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International differences in employee silence motives: Scale validation, prevalence, and relationships with culture characteristics across 33 countries

Michael Knoll[1] | Martin Götz[2] | Elisa Adriasola[3] | Amer Ali Al-Atwi[4] |
Alicia Arenas[5] | Kokou A. Atitsogbe[6] | Stephen Barrett[7] |
Anindo Bhattacharjee[8] | Norman D. Blanco[9] | Sabina Bogilović[10] |
Grégoire Bollmann[2] | Janine Bosak[11] | Cagri Bulut[12] | Madeline Carter[13] |
Matej Černe[10] | Susanna L. M. Chui[14] | Donatella Di Marco[5,15] |
Gesa S. Duden[1] | Vicki Elsey[13] | Makoto Fujimura[16] | Paola Gatti[17] |
Chiara Ghislieri[17] | Steffen R. Giessner[18] | Kenta Hino[19] |
Joeri Hofmans[20] | Thomas S. Jønsson[21] | Pazambadi Kazimna[22] |
Kevin B. Lowe[23] | Juliana Malagón[24] | Hassan Mohebbi[25] |
Anthony Montgomery[26] | Lucas Monzani[27] | Anne Nederveen Pieterse[18] |
Muhammed Ngoma[28] | Emir Ozeren[29,30] | Deirdre O'Shea[31] |
Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen[21,32] | Jennifer Pickett[20] | Anna A. Rangkuti[33] |
Sylwiusz Retowski[34] | Farzad Sattari Ardabili[35] | Razia Shaukat[36] |
Silvia A. Silva[15] | Ana Šimunić[37] | Niklas K. Steffens[38] | Faniya Sultanova[39] |
Daria Szücs[40] | Susana M. Tavares[15] | Arun Tipandjan[41] | Rolf van Dick[42] |
Dimitri Vasiljevic[43] | Sut I. Wong[44] | Hannes Zacher[1]

[1]Institute of Psychology - Wilhelm Wundt, Leipzig University, Leipzig, Germany

[2]Department of Psychology, University of Zurich, Zürich, Switzerland

[3]Business School, Universidad Adolfo Ibañez, Santiago, Chile

[4]Department of Business Administration, Al Muthanna University, Samawah, Iraq

[5]Department of Social Psychology, University of Seville, Seville, Spain

[6]Institute of Psychology, University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland

[7]Department of Informatics, Technical University Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

[8]ASMSOC, Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai, India

[9]Urban Studies Institute, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia

[10]School of Economics and Business and Faculty of Public Administration, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia

[11]Business School, Dublin City University, Dublin, Ireland

[12]Strategy and Excellence Office, Yasar University, Izmir, Turkey

From the third author on, authors are listed alphabetically because they contributed equally to this project.

[13]Department of Psychology, Northumbria University Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.

[14]Department of Management, Hang Seng University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

[15]Department of Human Resources and Organizational Behavior, ISCTE-Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal

[16]Faculty of Human Relations, Fukuoka Jo Gakuin University, Fukuoka, Japan

[17]Department of Psychology, Università degli Studi di Torino, Turin, Italy

[18]Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

[19]Faculty of Business Administration, Komazawa University, Tokyo, Japan

[20]Department of Psychology, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, Belgium

[21]Department of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, Aarhus Universitet, Aarhus, Denmark

[22]Department of Applied Psychology, University of Lomé, Lomé, Togo

[23]Business School, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

[24]Universidad de los Andes, School of Management, Bogotá, Colombia

[25]European Knowledge Development Institute, Ankara, Turkey

[26]University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece

[27]Ivey Business School, Western University, London, Canada

[28]Graduate studies and research, Makerere University Business School, Kampala, Uganda

[29]Faculty of Tourism, Dokuz Eylül University, Izmir, Turkey

[30]CISEI, University of Southampton, Southampton, U.K.

[31]Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick, Ireland

[32]CoHera, Risskov, Denmark

[33]Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia

[34]Faculty of Psychology, SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Sopot, Poland

[35]Management Department, Islamic Azad University, Ardabil, Iran

[36]Department of Management Sciences, COMSATS University Islamabad, Islamabad, Pakistan

[37]Department of Psychology, University of Zadar, Zadar, Croatia

[38]School of Psychology, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

[39]Faculty of Psychology, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia

[40]Department of Psychology, Technische Universität Chemnitz, Chemnitz, Germany

[41]International Centre for Psychological Counseling and Social Research, Pondicherry, India

[42]Department of Psychology, Goethe Universität Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany

[43]Neoma Business School, Reims, France

[44]Department of Communication and Culture, BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo, Norway

Correspondence
Michael Knoll, Department of Work and Organizational Psychology, Institut für Psychologie – Wilhelm Wundt, Universität Leipzig, Neumarkt 9-19, 04109, Leipzig, Germany.
Email: michael.knoll@uni-leipzig.de

Summary

Employee silence, the withholding of work-related ideas, questions, or concerns from someone who could effect change, has been proposed to hamper individual and collective learning as well as the detection of errors and unethical behaviors in many areas of the world. To facilitate cross-cultural research, we validated an instrument measuring four employee silence motives (i.e., silence based on fear, resignation, prosocial, and selfish motives) in 21 languages. Across 33 countries (N = 8,222) representing diverse cultural clusters, the instrument shows good psychometric properties (i.e., internal reliabilities, factor structure, and measurement invariance). Results further revealed similarities and differences in the prevalence of silence motives between countries, but did not necessarily support cultural stereotypes. To explore the role of culture for silence, we examined relationships of silence motives with the societal practices cultural dimensions from the GLOBE Program. We found relationships between silence motives and power distance, institutional collectivism, and

uncertainty avoidance. Overall, the findings suggest that relationships between silence and cultural dimensions are more complex than commonly assumed. We discuss the explanatory power of nations as (cultural) units of analysis, our social scientific approach, the predictive value of cultural dimensions, and opportunities to extend silence research geographically, methodologically, and conceptually.

1 | INTRODUCTION

In many countries, media reports and research emphasize that inefficacies, unethical practices, errors, and safety issues endure because employees withhold their views, questions, ideas, and concerns (e.g., Allard-Poesi & Hollet-Haudebert, 2017; Barry, 2007; Gibson & Singh, 2003; Joshi, 2016; Maree, 2016; Sheriff, 2000). Highly visible cases include fraud in the automotive industry, harassment in the entertainment industry, the military, and sports teams, misconduct in law enforcement, abuse of children and older people in educational, caring, and religious institutions, and bullying in health services (e.g., Derr et al., 2017; Ewing & Bowley, 2015; NHS, 2017; Prasad, 2018; United Nations, 2014; WHO, 2002). Besides these cases covered by the media, there is evidence that on a monthly, weekly, or even daily basis, many employees encounter situations in which they think that something should be addressed, but rarely speak up, hampering individual and collective effectiveness, development, and well-being (e.g., Knoll et al., 2019; Maxfield, 2016; Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Pinder & Harlos, 2001).

Despite an increased interest in these issues in many regions of the world, no systematic attempts exist to integrate international research on employee silence, and approaches to silence differ in their stage of conceptual and methodological development (e.g., Knoll et al., 2016; Morrison, 2014; Sherf et al., 2021). While diversity in approaches is valuable at early stages of theoretical development, when a concept matures and is to be applied in practice, research advances by comparability of assessment and findings (Edmondson & McManus, 2007). In addition, while culture and communication are interwoven (Lehman et al., 2004; Merkin et al., 2014), little systematic knowledge is available to explain how the specifics of culture may affect employees' motives for withholding their views. Conceptual articles proposed that cultural differences may exist regarding employees' tendency and motivation to express or withhold their views (Kwon & Farndale, 2020; Morrison, 2014), but very few studies have examined employee silence in more than one country. To advance understanding of employee silence as an international organizational challenge (George et al., 2016), to integrate conceptual developments in diverse disciplines, and to address a lack of empirical research, we conducted a large-scale study examining employee silence in diverse cultural regions.

