations or descriptions of the term 'employee voice'. Despite differences found within these definitions, they do pose for some shared meanings, namely: i) employee voice is described to be verbal, carried from the message's source towards those who receive it; ii) employee voice is a voluntary process, and iii) employee voice is intended to be upbuilding and not negatively connoted, with a purpose of betterment and constructive change and not simply a form of negative ranting (Alfayad & Arif, 2017). Hirshman (1970) explained it as "any attempt at all to change rather than to escape from an objectionable state of affairs" (p. 30). Van Dyne et al. (2003) were the first scholars to highlight the importance of seeing employee voice and silence as different concepts and not merely complete opposites on a spectrum.

Research has also shown that often employees willingly decide instead to keep specific fears or ideas – especially those with a noted likelihood of being essential to divulge – to themselves (Morrison et al., 2015). Beheshtifar et al. (2012) explain that employee silence can come in different forms, namely: i) employees can keep silent due to being inertly disconnected (acquiescent silence); ii) employees can also be silent due to anxiety about what engaging in employee voice may lead to (defensive/quiescent silence); or iii) employees can choose to remain silent due to care of other people (pro-social) (Van Dyne et al., 2003).

For this study, employee voice and silence will not be viewed from the perspective of one specific form but in the more general sense of these two respective terms.

Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention

Job satisfaction refers to the balance between those things that an employee longs for from their work and those things that people observe their work bring them – that is, the existing variance between what they receive and what they believe they are entitled to receive from their work (Lund, 2003; Singh & Onahring, 2019). Moreover, job satisfaction essentially looks toward employees' overall, nonspecific attitude about their job, including what they believe about their job and the feelings that their job evokes within them (Long & Thean, 2011; Vroom, 1964). Turnover intention is the intent of an employee to obtain another occupation, which is typically a mindful and conscious motivation (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Humayra & Mahendra, 2019). Therefore it relates to employees' thoughts about leaving their jobs (Firth et al., 2004).

Work-related Rumination and Employee Voice and Silence

Employee silence is typically an act of intent driven by conscious thinking – working through a process of careful consideration and reviewing the perceived problem before likely engaging in silence (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009). This provides scholars with a glimpse of the individual's contemplation process, mulling over an issue before engaging in a conscious act of employee voice or silence.

Madrid et al. (2015) investigated the occurrence of voice behaviour in less intense negative states, which, together with the subsequent rumination, increases the likelihood of engaging in employee silence. The study showed that the same was not true for employee voice, and affective rumination did not lead to employees speaking up. However, a more recent study by Tahir and Khan (2019) showed that adverse work-related circumstances could activate work-related rumination and the consequential voice behaviour of employees. The study also acknowledged how this occurrence could be fostered by employees responding to the specific situation, utilising "intervention" means. The hypotheses of the current study will include the following concerning affective rumination:

Hypothesis 1a: A negative relationship exists between affective rumination and employee voice.

Hypothesis 1b: A positive relationship exists between affective rumination and employee silence.

According to Madrid et al. (2015), when problem-solving demands trigger and lead to specific thoughts, consciousness is gained regarding possible challenges or factors that may be decreasing performance, resulting in employees seeking to engage in

employee voice to share their thoughts. Work-related rumination has been found to prompt employee voice in certain conditions as means of intervening, and higher problem-solving demands have been shown to activate employee voice. The current study adopts the following concerning problem-solving pondering:

Hypothesis 2a: A positive relationship exists between problem-solving pondering and employee voice.

Hypothesis 2b: A negative relationship exists between problem-solving pondering and employee silence.

In this study, detachment is not viewed negatively and is associated with more positive outcomes for an individual (Cropley & Ziljstra, 2011; Demerouti et al., 2012). In turn, positive moods have also been shown to lead to improved functional outcomes by choosing to capitalise on social resources (Demerouti et al., 2012). Taking into consideration this overview of work-related rumination, this study proposes the following concerning detachment and employee voice and silence:

Hypothesis 3a: A positive relationship exists between detachment and employee voice.

Hypothesis 3b: A negative relationship exists between detachment and employee silence.

Employee Voice and Silence and Job Satisfaction

Employee silence has been linked to decreased levels of job satisfaction due to damaging trust and commitment between employees and their workplace (Demirtas, 2018). According to Kim et al. (2016), satisfaction at work could result from employee voices being positively welcomed and fostered by organisations. Studies have also shown how the contrary can be found; Knoll and Van Dick's (2013) study indicated how employee silence negatively correlated to job satisfaction, regardless of the inherent reasons for remaining silent.

The study proposes the following concerning the relationships between employee voice and silence and job satisfaction:

Hypothesis 4a: A positive relationship exists between employee voice and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4b: A negative relationship exists between employee silence and job satisfaction.

Employee Voice and Silence and Turnover Intention

Over the years, scholars have proposed several theories or interpretations regarding the process of employee voice. Barry (1974) stated that employee voice could probably lead to exit if everything remains unchanged after the voice's occurrence, or it could lead to exit due to negative consequences caused by engaging in employee

voice (McClean et al., 2013). Furthermore, higher turnover was found to result from employee voice than from silence, further stating that silence may be the safer route to take for some employees as voice often leads to negative consequences such as the damaging of reputations, sanctions, and non-acceptance in the organisation (Donaghey et al., 2011).

Studies have proposed that the relationship between employee voice and turnover intention could come down to leadership or management styles used in the organisation (Lam et al., 2016; McClean et al., 2013). Studies by Wilkinson and Fay (2011) also support the idea that there may be a decreased likelihood of these employees leaving the organisation depending upon organisational provisions for employee voice. The impact of employee voice on turnover intention is unclear if one considers previous research and is influenced by various organisational or managerial factors. When considering employee silence, studies regarding turnover intention have also shown that relationships between these two constructs exist, and employee silence has been positively connected to increased turnover intention levels (Elçi et al., 2014). Studies have also shown how different forms of employee silence have been related to increased levels of turnover intention in organisations (Knoll & Van Dick, 2013).

The study, therefore, decides to take the following approaches to the relationship between voice, silence and turnover intention:

Hypothesis 5a: A negative relationship exists between employee voice and turnover intention.

Hypothesis 5b: A positive relationship exists between employee silence and turnover intention.

Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention

Over the years, scholars have conducted many studies to determine how job satisfaction and turnover intention are connected (Long & Thean, 2011). Satisfaction at work has been related to a higher intent to remain at the organisation, ultimately leading to enhanced productivity and a more significant competitive edge over other organisations (Amah, 2009). Therefore, job satisfaction can impact whether employees remain at the organisation or seek work elsewhere (Aydogdu & Asikgil, 2011). This study aim proposes the following relationship between turnover intention and job satisfaction:

Hypothesis 6: A negative relationship exists between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

The Indirect Relationships Between Work-Related Rumination, Employee Voice and Silence, Turnover Intention and Job Satisfaction

This study primarily explores the direct relationships between the stated research constructs. However, it also aims to explore some of the potential indirect relationships that may exist. For example, individual rumination components may affect turnover intention through voice behaviours and job satisfaction. The following relationships have been proposed and are indirectly mediated by employee voice and silence:

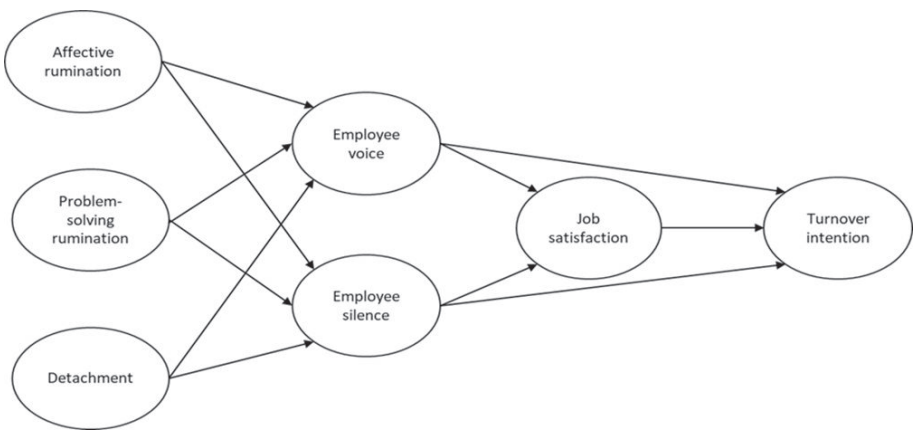
Hypothesis 7a: There is an indirect relationship between workplace rumination and job satisfaction through employee voice.