Our study contributes to the literature in three important ways. First, we adapt an established instrument for assessing differentially motivated silence types (i.e., silence based on fear, resignation, prosocial, and opportunistic motives; Knoll & van Dick, 2013) to 21 languages and examine the scales' psychometric properties (i.e., internal consistency, factor structure, and measurement invariance) in samples from 33 countries. Second, to advance understanding of the link between culture and employee silence, we examine whether approaches developed to differentiate between national cultures can be applied to explain international differences and similarities in the prevalence of silence motives. Specifically, we propose and test links between silence motives and societal practices dimensions from the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) research program framework (House et al., 2004)—an established approach to characterize cultural influences on organizational behavior (Dorfman et al., 2012; Urbach et al., 2020). Our study offers a rare opportunity to examine the relationship between culture and silence, because it provides sufficient variance in cultural variables of interest, minimizes context effects, and allows for examining cultural differences at the level at which they occur (Spector et al., 2015; Tsui et al., 2007). Third, based on our findings, we discuss the limitations of nations as (cultural) units of analysis and our social scientific approach, and we propose opportunities to extend silence research geographically, methodologically, and conceptually.

We hope that our research facilitates international attempts to overcome the detrimental effects of silence. Besides, it shall help scholars and practitioners to address communication challenges that organizations face when employing an international workforce, collaborating with partners in different countries, staffing culturally diverse teams, assigning expatriates, and attempting to transfer participation schemes to acquired international branches (Lewin, 2015; Tung & Stahl, 2018).

2 | THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

2.1 | Employee silence and its underlying motives

Addressing issues and expressing ideas and concerns (i.e., voice) is a way to express oneself and can lead to improved (e.g., more efficient and less harmful) circumstances at work and may even increase one's status within the group (e.g., Chamberlin et al., 2018; Jetten & Hornsey, 2014; Weiss & Morrison, 2019). However, voice

also exposes those who speak out, challenges the authority and judgment of others, and disrupts routines and the smooth operation of groups, which, in turn, potentially threatens relationships, group harmony, and status hierarchies (Brinsfield et al., 2009; van Dyne et al., 1995). Due to these potential costs of speaking out and speaking up, there are several reasons that motivate employees to remain silent (for recent reviews, see Knoll et al., 2016; Morrison, 2014; Sherf et al., 2021).

Four of the most prominent silence motives are subject of our study. First, studies have shown that employees remain silent at work due to a fear that speaking up may have negative effects on their career, damage relationships, or lead to being labeled as a "trouble-maker" by superiors or colleagues (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009; Milliken et al., 2003). This phenomenon has been called *quiescent silence* (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). While research on whistleblowing and retaliation shows that these fears are not unreasonable (Cortina & Magley, 2003; Miceli et al., 2008), remaining silent due to a fear of speaking up comes with a price as well, namely, high-arousal negative affect and increased exhaustion and depersonalization (Kirrane et al., 2017; Knoll et al., 2019). Second, Pinder and Harlos (2001) suggested that besides silence that is based on fear employees withhold their views because they think that speaking up will not make a difference and that potential recipients are not responsive or interested in the particular issue. This type of silence labeled *acquiescent silence* by Pinder and Harlos is also accompanied by negative affect but with a lower arousal level compared with quiescent silence, bearing similarities to the state of learned helplessness (Kirrane et al., 2017; Seligman, 1975).

Subsequent research emphasized the relevance of prosocial and selfish motives for the occurrence of silence in organizations (for more extensive typologies, see Bies, 2009; Brinsfield, 2013; Kurzon, 2007). A third type of silence, *prosocial silence*, suggests that employees withhold their views to protect or not to embarrass their superiors, colleagues, or a specific group (e.g., organization, profession; van Dyne et al., 2003). Prosocial silence differs from quiescent and acquiescent silence in that it is accompanied by positive emotions and the intention to benefit others. However, it does not exclude negative emotions such as shame, sadness, and fear (Kirrane et al., 2017). Thus, prosocial silence is more complex than other silence types (Perlow & Repenning, 2009). This might be one reason for the divergent and in part ambivalent relationships with other constructs such as health, job satisfaction, and voice opportunities (Knoll & van Dick, 2013), as well as its association with both positive and negative outcomes (Umphress et al., 2010). Finally, a fourth type of silence, *opportunistic silence*, has been introduced to consider the fact that silence is, at times, based on rather selfish motives, such as the intention of protecting a knowledge advantage or avoiding additional workload (Knoll & van Dick, 2013). Opportunistic silence has its roots in the literatures on knowledge hiding, knowledge hoarding, and counterproductive work behaviors (Connelly et al., 2019; Evans et al., 2015) and is rather negatively connoted.

2.2 | National culture and international differences in employee silence

Culture can be defined as a set of shared beliefs, values, norms, meanings, and practices that have been learned while societies solved problems of external adaptation (e.g., dealing with external threats and securing resources) and internal regulation (e.g., how power and status are distributed and how conflicts are resolved; Schein, 2017). Shared patterns of social behavior and thinking are transmitted through social institutions and artifacts such as schools, hierarchies, laws, and reward systems, which, in turn, shape and justify individual and group beliefs and actions (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). In our study, we use countries as cultural units, because they are relatively stable societies, have clear geographical boundaries and institutionalized rules of what constitutes membership, they generally have a common law system, political institutions, and a history of collective problem solving (for respective discussions, see Chen et al., 2009; Peterson et al., 2018; Taras et al., 2016).

National culture affects organizational behavior in several ways (Tsui et al., 2007). A key way is by providing its members (which constitute the majority of the workforce in a country) a framework for constituting the self and interpreting reality (including perceptions and evaluations) and by providing norms regarding communication and (inter)action (Gelfand et al., 2017; Triandis, 1996). National cultures also affect the shape of organizations and thus the immediate context in which employees operate (e.g., leadership styles and formal voice mechanisms; Dickson et al., 2004; Kwon & Farndale, 2020). While we do not explicitly examine how national culture affects the organizational context in which our study participants work, we need to consider that the immediate work context is embedded in a national macro context (Johns, 2006; Peterson & Barreto, 2014). A third way of influence that is beyond the scope of the current study is that culture moderates the effects of individual differences and factors of the immediate work context on organizational behavior (Tsui et al., 2007). We elaborate on this influence in the discussion.

So far, employee silence has been examined in a rather limited scope of countries with South Asian and Arab countries recently complementing the traditional focus on Confucian Asian and Western countries (Hawass, 2016; Jain, 2015; Wilkinson et al., 2020). Studies comparing employee silence or voice across countries are almost absent (Morrison, 2014). Examining how national culture affects employee silence does not only lay a foundation for research on culture and workplace silence, it also contributes to the ongoing debate on whether national culture has considerable influence on employee behavior (Chen et al., 2009; Tung & Stahl, 2018). Indeed, despite ambiguity, a lot of—in part stereotypical—assumptions exist regarding national differences and their influence on employee behavior, and these assumptions potentially misguide research and practitioner training and actions (Chen et al., 2009; McCrae et al., 2013). For silence in particular, prior research—for example, among samples from Japan, Korea, Australia, South Africa, and the United States (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Maree, 2016)—did not support assumptions

regarding national differences in the use and valence of silence. To facilitate understanding of how silence manifests itself across nations, we validate an instrument to conduct cross-cultural research and use it to examine differences (or their absence) in silence motives across 33 countries from diverse regions.

- Research Question 1: Do the scales that assess differentially-motivated silence types demonstrate adequate psychometric properties in each country?
- Research Question 2: Are there differences in the prevalence of differentially-motivated silence types across countries?

2.3 | Relationships between cultural dimensions and employee silence motives

Attempts to explain culture's effects on silence can be divided into two approaches (Ting-Toomey, 2010). Ethnographic approaches aim at identifying distinctive communication codes of a cultural community that, in turn, reveal this particular community's normative expectations regarding the adequate use of, for example, speech and silence. Examples for ethnographic studies on silence include Covarrubias's (2007) research on generative silence (i.e., silence as a powerful means to achieve productive personal, social, and cultural outcomes) in the communication of Native Americans and Sheriff's (2000) research on customary silence (i.e., a form of silence reflective of cultural censorship and practiced in the absence of explicit coercion or enforcements) surrounding the subject of racism in Brazil. The second approach, called the social scientific approach by Ting-Toomey (2010), draws upon preexisting frameworks of cultural characteristics (e.g., individualism–collectivism) and uses them as independent variables to explain the differences and similarities of communication phenomena across countries. We decided to apply a social scientific approach based on the following arguments (Ting-Toomey, 2010).