Hypothesis 7b: There is an indirect relationship between workplace rumination and job satisfaction through employee silence

Hypothesis 8a: There is an indirect relationship between workplace rumination and turnover intention through employee voice.

Hypothesis 8b: There is an indirect relationship between workplace rumination and turnover intention through employee silence.

Figure 1: The Research Model



Methodology

Research approach

A quantitative, cross-sectional research approach was followed. Quantitative research was used to study all identified constructs using a quantitative questionnaire (Struwig & Stead, 2013). Data were obtained from the identified sample group at one point in time (De Vos et al., 2011).

Research Participants

A non-probability purposive sampling method was employed in this study. Participants were at least 18 years of age, employed, and South African citizens. The final sample consisted of 332 participants. The mean age of the participants was 48.01 years (SD = 10.13). Most of the participants were male employees (n = 174; 52.41%) and the group consisted mostly of white (n = 182; 54.82%) and African (n = 81; 24.40%) participants. Most of the participants were within other sectors that were not explicitly identified in this study (n = 79; 23.80%), followed by the financial (n = 48; 14.46%) and government sector (n = 44; 13.25%). Lastly, the education of most participants that formed part of this study was identified as graduates (n = 157; 47.52%).

Measuring Instruments

Work-related rumination was measured using the work-related rumination questionnaire (WRRQ) developed by Cropley et al. (2012). This instrument consists of three subscales, namely: Affective rumination (e.g., "Are you annoyed by thinking about work-related issues when not at work?"), Problem-solving pondering (e.g., "I find thinking about work during my free time helps me to be creative"), and detachment (e.g., "I am able to stop thinking about work-related issues in my free time") with five items respectively for each subscale. A 5-point Likert scale is used to answer the items and ranges from 1 (Very seldom/Never) to 5 (Very often/Always). According to Cropley et al. (2012), Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the scales are 0.90 (affective rumination), 0.81 (problem-solving pondering) and 0.88 (detachment).

Employee voice was measured by using the scale utilised by Madrid et al. (2015). The scale comprises three items with a scale that ranges from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Individuals who engage in employee voice choose to speak up concerning work-related ideas, issues, or concerns. An example of an item from this scale is "I spoke up with ideas for new projects or changes in procedures". Madrid et al. (2015) state that this instrument has a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.79.

Employee silence was measured by utilising a scale developed by Detert and Edmondson (2011), and it consists of four items (e.g., "I kept ideas for developing new products or services to myself"). The instrument is rated by using a frequency scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always) and was intended to measure whether employees would choose to remain silent regarding opinions, concerns or ideas within the organisation. Detert and Edmondson (2011) found the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this measure to be 0.74. However, more recent studies conducted by Madrid et al. (2015) showed a higher Cronbach alpha coefficient value of 0.93.

Job satisfaction was measured using a scale developed by Hellgren, Sjöberg and Sverke (1997). This instrument comprises three items with a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) and aims to uncover whether a person is satisfied with their job (e.g., "I enjoy being at my work"). Hellgren et al. (1997) found this scale to have a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.86 and within the South African context. Pienaar et al. (2007) reported having found an alpha coefficient of 0.80.

Turnover intention was measured with a scale developed by Sjöberg and Sverke (2000). This scale comprises three items and consists of a 5-point Likert scale on which a high score would indicate a high intention to leave one's job (e.g., "I feel I could leave this job"), while a low score would indicate the opposite. Sjöberg and Sverke (2000) stated that the scale has a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.83; within a South African context, a range was found between 0.74 and 0.79 (Redelinghuys & Botha, 2016).

Research Procedure

Approval was received from the Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the North-West University for the proposed study (NWU-00810-19-A4). Organisations were contacted to gain approval to conduct the proposed study and were chosen based on availability and accessibility. An online questionnaire was used to collect the data. Therefore, all booklets were distributed electronically, as this was the most appropriate manner for identified organisations to participate. All instructions and items were provided in English, the accepted business language in South Africa. The data was captured on Microsoft Excel, from where it was examined, after which statistical analysis followed.

Statistical Analysis

Mplus 8.4, a powerful statistical software suite that can implement various observed and latent variable modelling approaches, was used for the data analyses (Muthén & Muthén, 2019). Specifically, confirmatory factor analysis was used to specify the measurement model based on how all the items related to the corresponding factors. Specifically, a second-order model was tested for rumination and a first-order model. The fit of the models and the magnitude of the factor loadings, and correlations between factors were also considered. For the fit, the guidelines by Van de Schoot, Lugtig and Hox (2012) were followed: Comparative fit Index (CFI; ≥ 0.90), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI; ≥ 0.90), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA; ≤ 0.08). Moreover, the indirect paths were specified with the MODEL INDIRECT function, and 10,000 bootstrap replications were requested to generate 95% confidence intervals for the indirect relationships.

Results

The Measurement Models

Two measurement models were tested for use in this study: a first-order model in which rumination is conceptualised as three separate factors and a second-order model in which rumination is a higher-order factor, indicated by the three first-order factors. Table 2 below provides the fit statistics for the estimated model.

Table 1. Fit Statistics of the Measurement Models

Description	χ^2	*df*	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR	AIC	BIC
First-order model	776.49	328	0.92	0.91	0.06	0.07	23414.10	23817.44
Second-order model	1000.60	337	0.88	0.87	0.08	0.18	23620.20	23989.30

Notes: χ^2 = Chi-square; df = Degrees of freedom; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; SRMR = Standardised Root Mean Residual; $p < .001$

As reflected in Table 1, the first-order model with the work-related rumination factors specified as separate fitted the data best (χ^2 = 776.49; CFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.91; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.07). Therefore, this model was used, and the remaining results are presented with this model as the foundation. The factor loadings for the model are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Standardised Loadings for the Latent Factors

Factor	Item	Loading	SE	*p*	AVE	CR
Affective (Rumination)	affect1	0.82	0.02	0.001	0.68	0.92
	affect2	0.82	0.02	0.001		
	affect3	0.82	0.02	0.001		
	affect4	0.85	0.02	0.001		
	affect5	0.83	0.02	0.001		
Problem-solving (Rumination)	solve1	0.73	0.03	0.001	0.50	0.83
	solve2	0.80	0.03	0.001		
	solve3	0.71	0.03	0.001		
	solve4	0.59	0.04	0.001		
	solve5	0.69	0.04	0.001		
Detachment (Rumination)	detach2	0.58	0.04	0.001	0.53	0.85
	detach1	-0.68	0.04	0.001		
	detach3	0.77	0.03	0.001		
	detach4	0.78	0.03	0.001		
	detach5	0.83	0.02	0.001		
Employee voice	voice1	0.79	0.03	0.001	0.61	0.82
	voice2	0.76	0.03	0.001		
	voice3	0.79	0.03	0.001		
Employee silence	silence1	0.55	0.04	0.001	0.55	0.83

Factor	Item	Loading	SE	*p*	AVE	CR
	silence2	0.63	0.04	0.001		
	silence3	0.87	0.03	0.001		
	silence4	0.87	0.03	0.001		
Job satisfaction	jobsat1	0.84	0.02	0.001	0.78	0.92
	jobsat2	0.90	0.01	0.001		
	jobsat3	0.91	0.01	0.001		
Turnover intention	turn1	0.79	0.03	0.001	0.63	0.84
	turn2	0.71	0.03	0.001		
	turn3	0.88	0.02	0.001		

Notes: S.E. = Standard error; All *p*-values < 0.001; AVE = Average Variance Extracted; CR = Composite Reliability

Table 3 reflects that all the factor loadings in the model were significant ($p < 0.001$), that most of the factor loadings were 0.70 or above, and that no factor loadings were below 0.50 (Hair et al., 2014). Furthermore, all the AVEs were above 0.50, indicating convergent validity (Hair et al., 2014), and the composite reliability for the latent factors was all above 0.80 – indicating excellent internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was also calculated and is presented in the correlation matrix below.