First, utilizing conceptual cultural frameworks helps to create an exploratory system for why employees in several cultural communities communicate differently or similarly in accordance with a consistent, anchoring foundation. Second, drawing upon a cultural framework provides design parameters regarding to concepts that potentially explain the phenomenon of interest and thus should be included in studies (and those that might be omitted). Third, the cultural characteristics included in conceptual cultural frameworks (e.g., cultural value dimensions, such as power distance and collectivism) provide starting points for practitioners and trainers who aim to improve communication in international business. Fourth, cultural frameworks such as Hofstede's typology (Hofstede, 1980) and the GLOBE framework (House et al., 2004) have been used to examine the relevance of culture for a range of organizational phenomena. Thus, by drawing on such frameworks, our research is embedded into the broader field of cross-cultural organizational behavior research.

Studies that applied the social scientific approach to examine the role of ethnic cultural factors regarding silence (or voice; e.g., Botero & Van Dyne, 2009; Lam & Xu, 2019; Rhee et al., 2014)

focused on one or two out of potentially manifold characteristics supposed to differentiate cultures (see Lytle et al., 1995; Taras et al., 2009). Applying a more comprehensive approach, we draw upon a systematic and widely examined typology of culture, namely, the GLOBE framework (House et al., 2004). This framework provides a differentiated approach to culture including nine dimensions for societal practices (see Table 1 for an overview), uses more recent data than comparable typologies (e.g., Hofstede, 1980), and is well validated, as it is widely used in the field of leadership and management (Dorfman et al., 2012).

In our study, we focus on three GLOBE dimensions based on theoretical grounds (i.e., the nature of the situation in which silence occurs) as well as empirical grounds (i.e., the number of cases for between-country level analyses is limited to 33 countries; Maas & Hox, 2005). We develop hypotheses that specify that silence is likely to vary as a function of power distance (because silence means not challenging authorities), assertiveness (because silence means applying a rather indirect communication style), and in-group collectivism (because silence means not acting independently but being loyal to group norms). Note that we also explore relationships between silence motives and the other GLOBE-dimensions and discuss findings as additional, exploratory analyses.

2.3.1 | How societies deal with hierarchy and power differences: Power distance

Employees who address critical issues, ideas, and concerns are challenging the status quo, and they question the judgment of those who installed the current procedures, rules, and practices (van Dyne et al., 1995). The idea that cultures can be distinguished with regard to whether their members are expected to accept or challenge the current distribution of power is prominent in several cultural frameworks (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 2006; Smith et al., 2002) and central to the dimension of power distance in the GLOBE typology. Reviews (Daniels & Greguras, 2014; Khatri, 2009) suggested that in high power distance contexts, individuals with a lot of power are perceived as superior and elite, while those with little power accept their places in the hierarchy, defer judgments to their leaders, and are generally loyal and obedient to them (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994; Kirkman et al., 2009). Such loyalty and deference would suggest that members remain silent for prosocial reasons to protect or not embarrass their leaders.

Power distance is also associated with conformity as suggested by results of Brockner et al.'s (2001) meta-analysis: compared with samples from low power-distance countries (i.e., the United States and Germany), samples from high-power distance countries (e.g., China and Mexico) responded more favorably to lower levels of voice opportunities. A tendency to defer to authorities is also visible in the sources of guidance employees tend to rely upon when handling work events. In a 47-nation study, Smith et al. (2002) showed that samples from high power distance cultures relied upon vertical sources such as superiors, as well as formal rules and hierarchies,

TABLE 1 GLOBE study culture dimensions (House et al., 2004) examined in the current study and their relation to differentially-motivated silence types

Cultural dimension[a]	Brief definition	Relationships with employee silence motives as found in our study[b]
Power distance	The degree to which members of a society expect power to be distributed equally or concentrated at higher levels.	As hypothesized, power distance was related to acquiescent and prosocial silence.
Assertiveness	The degree to which individuals are assertive, confrontational and aggressive in their relationships with others.	-
In-group collectivism	The degree to which members of a society express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families.	-
Institutional collectivism	The degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action.	Exploratory analyses showed a negative relationship with acquiescent silence.
Uncertainty avoidance	The extent to which members of a society rely on social norms, rules, and procedures to alleviate unpredictability of future events.	Exploratory analyses showed a negative relationship with opportunistic silence
Performance orientation	The degree to which a collective encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence.	-
Gender egalitarianism	The degree to which a collective minimizes gender inequality.	-
Humane orientation	The degree to which a society encourages and rewards individuals for being fair, altruistic, generous, caring and kind to others.	-
Future orientation	The degree to which members of a society engage in future-oriented behaviors such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying individual or collective gratification.	-

[a]In this study, we used the societal practices scores to represent the cultural dimensions.
[b]Only statistically significant results at $p < .05$ are reported.

while contributions from lower-level employees were not seen as effective or appreciated. These and similar findings (see Lam & Xu, 2019; Taras et al., 2010) suggest a positive relationship between power distance and acquiescent silence, which is associated with conformity and acceptance of the status quo. As members of high-power distance countries prefer directive leadership (Taras et al., 2010) and accept that the status quo cannot and should not be changed, they are likely to believe that it is more efficient not to rock the boat at all. Engaging in opportunistic silence would thus save them from additional workload and helps to avoid interpersonal conflict (Morrison & Rothman, 2009). Such a detachment-based reasoning is also supported by Merkin et al.'s (2014) meta-analytic finding that power distance is negatively related to propensity to interrupt.

Power is linked to emotional experience, with fear often being experienced by low-power individuals (Mondillon et al., 2005). In line with this reasoning, in Hofstede's (1980) conceptualization of power

distance, members of high-power distance cultures are fearful of expressing concerns to more powerful people. However, this emphasis on fear is not evident in the power distance construct and its operationalization as per the GLOBE study (see Hofstede, 2006). Indeed, power may not always be associated with fear. While the abuse of power (e.g., by leaders) certainly induces fear in followers (Beugre, 1998), trust in hierarchy, positions, and institutions can be comforting for individuals. Doney et al. (1998) proposed that calculative prediction and capability forms of trust would be more prevalent in high power distance cultures. Such forms of trust are based on the ability to predict and calculate the potential costs and rewards of making oneself vulnerable to another, as well as an assessment that the individual or entity that is trusted will meet their obligations and expectations (Doney et al., 1998). Thus, we do not expect a positive relationship with quiescent silence, because employees from high power distance cultures accept the status quo and thus do not fear their superiors (Daniels & Greguras, 2014). Indeed, neither Rhee

et al. (2014) nor Lam and Xu (2019) found substantial relationships between power distance and fear-based silence using individual-level data. In sum, we expect

Hypothesis 1. Power distance is positively related to (a) acquiescent, (b) prosocial, and (c) opportunistic silence.

2.3.2 | Whether societies deal with issues in a confrontational versus harmonious style: Assertiveness

Whether members of a culture express or withhold their views could also be affected by the culturally endorsed communication style (Merkin et al., 2014). Hall (1976) suggested that countries differ in their preference for direct (i.e., open and confrontational, which he labeled "low-context") or indirect (i.e., more harmonious and considerate) communication styles (which he labeled "high-context"). Several researchers (e.g., Brett, 2007; Ting-Toomey et al., 2001; Ward et al., 2016) drew upon this idea and showed that members of high context cultures prefer indirect (i.e., more harmonious) communication styles, are more likely to avoid conflict, and use more nonconfrontational strategies in conflict resolution and negotiation. The idea of direct versus indirect communication style is part of GLOBE's assertiveness dimension (see Table 1).