Table 3. Reliabilities and Correlation Matrix for the Latent Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Affective rumination	(0.92)						
2. Problem-solving	0.38*a	(0.83)					
3. Detachment	0.55*b	0.56*b	(0.84)				
4. Employee voice	-0.13*	0.17*	-0.17*	(0.85)			
5. Employee silence	0.32*a	-0.09	0.21*	-0.49*a	(0.82)		
6. Job satisfaction	-0.56*b	0.02	-0.24*	0.15*	-0.27*	(0.91)	
7. Turnover intention	0.58*b	0.04	0.22	-0.02	0.29	-0.79*b	(0.83)

Notes: Cronbach's reliability coefficients in brackets on the diagonal; * = correlations statistically significant $p < 0.05$; a = Medium effect size; b = Large effect size

Table 3 shows that the correlations between the components of rumination were all statistically significant, with medium and large effect sizes. Specifically, affective rumination had a positive correlation with problem-solving rumination (r = 0.38; medium effect) and detachment (r = 0.55; large effect). Problem-solving rumination and detachment were also positively correlated (r = 0.56; large effect). Furthermore, employee voice and silence were negatively correlated (r = -0.49; medium effect). Affective rumination was the only rumination component that had a relationship with job satisfaction (r = -0.56; large effect) and turnover intention (r = 0.58; large effect) that had an effect size. The largest correlation was between job satisfaction and turnover intention (r = -0.79; large effect).

The Structural Model

The research model with the hypothesised paths added also fitted the data (χ^2 = 816.23; CFI = 0.91; TLI = 0.90; RMSEA = 0.07; SRMR = 0.07). Table 4 and Figure 3 below present the resulting path estimates.

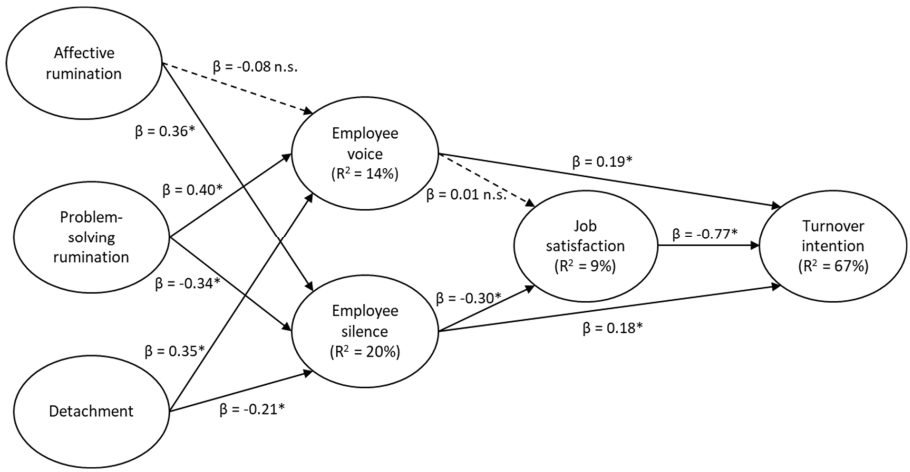
Table 4. Path Results for the Structural Model

Structural path	β	SE	*p*
Affective rumination → Employee voice	-0.08	0.08	0.306
Affective rumination → Employee silence	0.36*	0.07	0.001
Problem-solving rumination → Employee voice	0.40*	0.08	0.001
Problem-solving rumination → Employee silence	-0.34*	0.08	0.001
Detachment → Employee voice	0.35*	0.09	0.001
Detachment → Employee silence	-0.21*	0.09	0.001
Employee voice → Job satisfaction	0.01	0.08	0.942
Employee silence → Job satisfaction	-0.30*	0.07	0.001
Employee voice → Turnover intention	0.19*	0.06	0.001
Employee silence → Turnover intention	0.18*	0.06	0.001
Job satisfaction → Turnover intention	-0.77*	0.03	0.001

Notes: β = Standardised beta coefficient; SE = Standard error; p = Two-tailed statistical significance; * = Significant

As can be seen from Table 4 and Figure 2, results from the path of the structural model showed that affective rumination did not have a statistically significant relationship with employee voice (β = -0.08, SE = 0.08, p = 0.306; rejecting H1a), but did have a statistically significant relationship with employee silence (β = 0.36, SE = 0.07, $p < 0.001$; supporting H1b). Problem-solving rumination had a statistically significant relationship with employee voice (β = 0.40, SE = 0.08, $p < 0.001$; supporting H2a) and employee silence (β = -0.34, SE = 0.08, $p < 0.001$; supporting H2b). Similarly, detachment had a statistically significant relationship with employee voice (β = 0.35, SE = 0.08, $p < 0.001$; supporting H3a) and employee silence (β = -0.21, SE = 0.08, $p < 0.001$; supporting H3b). Furthermore, employee voice did not have a statistically significant relationship with job satisfaction (β = 0.01, SE = 0.08, p = 0.942; rejecting H4a), but employee silence had a negative relationship with job satisfaction (β = -0.30, SE = 0.07, $p < 0.001$; supporting H4b). Interestingly, both employee voice (β = 0.19, SE = 0.06, $p < 0.001$; rejecting H5a) and employee silence (β = 0.18, SE = 0.06, $p < 0.001$; supporting H5b) had a positive relationship with turnover intention – it was initially hypothesised that employee voice would have a negative relationship. Moreover, job satisfaction had a strong negative relationship with turnover intention (β = -0.77, SE = 0.03, $p <$ 0.001; supporting H6).

Figure 2: The Structural Model with the Results of the Direct Paths



Indirect Relationships

Table 5 below provides the estimates of all the indirect effects in the model and the accompanying confidence intervals.

Table 5. Indirect Paths for the Structural Model

Indirect path	Estimate	L95% CI	U95% CI
Affective rumination → Employee voice → Job satisfaction	0.01	-0.01	0.03
Affective rumination → Employee silence → Job satisfaction	-0.01	-0.06	0.04
Problem-solving rumination → Employee voice → Job satisfaction	-0.01	-0.08	0.05
Problem-solving rumination → Employee silence → Job satisfaction	0.01	-0.06	0.08
Detachment → Employee voice → Job satisfaction	-0.01	-0.07	0.05
Detachment → Employee silence → Job satisfaction	0.01	-0.04	0.07
Affective rumination → Employee voice → Turnover	-0.01	-0.07	0.02
Affective rumination → Employee silence → Turnover	0.04*	0.01	0.10
Problem-solving rumination → Employee voice → Turnover	0.07*	0.02	0.15
Problem-solving rumination → Employee silence → Turnover	-0.05*	-0.12	-0.01
Detachment → Employee voice → Turnover	0.06*	0.02	0.15
Detachment → Employee silence → Turnover	-0.03*	-0.10	-0.01

Notes: * = Does not include zero; L95% CI = Lower 95% confidence interval; U95% CI = Upper 95% confidence interval

As reflected in Table 5, all the indirect relationships from work-related rumination to job satisfaction, through employee voice and silence, included zero – rejecting H7a and H7b. However, H8a was partially supported as affective rumination did not have a relationship through employee voice to turnover intention, but problem-solving rumination (Estimate = 0.07; 95% CI[0.02, 0.15]) and detachment (Esti-

mate = 0.06; 95% CI[0.02, 0.15]) did. H8b was supported as all the components of rumination had a negative relationship with turnover intention

Discussion

This study investigated the relationships between work-related rumination (affective rumination, problem-solving pondering, detachment), employee voice, employee silence, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. The study was the first to incorporate all the constructs within a single study in South Africa, a non-WEIRD context.