Elaborating on the relationship between assertiveness and voice, Kwon and Farndale (2020) suggest that in high assertiveness cultures, norms may signal that assertive behavior is appropriate, useful to achieve instrumental aims, and, thus, more important than concerns about harming relationships. This assumption suggests a negative relationship between assertiveness and prosocial silence and a lower tendency of members from assertive cultures to be afraid of negative consequences that might follow from speaking up (i.e., quiescent silence). Further, as assertiveness has been associated with internal locus of control (see den Hartog, 2004), members of assertive cultures should tend to believe that speaking up will make a difference and thus acquiescent silence should be low. Prospects seem different for opportunistic silence. Assertive cultures value competitiveness and assign status based on achievement. As a consequence, assertiveness is consistent with a tendency toward opportunism (den Hartog, 2004; Doney et al., 1998), which, in turn, makes it more likely that members of assertive cultures withhold their views to gain a personal advantage than members of less assertive cultures.

Assertiveness has "rarely been studied as a dimension of culture in its own right" (den Hartog, 2004, p. 396), but research on Hofstede's (1980) dimension masculinity versus femininity provides indirect support for our reasoning. Indeed, the GLOBE dimension assertiveness has been derived from Hofstede's masculinity dimension, which denotes the degree to which a society values competition, achievement, heroism, and assertiveness rather than cooperativeness, modesty, and caring for the weak. In support of our reasoning regarding negative relationships between assertiveness and silence,

masculinity was negatively related to indirectness, conflict avoidance, and conformity and positively related to confrontation in meta-analyses (Merkin et al., 2014; Taras et al., 2010). Doney et al. (1998) provide indirect support for the proposed positive relationship between assertiveness and opportunistic silence. Reviewing research from diverse disciplines, these authors conclude that calculative processes are more expected and thus tolerated in assertive/masculine societies, whereas honoring moral obligations is more valued in rather harmonious societies. In sum, we expect:

Hypothesis 2. Assertiveness is negatively related to quiescent (H2a), acquiescent (H2b), and prosocial silence (H2c), and positively related to opportunistic silence (H2d).

2.3.3 | How societies perceive the relationship between individual and group: In-group collectivism

Whether members of a society challenge the status quo by expressing their views and whether they expose themselves as individuals should be influenced by the way they perceive themselves and their position in relation to their social environment. Several cultural frameworks suggest that cultures differ regarding to the extent to which they socialize their members into striving for independent/individual and/or interdependent/collective identities—with widespread effects on their members' cognition, emotion, motivation, and behavior (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Minkov et al., 2017; Schwartz, 2006; Triandis, 2000). In the GLOBE framework, collectivism is addressed by two dimensions (see Table 1). In our study, we draw upon in-group collectivism as this dimension is rooted in the extensive literature on societal collectivism (Hofstede, 1980; Triandis, 1996), has been used to represent collectivism in cross-validation studies (Vignoles et al., 2016), and has been conceptually related to silence and (negatively to) voice in the past (Kwon & Farndale, 2020).

Collectivistic societies draw upon group norms, perceived duties, and obligations and members of collective cultures ground their self-esteem, at least in part, in their ability to adjust and restrain the self. One consequence of being socialized in collectivistic societies is a tendency to communicate in a way that protects others and maintains harmonious relationships—a pattern that has been associated with the concept of face (Merkin, 2018; Triandis, 1996). In face cultures, individuals derive their self-worth primarily extrinsically by fulfilling social role obligations, including that, besides preserving their own face, they also know of the importance of face for the self-worth of others (e.g., Leung & Cohen, 2011; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003). Expressing diverging viewpoints or questioning a supervisor's or colleague's viewpoint, risks discrediting one's own and the other person's face, causing embarrassment and feelings of shame in actor, target, and observers which, in turn, disrupt interaction and collaboration. Members of face cultures and collectivists in general try to avoid such disruption and know that others are interested in preserving each other's face in social interactions as well. Consequently, employees from

collectivistic cultures should be more likely to withhold their views to protect others and social harmony. They should also expect others to protect them, but at the same time, to be interested in maintaining harmony and declining challenges to the status quo. This reasoning links collectivism to prosocial and acquiescent silence. Collectivists should further have a lower tendency to engage in selfish behavior to achieve a personal advantage which is the case in opportunistic silence. We do not, in contrast, expect relationships with quiescent silence. Collectivists should not fear their group members, because they know that group members do not discredit other group members and protect each other's face. This is particularly the case for higher-status members, such as managers, as these have a particular obligation to protect the collective.

While research on specific relationships between collectivism and silence motives is scarce, a large body of research supports the more general assumption that members from collectivistic cultures are socialized into accepting group norms even if their ideas and opinions diverge from the ideas and concerns shared by their group. Meta-analyses (e.g., Bond & Smith, 1996; Merkin et al., 2014; Taras et al., 2010) and reviews (Gelfand et al., 2007) showed that conformity is more prevalent in collectivistic cultures while individualism, in turn, is positively related to openness in communication, propensity to interrupt, and confrontation, and negatively related to passive reactions to injustice, conflict avoidance, indirectness, and face-saving concerns. The only study that examined specific relationships of collectivism with silence—at the individual level—supported our assumption regarding the relationship between collectivism and acquiescent silence and the zero-relationship between collectivism and silence that is based on fear (Rhee et al., 2014). Notably, contrary to our reasoning, Rhee and colleagues also did not find support for the expected relationship between collectivism and prosocial silence. We expect:

Hypothesis 3. In-group collectivism is positively related to acquiescent (H3a) and prosocial silence (H3b) and negatively related to opportunistic silence (H3c).

2.3.4 | Additional dimensions included in the GLOBE framework

The GLOBE framework includes further cultural dimensions (see Table 1). While there is no strong theoretical rationale and consistent prior research to propose hypotheses regarding their relationship with silence motives, we explored how these additional dimensions relate to the four employee silence motives. Our aim was to identify patterns of relationships that have been neglected so far but may inspire future theorizing and research.

- Research question 3: How are the GLOBE cultural dimensions uncertainty avoidance, performance orientation, future orientation, gender egalitarianism, human orientation, and institutional collectivism related to employee silence motives?

3 | METHOD

3.1 | Samples and data preparation

The Cross-Cultural Silence Project is an international collaboration of scholars from social and organizational psychology as well as management science. Data collection was centrally organized by the first author but carried out by each of the co-authors in their respective country. Table 2 show the samples' characteristics, and more detailed description of data collection strategies within the participating countries is presented in Appendix S1. Thirty-five samples were collected from 33 countries. Canada and Switzerland are represented by two samples due to the two main language groups in these countries (i.e., English/French and German/French, respectively). The overall sample comprised 8222 employees. Sample sizes in each country ranged from 145 to 463 with a median of 225 participants. To avoid biases caused by organizational membership or profession, we aimed to recruit heterogeneous employee samples. This aim was accomplished in that all of the samples comprised participants from diverse age groups, many different professions and industries, and with varying degrees of work experience. Note that we excluded all participants that were self-employed, because we were interested in silence as it appears within organizations (Morrison & Milliken, 2000).

3.2 | Measures

Contributors translated all scales using the standard procedure of translation-back-translation, and resolving inconsistencies through discussion (Brislin, 1970). The translated items of the employee silence scales are presented in Table A1.

Employee silence was measured with the employee silence scale developed by Knoll and van Dick (2013). Participants first read a short paragraph outlining the situations we were interested in (i.e., they thought that colleagues or supervisors acted in a wrong, inefficient, immoral, or otherwise problematic way) and then asked them whether they spoke up to someone who could change the situation or tended to remain silent. We then asked them to rate their underlying motives for remaining silent. The item stem ("I remained silent at work …") was presented, followed by three randomly ordered items for each of the *four silence types*, namely, *acquiescent*, *quiescent*, *prosocial*, and *opportunistic silence* (see Table A1 for the complete list). The silence type items were answered using a frequency scale with the following seven response categories: 1 (never), 2 (very rarely), 3 (rarely), 4 (from time to time), 5 (occasionally), 6 (frequently), and 7 (very frequently).

Cultural dimensions were represented by the respective society-level scores as provided at the GLOBE webpage (GLOBE, 2020). The GLOBE project provides country-level societal practices and societal values scores. We used societal practices scores, because societal cultural practices (as a culture "is") mirror individuals' reality of "how things are" in a society and how a societal culture is practiced in everyday life (Frese, 2015; Urbach et al., 2020). This is why practices are more likely to drive behavior than societal values (i.e., how a

TABLE 2 Demographic details for each cultural sample

Cultural unit	n	Age M (SD)	Gender (% fem.)	Manager (% yes)	Contract (% perm.)	Language	Cultural region[a]	City/Region
Australia	259	44.39 (12.67)	–[c]	64	85	English	Anglo	Australia-wide
Belgium	171	33.16 (9.34)	65	12	79	Dutch	Germanic Europe	Flanders
Canada (English)	307	39.87 (12.06)	56	43	89	English	Anglo	5 regions[d]
Canada (French)	280	40.34 (12.47)	62	49	68	French	Anglo	Quebec
Chile	176	40.54 (8.75)	57	56	94	Spanish	Latin America	Area around Santiago
China	264	33.32 (6.08)	45	11	72	Chinese	Confucian Asia	Shenzhen
Colombia	157	30.24 (9.20)	55	31	61	Spanish	Latin America	Colombia-wide
Croatia	201	36.01 (9.32)	74	21	78	Croatian	Eastern Europe	Whole Croatia
Denmark	230	38.60 (12.87)	56	15	–[c]	Danish	Western Europe	Aarhus
France	244	39.10 (12.24)	50	43	84	French	Western Europe	Whole France
Germany	463	37.38 (12.87)	56	18	72	German	Germanic Europe	Western Germany
Greece	145	42.12 (10.15)	59	19	51	Greek	Eastern Europe	Macedonia
Great Britain	182	39.53 (10.43)	76	59	86	English	Anglo	UK-wide
Indonesia	202	39.41 (8.03)	63	33	89	Bahsa Indon.	Southern Asia	Central and western regions
India	319	33.95 (8.87)	67	35	77	English	Southern Asia	Whole India, major cities
Ireland	272	41.67 (9.95)	62	47	88	English	Anglo	Whole Republic of Ireland
Iran	256	38.96 (7.05)	30	42	75	Farsi	Middle-East	The largest cities in five main regions of Iran
Iraq	261	41.21 (9.40)	37	49	88	Arabic	Middle East	Iraq-wide
Italy	245	38.67 (12.95)	56	18	69	Italian	Western Europe	Piedmont
Japan	202	39.34 (10.49)	22	75	96	Japanese	Confucian Asia	Tokyo and Fukuoka
The Netherlands	201	39.02 (11.04)	48	33	89	Dutch	Western Europe	Whole Netherlands
Norway	189	45.11 (11.12)	35	28	96	Norwegian	Nordic Europe	Whole Norway
Pakistan	210	36.60 (7.85)	30	61	72	English	Southern Asia	Islamabad and Rawalpindi
Peru	246	32.39 (6.83)	55	–[c]	–[c]	Spanish	Latin America	Peru-wide
Poland	174	35.58 (8.37)	66	30	78	Polish	Eastern Europe	Northern Poland
Portugal	318	–[b]	62	25	75	Portuguese	Western Europe	Portugal-wide
Romania	273	42.54 (10.39)	59	29	89	Romanian	Eastern Europe	Lugoj, Western Romania
Russia	202	29.70 (11.42)	65	26	68	Russian	Eastern Europe	Moscow
Slovenia	301	44.06 (9.83)	48	81	88	Slovenian	Eastern Europe	Whole Slovenia
Spain	183	46.83 (9.62)	38	69	85	Spanish	Western Europe	Mainly in the South of Spain
Switzerland (French)	163	41.30 (10.10)	71	40	78	French	Germanic Europe	French-speaking part
Switzerland (German)	307	35.98 (10.77)	73	19	77	German	Germanic Europe	German-speaking part
Togo	190	36.94 (8.01)	27	48	67	English	Sub-Saharan Africa	Lomé
Turkey	204	32.25 (7.47)	49	78	88	Turkish	Middle East	Izmir
Uganda	225	30.73 (8.12)	44	50	66	English	Sub-Saharan Africa	Central and Eastern parts

Note: N = 8,222. Data were collected between 2014 and 2019.

[a]Culture clusters as suggested by the Globe study.

[b]Age was measured categorically, most frequent category was 18–24 years (26%).

[c]Measure was not included in the survey.

[d]Nova Scotia; Ontario; Manitoba; Alberta; Brit. Columbia.

society's culture "should be"). In Tables S5 and S6a–d in the Online Appendix), we provide additional analyses linking the employee silence motives to further cultural typologies. Data for the respective indicators were taken from the following sources: Schwartz (2008) for Schwartz' culture value orientations, Hofstede (2006) for the Hofstede (1980) dimensions and Minkov et al. (2017) for the revised

individualism–collectivism dimension. To show relationships of silence motives with cultural tightness, we used data from Gelfand et al. (2011) and Uz (2015).

3.3 | Analytical procedure

Overall, we conducted four main analyses to address our research questions and hypotheses and tested them using the statistical software R (Version 4.0.3; R Development Core Team, 2020). First, to establish a proper measurement model of our measure (i.e., the four types of employee silence scale; Knoll & van Dick, 2013), we conducted confirmatory factor analyses (CFA; Brown, 2015) using the R package *lavaan* (Version 0.6-7; Rosseel, 2012), and applied the alignment method by Asparouhov and Muthén (2014) using M*plus* (Version 8.4; L. K. Muthén & Muthén, 2017), as we will describe in detail below.

Second, against the background of the hypothesized measurement model that fitted the entire sample well, we used multi-group CFA (MG-CFA) to assess measurement invariance (MI) across all samples (Davidov et al., 2018; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). We employed a stepwise procedure and tested whether imposing additional constraints significantly deteriorated model fit by each time comparing the more constrained model with the preceding model using a χ^2 difference test (Stoel et al., 2006). Because the χ^2 test statistic is sensitive to sample size and minor model misspecifications (Bentler & Bonett, 1980; Bollen, 1989), we additionally evaluated change in model fit in light of alternative fit indices as recommended by Kim et al. (2017). In particular, we applied the cut-offs for the assessment of metric invariance and scalar invariance as recommended by Rutkowski and Svetina (2014) when testing for MI in multiple groups.

To allow for a meaningful comparison of the latent factor means across groups, scalar invariance is generally desired (e.g., Brown, 2015; Davidov et al., 2018; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). However, "strict forms of MI, such as scalar invariance, which imposes identical factor loadings and indicator intercepts across the groups to be compared, often do not hold" (Davidov et al., 2018, p. 632). Muthén and Asparouhov (2018); see also Marsh et al., 2018) concluded that "traditional multiple-group CFA makes it very difficult to properly identify the sources of non-invariance due to too many necessary model modifications" (p. 642) and proposed the alignment method which has successfully been used to analyze MI in cross-cultural research (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014; Cieciuch et al., 2018). This alignment method can be used to estimate group-specific factor means and variances without requiring exact measurement invariance, and provides a detailed account of parameter invariance for every model parameter in every group (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014).

Finally, we tested hypotheses on the relationships of cultural syndromes with the four silence motives with multilevel modeling (MLM; Hox et al., 2018) in M*plus* (Verison 8.4; Muthén & Muthén, 2017). Specifically, we first calculated the unconditional *ICC*(1) and the unconditional *ICC*(2) for the four silence motives to inquire whether variance in the four silence motives was attributable to the sample using the R package *multilevel* (Version 2.6; Bliese, 2016). If between-

group variance with regard to the four silence motives was statistically significant, we investigated the hypotheses with regard to the GLOBE framework (House et al., 2004). In addition, we also calculated the conditional *ICC*(1)—that is, the *ICC*(1) for a respective silence motive controlling for age, gender, and managerial position—for each silence motive using the R package *performance* (Version 0.7.0; Lüdecke et al., 2021). The small sample size at the country level (i.e., cultural dimension scores from the GLOBE were available for 21 out of the 35 samples; House et al., 2004) limited statistical power to identify meaningful effects in our analyses (e.g., Hox et al., 2018; Maas & Hox, 2005; Scherbaum & Pesner, 2019). We therefore decided to generally include only one level-2-predictor at a time and included only the three dimensions for which we developed hypotheses in a combined model.