According to the results obtained in the study, affective rumination did not have a statistically significant relationship with employee voice (rejecting H1a). Affective rumination did, however, show to have a significant positive relationship with employee silence (supporting H1b), supporting the notion that if employees engage in affective rumination, it increases the likelihood for them to engage in an active decision to refrain from speaking up about important issues, contributions, or related information (Brinsfield, 2013). The results support previous research studies that found affective rumination positively related to employee silence outcomes (Madrid et al., 2015). Furthermore, it stresses the importance of studying and viewing employee voice and silence as two separate constructs, even if strongly connected, which could have different outcomes and should not merely be inferred as opposites (Van Dyne et al., 2003). This study showed how the presence of a significant relationship between affective rumination and employee silence did not guarantee a significant relationship with employee voice.

Problem-solving pondering had a significant positive relationship with employee voice (supporting H2a). When employees engage in problem-solving pondering, it will likely increase their likelihood of voicing work-related information to contribute to the workplace (Barry & Wilkinson, 2016). Interestingly, in this case, the opposite also seemed to be true for employee silence (supporting H2b). A significant negative relationship showed that employees who engaged in problem-solving pondering were not likely to engage in employee silence. This supports Madrid et al.'s (2015) notion that voice would likely occur and not silence, given (functionally) high levels of problem-solving demands. This study also found that employees who can detach after a day's work are more likely to engage in employee voice at work (supporting H3a). Moreover, employees who find it difficult to turn their thoughts away from work-related matters are likelier to engage in employee silence at work (supporting H3b).

Employee voice did not have a significant relationship with job satisfaction (rejecting H4a). This contrasted with the expectation of this study, stating that job satisfaction could result from employee voice, which is positively welcomed and fostered in organisations (Kim et al., 2016; Alfayad & Arif, 2017). Previous studies that found positive relationships between employee voice and job satisfaction speculated that open communication, boldness to speak up, positive relationships with

management, readily available co-workers, interest in sharing ideas, and choosing to listen without prejudice or judgment, are among some of the key contributing factors (Alfayad & Arif, 2017). The type of voice being used may also impact the relationship with satisfaction (Alfayad & Arif, 2017).

Employee silence, however, has been found to have a significant relationship with job satisfaction (supporting H4b). Employee silence negatively influenced job satisfaction, supporting previous research by Knoll and Van Dick (2013) showing how various forms of employee silence seem negatively related to job satisfaction, regardless of the underlying intent or reason behind the silence.

Employee voice was shown to have a significant positive relationship with turnover intention (rejecting H5a), not a negative relationship as initially proposed. As previously mentioned, the influence of employee voice on turnover intention may largely be determined by organisational factors such as positive leadership or managerial approaches adopted, for which lower turnover intention levels can be expected. Therefore the specific organisational context is important to consider. Furthermore, if organisations provide more support and opportunity for employee voice, employees may be less intent to leave (Lam et al., 2016; McClean et al., 2013; Wilkinson & Fay, 2011). In this study, the influence of employee voice on turnover intention may support notions that it could cause employees to become more intent to leave due to the adverse effects of voicing in their organisations (Donaghey et al., 2011).

Employee silence and turnover intention showed a significant positive relationship (supporting H5b). As was initially expected, employee silence did lead to higher turnover intention levels. Regardless of the form of employee silence, a universal inclination to search for better employment conditions than to engage in silence can be a dominant factor (Knoll & Van Dick, 2013). Turnover intention and job satisfaction showed a robust negative relationship (supporting H6), as was initially proposed by this study. It is thus again apparent, as has been established in the literature, that higher levels of job satisfaction will lead to lower turnover intention and vice versa (e.g., Amah, 2009).

Lastly, indirect relationships were also studied using bootstrapping to gather a more in-depth picture of the research constructs. Employee voice and silence did not have a complementary mediating effect in the relationship between work-related rumination and job satisfaction (rejecting H7a and H7b).

In this study, work-related rumination was seen as the antecedent within the indirect relationships. The influence was shown on turnover intention through the mediating role of employee silence and voice. H8a was partially supported, as problem-solving pondering and detachment influenced turnover intention through employee voice, but not affective rumination. H8b was supported as all components of work-related rumination had a relationship with turnover intention through the mediating role of employee silence.

Practical Implications

This study has added to the literature and provided more information regarding work-related rumination, employee voice, employee silence, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. This study also assists in uncovering how the constructs mentioned above are interrelated and informs organisations on how work-related rumination and employee voice and silence influence employees' perceived levels of job satisfaction and turnover intention.

This study shed light on the presence of work-related rumination in organisations, assisting organisations in becoming aware of the consequences to foster healthier working conditions where rumination is not a common norm (Blanco-Encomienda et al., 2020). This study investigates the processes accompanying employees' tendency to focus repetitive energy on negative thoughts instead of active conduct (Madrid et al., 2015). The impact of general negativity in the workplace on voice behaviour is fuelled by rumination, and dysfunctional passive mindsets become the norm (Madrid et al., 2015). This study, however, also expands further by not only focusing on the processes and relationships between rumination and employee voice and silence but also further aims to shed light on the outcomes of these constructs and their relationships with the organisation, namely in the form of typical job satisfaction and turnover intention.

This study increased understanding of the processes related to winding down when away from the workplace, as increased work-related rumination has long been associated with lower mental functioning skills and negative strain or well-being outcomes for employees (Cropley et al., 2012; Quarstret & Cropley, 2012). Organisations can intervene to reduce work-related negative states that trigger affective rumination and consequential silence (Madrid et al., 2015). Therefore, certain organisational factors can be addressed to foster healthy and supportive organisational cultures or climates.

Lastly, organisations should also be attentive to how employee voice and silence behaviours are handled within their workplace. Choosing to opt for employee voice or silence can have different outcomes for employees and their organisation. Furthermore, many factors can influence the occurrence of voice and silence, and organisations should ensure that a workplace is nurtured that encourages positive employee voice (Morrison, 2014). Organisational factors that can encourage employee voice instead of silence should be of significant focus for organisations to uncover and address. Furthermore, the relationships supported to exist directly and indirectly in this study should also remain a driving force for organisations to understand, be attentive to, and intervene where needed.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The first limitation of this study is that it was conducted within a general sample and did not focus on a specific sector, industry, or group. Furthermore, a non-probability sampling method was used, and a limitation of using this method is that generalisation can be compromised (Struwig & Stead, 2013). A direction for future research can be to replicate the study within a specific sector, industry or other populations. Additionally, researchers could explore how national cultural factors may influence factors such as rumination and voice behaviours (e.g., Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory). Another limitation is the issue of social desirability, meaning that the respondents may provide only acceptable or desirable answers due to a fear of producing a particular undesirable image of themselves or their organisations (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2013), consequently not being entirely honest about aspects such as intention to leave.

This study can stimulate future research to expand and build on what this study has delivered. This study has focused explicitly on proposed relationships in a broader sense. Future research can comprehensively depict these respective constructs and their relations by focusing on specific forms of employee voice and silence. Certain contextual elements that can influence the experience of the stated research constructs and their relations with one another were also not thoroughly investigated and limited the study. This includes differences within organisational climates and cultures and subjective differences found within approaches and relationships between employees, co-workers, managers, and leaders.

More focus can be placed on uncovering the individual and organisational factors that cause, contribute to and influence the occurrence of work-related rumination, employee voice, and employee silence. Lastly, other possible outcomes of work-related rumination, employee voice, and employee silence should also be investigated, explicitly focusing on positive outcomes of problem-focused rumination, detachment, and employee voice, as well as negative physical and psychological consequences of affective rumination and employee silence, in an attempt to build on or intervene where needed.

Conclusion

This study showed how work-related rumination, through employee voice and silence, can result in changes in turnover intention. Organisations need to be aware of the adverse effects of affective rumination and employee silence on organisational functioning, satisfaction, turnover, longevity, and overall employee well-being. It is also essential to consider the potential benefits of problem-solving pondering, detachment and employee voice if fostered/approached correctly, and how it can contribute to a more satisfied workforce with less intention to leave.

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