4 | RESULTS

As adequacy of measures is a central precondition for conducting cross-cultural research, we first report the psychometric properties of an instrument assessing employee silence motives across 33 countries. We then examine similarities and differences in silence motives across country samples and cultural clusters. To provide insights into the role of culture as an explanation for international differences in silence, we report results regarding the hypothesized relationships between silence motives and the GLOBE dimensions. Please note that our data and analysis scripts are available online (https://osf.io/8g9fe/) along with an extended Online Appendix.

4.1 | Psychometric properties of the employee silence scales

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics and internal consistencies of the silence scales. To choose the proper estimator for our substantive latent analyses (i.e., CFA and MG-CFA), we initially checked for systematic missing data and whether the data were normally distributed: First, a multiple logistic regression revealed that missing data with regard to silence was not predicted by a participant's demographics (i.e., gender, age, and tenure; $p > .05$ for all). Second, a Henze–Zirkler test (Henze & Zirkler, 1990; Korkmaz et al., 2014) of the assumption of multivariate normality suggested that this assumption did not hold ($HZ = 35.09$, $p < .001$). Consequently, we employed the robust maximum likelihood estimation to ultimately obtain parameter estimates based on all the available information in the data and robust to non-normally distributed variables (Enders, 2010; Kline, 2016).

To examine the factor structure of the four types of employee silence scale (Knoll & van Dick, 2013), we performed CFAs in the full sample. First, we compared several measurement models, specifically a four-factor solution in which we specified the four silence types to be orthogonal to each other (Model 1), a single-factor solution, with all items from the four subscales loading on one factor (Model 2), a

four-factor solution with a second-order factor (Model 3), and a four-factor solution with correlated factors (Model 4). As can be seen in Table 4, the four-factor solution with correlated factors fitted the data best, $\chi^2(48) = 1255.35$, $p < .001$, CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMSEA = .07 [CI 90%: .07–.07, $p < .01$], SRMR = .05. In addition, it fit the data significantly better than the second-order solution,

$\Delta\chi^2(2) = 12.71$, $p < .01$, ΔAIC = 14.18.[1] We then performed CFAs on this best fitting model to examine whether measurement invariance (MI) held across all 35 samples, and whether the same factor structure held in all samples (i.e., *equal form* or *configural invariance*; see Brown, 2015; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000) and found it to be the case (see Table 5).

TABLE 3 Descriptive statistics, standardized Cronbach alphas, and Revelle's total omega for employee silence across 35 samples

Sample	Acquiescent silence		Quiescent silence		Prosocial silence		Opportunistic silence	
	M (SD)	$\omega_t{}^a$	M (SD)	$\omega_t{}^a$	M (SD)	$\omega_t{}^a$	M (SD)	$\omega_t{}^a$
Australia	3.85 (1.61)	.90	3.71 (1.64)	.92	3.70 (1.41)	.87	3.06 (1.50)	.88
Belgium	3.48 (1.81)	.84	3.08 (1.56)	.81	3.36 (1.47)	.80	2.16 (1.12)	.66
Canada (English)	4.04 (1.85)	.89	3.85 (1.79)	.88	3.86 (1.71)	.87	3.43 (1.77)	.87
Canada (French)	3.49 (1.74)	.91	3.38 (1.70)	.89	3.41 (1.63)	.90	3.15 (1.63)	.90
Chile	3.08 (1.74)	.86	2.66 (1.45)	.77	3.09 (1.61)	.87	2.09 (1.21)	.77
China	2.57 (1.48)	.82	2.35 (1.27)	.75	3.11 (1.73)	.87	1.84 (1.09)	.78
Colombia	3.68 (1.87)	.86	3.35 (1.55)	.71	3.45 (1.63)	.82	2.73 (1.50)	.76
Croatia	4.60 (1.70)	.85	3.69 (1.57)	.75	4.56 (1.52)	.85	2.59 (1.23)	.68
Denmark	2.70 (1.43)	.86	2.80 (1.31)	.80	3.11 (1.29)	.84	2.18 (1.08)	.77
France	3.96 (1.77)	.91	3.56 (1.66)	.87	3.65 (1.46)	.79	2.87 (1.38)	.76
Germany	3.52 (1.78)	.89	2.96 (1.53)	.86	3.61 (1.43)	.83	2.19 (1.10)	.65
Great Britain	3.91 (1.79)	.88	3.48 (1.70)	.87	3.64 (1.49)	.81	2.45 (1.19)	.70
Greece	3.67 (1.84)	.86	2.79 (1.49)	.82	3.81 (1.76)	.89	2.18 (1.26)	.73
Indonesia	3.55 (1.87)	.84	3.47 (1.41)	.87	4.40 (1.34)	.86	3.11 (1.28)	.77
India	3.70 (1.45)	.75	3.35 (1.56)	.82	3.85 (1.46)	.75	3.03 (1.31)	.68
Ireland	3.49 (1.71)	.87	3.32 (1.60)	.86	3.56 (1.45)	.86	2.54 (1.26)	.77
Iran	4.44 (1.66)	.87	3.44 (1.55)	.81	3.85 (1.54)	.85	3.03 (1.41)	.77
Iraq	2.95 (1.63)	.93	2.50 (1.40)	.87	2.97 (1.51)	.91	2.21 (1.26)	.87
Italy	3.58 (1.66)	.81	2.96 (1.63)	.87	3.74 (1.49)	.80	2.44 (1.34)	.73
Japan	3.18 (1.37)	.77	3.14 (1.50)	.83	3.38 (1.43)	.83	2.52 (1.19)	.69
The Netherlands	3.40 (1.71)	.90	3.17 (1.53)	.86	3.23 (1.50)	.86	2.74 (1.51)	.91
Norway	3.51 (1.59)	.90	3.34 (1.39)	.86	3.81 (1.33)	.87	2.80 (1.28)	.85
Pakistan	2.92 (1.01)	.45	3.19 (1.09)	.39	2.90 (1.19)	.70	2.63 (1.02)	.55
Peru	3.21 (1.55)	.87	2.96 (1.54)	.89	3.37 (1.62)	.90	2.48 (1.25)	.82
Poland	3.71 (1.72)	.85	3.37 (1.52)	.85	3.68 (1.56)	.87	2.60 (1.31)	.70
Portugal	3.48 (1.77)	.85	3.19 (1.62)	.86	3.31 (1.55)	.83	2.32 (1.28)	.79
Romania	3.42 (1.64)	.82	2.72 (1.57)	.86	3.46 (1.50)	.77	2.47 (1.35)	.75
Russia	3.02 (1.48)	.80	3.28 (1.53)	.78	3.23 (1.52)	.81	2.83 (1.51)	.84
Slovenia	4.23 (1.75)	.88	3.73 (1.70)	.87	4.07 (1.51)	.83	3.18 (1.57)	.84
Spain	3.48 (1.79)	.89	2.95 (1.54)	.86	3.49 (1.59)	.83	2.10 (1.02)	.67
Switzerland (French)	3.60 (1.76)	.87	3.47 (1.61)	.84	3.87 (1.51)	.84	2.21 (0.97)	.68
Switzerland (German)	3.43 (1.80)	.89	3.09 (1.56)	.86	3.64 (1.46)	.82	2.07 (0.92)	.61
Togo	3.64 (1.65)	.75	3.46 (1.50)	.71	4.25 (1.53)	.82	2.54 (1.34)	.73
Turkey	3.35 (1.67)	.81	3.33 (1.63)	.79	3.72 (1.62)	.83	2.32 (1.36)	.77
Uganda	3.24 (1.57)	.75	3.13 (1.48)	.66	3.59 (1.52)	.70	2.83 (1.34)	.65

Note: N = 8,222.

[a]Revelle's (2018) total omega. Cronbach's alpha scores were in the same range, +/−.02, for all countries except Pakistan. For opportunistic silence, differences were slightly larger.

Next, we constrained the loadings to be equal across samples (i.e., *equal factor loadings* or *metric invariance*), which resulted in a slight decrease in fit but an acceptable solution nonetheless. Specifically, comparing this more constrained model of MI with the former one, we accepted it in light of the cut-offs of $\Delta CFI \leq .02$ and $\Delta RMSEA \leq .03$ as recommended by Rutkowski and Svetina (2014), $\Delta\chi^2(272)$ = 549.83, $p < .001$, $\Delta CFI \leq .01$, $\Delta RMSEA \leq .01$. Finally, we additionally constrained the item intercepts across samples (i.e., *equal intercepts* or *scalar invariance*), which resulted in a substantially worse fit of this MI model with respect to the data. In particular, and against the recommended cut-offs for this stage (i.e., $\Delta CFI \leq .01$ and $\Delta RMSEA \leq .015$), scalar invariance cannot be assumed, $\Delta\chi^2(272)$ = 1646.64, $p < .001$, $\Delta CFI < .03$, $\Delta RMSEA < .02$ (see Table 5). This finding is rather common for studies investigating MI, particularly in a cross-cultural setting (e.g., Cieciuch et al., 2018; Davidov et al., 2018; Marsh et al., 2018). Accordingly, we used the alignment method (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014) to estimate group-specific factor means and variances without requiring exact MI, and to provide a detailed account of parameter invariance for every model parameter in each group. Against the basis of the configural model, the alignment method identified only a few sources of measurement noninvariance for the measurement loadings and the intercepts of the indicators (for details on noninvariant loadings or intercepts across samples, see Table S3).

With respect to internal consistency of the subscales, Table 3 shows that the four types of employee silence displayed good omega scores (McNeish, 2018; Raykov & Marcoulides, 2019) across essentially all of the samples. Opportunistic silence showed somewhat lower omega scores and, in some samples, narrowly missed the often-applied criterion for acceptable omega scores for three item-measures (i.e., around .70). In sum, results indicate that Research Question 1 can be answered with "yes," because the instrument for assessing four types of employee silence shows adequate internal consistency and a fairly invariant factor structure across cultures.

A sufficient degree of homogeneity within countries provides further evidence for the validity of country culture measures (Fischer & Schwartz, 2011). Statistical evidence for within-sample homogeneity is provided by *ICC*(1) and *ICC*(2) scores, both unconditional and conditional, that indicate a considerable amount of variance explained by sample origin (see Table 6). Given that "ICC(1)'s in the 5-20% range indicate fairly powerful effects of the overall organization or society" (Hanges & Dickson, 2004, p. 147; see also Bliese, 2000), in our study, the amount of shared variance explained by country membership justifies treating sample origin as a meaningful level of analysis. The fact that there is still a considerable amount of variance unexplained is not surprising, as nationality is a rather distal context (Hackman, 2003) and more proximal factors, such as organizational culture and

TABLE 4 Results of the confirmatory factor analyses for the full sample

Model	χ^2	df	p	CFI	TLI	RMSEA [90% CI]	SRMR	AIC
1. Four orthogonal factors	8,611.09	54	<.001	.74	.69	.17 [.17–.17]	.31	349,721.28
2. One-factor model	7,336.16	54	<.001	.76	.71	.16 [.16–.17]	.08	348,757.36
3. Second-order factor	1,269.34	50	<.001	.96	.95	.07 [.06–.07]	.05	339,128.75
4. Four correlated factors	1,255.35	48	<.001	.96	.95	.07 [.07–.07]	.05	339,114.58

Note: $N = 8,222$. All models were estimated using the MLR estimator and, as such, the χ^2, CFI, TLI, and RMSEA represent the robust versions as produced by lavaan (Version 0.6-7; Rosseel, 2012). The measurement model with four correlated factors fits the data better than a second-order factor model, $\Delta\chi^2$ (2) = 12.71, p < .01, ΔAIC = 14.18. We also compared these measurement models excluding Colombia, Pakistan, and Togo due to their suboptimal individual fit indices (see Table S2). Again, the measurement model with four correlated factors fitted the data better than a second-order factor model, $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 18.61$, p < .001, ΔAIC = 22.42.

TABLE 5 Results of the measurement invariance assessment via confirmatory factor analyses

Model	χ^2	df	p	CFI	TLI	RMSEA [90% CI]	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	p	ΔCFI	$\Delta RMSEA$	Pass
1. Equal form (configural invariance)	3,504.96	1,680	<.001	.95	.93	.08 [.08–.08]	.06	–	–	–	–	–	✓
2. + equal loadings (metric invariance)	4,058.27	1,952	<.001	.95	.94	.08 [.08–.08]	.07	549.83	272	<.001	<.01	<.01	✓
3. + equal intercepts (scalar invariance)	5,467.77	2,224	<.001	.92	.91	.09 [.09–.09]	.08	1,646.64	272	<.001	<.03	<.02	✗

Note: $N = 8,222$. All models were estimated using the MLR estimator and, as such, the χ^2, CFI, TLI, and RMSEA represent the robust versions as produced by lavaan (Version 0.6-7; Rosseel, 2012). χ^2 differences of the robust χ^2 test statistics of the respective models were calculated following the procedure recommended by Bryant and Satorra (2012). To assess whether a particular measurement invariance held, we applied the cut-offs of $\Delta CFI \leq .02$ and $\Delta RMSEA \leq .03$ for test of Model 2 against Model 1, and $\Delta CFI \leq .01$ and $\Delta RMSEA \leq .015$ for test of Model 3 against Model 2.

individual differences, are also important (Tung & Stahl, 2018). We elaborate on this issue in the discussion.

4.2 | Employee silence motives across countries and cultural clusters

Another aim of our study and subject of Research Question 2 was to explore whether employees from different countries vary in their motives to withhold their views at work. Table 3, which shows mean scores and standard deviations, suggests that the four employee silence motives varied considerably between countries. Results also indicate differences in the magnitude of the four silence motives for each country. We used the alignment method (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014) to compare the latent means of the four silence types directly across our samples. Table S4 shows in detail where each sample ranked on each of the four silence types.

These results—along with the ICC scores presented above—suggest that Research Question 2 can also be answered with "yes." However, the distribution of silence motives scores across countries did not resemble established cultural clusters as defined, for example, by the GLOBE program (see also Figure S1, which uses violin plots to illustrate the distribution of silence motives scores across cultural clusters).

4.3 | Relationships between cultural dimensions and employee silence motives

Dimensions that are proposed to characterize cultures are a way to explain similarities and differences across countries (Ting-Toomey,

2010). Tables 7a and 7b provide results from MLM analyses that were used to examine relationships between employee silence motives and the three focal cultural dimensions (i.e., power distance, assertiveness, and in-group collectivism). As can be seen in Table 7b, these cultural dimensions explained a considerable amount of variance in the four silence motives whereby $R^2_{Between}$ was highest for acquiescent and prosocial silence and lower for quiescent and opportunistic silence. We further explored relationships between silence motives and the other cultural dimensions included in the GLOBE framework. We could not test a complete model including all cultural dimensions, because statistical power to identify meaningful effects was limited by the sample size at country-level (see methods section; Scherbaum & Pesner, 2019). Thus, for each hypothesis, we report results for one separate model including one level 2 predictor at a time, and one combined model which included the three dimensions for which we developed hypotheses (see Table 7b).

4.3.1 | Relationships with selected dimensions from the GLOBE typology

Hypothesis 1 proposed that the cultural dimension power distance is positively related to acquiescent, prosocial, and opportunistic silence. As can be seen in Table 7a, in line with Hypotheses 1a and 1b, power distance was positively related to acquiescent and prosocial silence. Hypothesis 1c, in contrast, had to be rejected, because power distance was not significantly related to opportunistic silence. When included in a combined MLM with cultural dimensions in-group collectivism and assertiveness (see Table 7b), power distance was positively related to acquiescent, but not significantly related to prosocial and opportunistic silence at $p < .05$ level.

TABLE 6 Intraclass and zero-order correlations for age, gender, managerial status, and the four silence types at both levels of analysis

Variable	ICC $(1)_{uc}$[a]	ICC $(1)_c$[b]	ICC $(2)_{uc}$[a]	M[c]	SD[c]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	.14	–	.97	38.20	11.02	–	.18	.35*	.28	.14	.14	.14
2. Gender[4]	.07	–	.95	–[d]	-	.07***	–	.44**	−.18	−.15	−.20	.06
3. Managerial status[e]	.16	–	.98	–[e]	-	.04**	.10***	–	.19	.39*	.07	.38*
4. Acquiescent silence	.06	.06	.94	3.53	1.72	.00	−.03**	−.04**	–	.76***	.78***	.57***
5. Quiescent silence	.05	.05	.92	3.21	1.58	−.09***	−.04***	−.05***	.63***	–	.66***	.77***
6. Prosocial silence	.05	.06	.93	3.60	1.55	−.03**	−.03**	−.02	.44***	.55***	–	.44**
7. Opportunistic silence	.08	.08	.95	2.58	1.37	−.04**	.02*	−.01	.49***	.58***	.48***	–

Note: 8,222 employees from 35 samples. Below the diagonal, the pooled within-sample correlations are presented, and, above the diagonal, the sample size weighted between-sample correlations are presented. All p values stem from two-sided tests.

[a]The subscript "uc" indicates the respective unconditional ICC.

[b]The subscript "c" indicates the conditional ICC(1) in that age, gender, and managerial status were controlled at Level 1.

[c]These descriptive statistics refer to the full sample—for the descriptive statistics of the specific samples, please avail yourself of Tables 2 and 3.

[d]Gender was coded: 0 = female, 1 = male, 46% were male; full sample: n_{female} = 4277, n_{male} = 3686, n_{NA} = 259.

[e]Managerial status was coded: 0 = no, 1 = yes; 39% were managers; full sample: N_{no} = 4839, N_{yes} = 3137, N_{NA} = 246.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

TABLE 7a Results of separate multilevel models for each of the nine GLOBE dimensions for societal practices (controlled for within-level variables)

	Acquiescent silence				Quiescent silence				Prosocial silence				Opportunistic silence			
	b^*	SE	95% CI Lower	Upper	b^*	SE	95% CI Lower	Upper	b^*	SE	95% CI Lower	Upper	b^*	SE	95% CI Lower	Upper
Between-level																
Power distance	0.38*	0.16	0.07	0.70	0.13	0.16	−0.17	0.44	0.40*	0.17	0.07	0.72	0.12	0.18	−0.24	0.47
Assertiveness	0.22	0.15	−0.07	0.50	−0.12	0.20	−0.51	0.27	0.08	0.20	−0.31	0.46	−0.25	0.20	−0.64	0.13
In-group collectivism	0.15	0.25	−0.34	0.63	−0.03	0.22	−0.47	0.41	0.25	0.22	−0.19	0.68	0.20	0.23	−0.24	0.65
Institutional collectivism	−0.48***	0.13	−0.74	−0.22	−0.02	0.24	−0.48	0.45	−0.36	0.19	−0.73	0.01	0.09	0.19	−0.28	0.45
Future orientation	−0.10	0.20	−0.48	0.28	0.06	0.17	−0.27	0.39	−0.04	0.21	−0.45	0.38	−0.09	0.19	−0.47	0.29
Gender egalitarianism	0.06	0.27	−0.47	0.58	0.32	0.19	−0.06	0.69	−0.13	0.23	−0.59	0.33	0.35	0.20	−0.05	0.75
Human orientation	−0.18	0.16	−0.50	0.15	0.14	0.21	−0.28	0.55	0.05	0.22	−0.39	0.49	0.33	0.19	−0.05	0.72
Performance orientation	−0.00	0.22	−0.43	0.42	0.06	0.23	−0.39	0.51	−0.00	0.21	−0.42	0.42	0.01	0.23	−0.45	0.47
Uncertainty avoidance	−0.28	0.23	−0.73	0.18	−0.20	0.19	−0.58	0.18	−0.18	0.24	−0.65	0.29	−0.35*	0.17	−0.69	−0.01

Note: 5,036 observations from 22 samples. All coefficients derived from the fully standardized solution estimated using random-intercept multilevel models in *Mplus* (Version 8.4; L. K. Muthén & Muthén, 2017). In every model, we controlled for age, gender, and managerial status at the within-level. All *p* values stem from two-sided tests.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

TABLE 7b Results of the combined multilevel model for the three GLOBE-dimensions for societal practices included in Hypotheses 1–3

	Acquiescent silence				Quiescent silence				Prosocial silence				Opportunistic silence			
	b^*	SE	95% CI Lower	Upper	b^*	SE	95% CI Lower	Upper	b^*	SE	95% CI Lower	Upper	b^*	SE	95% CI Lower	Upper
Within-level																
Gender	−0.03	0.02	−0.06	0.01	−0.01	0.02	−0.05	0.03	−0.02	0.02	−0.06	0.03	0.03	0.02	−0.00	0.06
Age	0.01	0.02	−0.03	0.04	−0.10***	0.01	−0.13	−0.08	−0.02	0.02	−0.06	0.01	−0.04*	0.02	−0.08	0.00
Manager	−0.04	0.02	−0.09	0.00	−0.04	0.02	−0.08	0.01	−0.02	0.02	−0.05	0.02	−0.02	0.03	−0.07	0.03
R^2_{Within}	.00				.00				.00				.01			
Between-level																
Assertiveness	0.11	0.14	−0.17	0.40	−0.22	0.16	−0.52	0.09	−0.01	0.19	−0.38	0.37	−0.25	0.18	−0.60	0.10
Ingroup-collectivism	−0.23	0.32	−0.86	0.40	−0.36	0.32	−0.99	0.28	−0.09	0.33	−0.74	0.55	0.16	0.35	−0.54	0.85
Power distance	0.54*	0.25	0.04	1.03	0.43	0.28	−0.12	0.97	0.47	0.30	−0.13	1.06	0.04	0.31	−0.58	0.65
$R^2_{Between}$	.20				.10				.16				.09			

Note: 5,036 observations from 22 samples. All coefficients derived from the fully standardized solution estimated using random-intercept multilevel models in *Mplus* (Version 8.4; L. K. Muthén & Muthén, 2017). All *p* values stem from two-sided tests.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Hypothesis 2 had to be rejected as assertiveness was not significantly related to any of the four silence motives. Hypothesis 3 proposed positive relationships between in-group collectivism and acquiescent (H3a) and prosocial silence motives (H3b), and a negative relationship with opportunistic silence (H3c). As the relationships with acquiescent, prosocial silence, and opportunistic silence were not significant at $p < .05$ level, Hypotheses 3a–c had to be rejected.

4.3.2 | Additional analyses regarding further cultural dimensions from the GLOBE study

To answer Research Question 3, we explored whether any of the other six culture dimensions that are part of the GLOBE typology (see Table 1) are related to any of the silence motives using MLM with each cultural dimension separately. As can be seen in Table 7a, results revealed statistically significant negative relationships between institutional collectivism and acquiescent silence, and between uncertainty avoidance and opportunistic silence. No statistically significant relationships were found between future orientation, performance orientation, gender egalitarianism, and humane orientation and any of the silence motives.

5 | DISCUSSION

Although the wide-ranging detrimental effects of employee silence are apparent and have been documented in many regions across the globe, little systematic knowledge is available on international similarities and differences as well as cultural specifics that may affect employees' motives for withholding their views. We advanced international research on employee silence by introducing a reliable measure to assess four types of silence (i.e., acquiescent, quiescent, prosocial, and opportunistic silence) in 21 languages and demonstrating its psychometric qualities. We further add to this aim by providing scores of differentially-motivated silence for 33 countries and revealing relationships of cultural dimensions from the GLOBE framework with the four silence motives. In the following, we discuss why our results regarding the hypothesized and exploratory links between cultural dimensions and silence motives specify and, in part, challenge traditional assumptions of the culture and organizational behavior literature on silence.

Essential to the power distance dimension is that people in high power distance societies do not challenge hierarchies by expressing their concerns to more powerful people. One potential explanation underlying this reasoning is that this may be due to fear as evident from the conceptualization of this dimension in the Hofstede (but not the GLOBE) study. Based on our nuanced approach to examining motives for silence, the relationships between power distance and *acquiescent* and *prosocial silence* show that high power distance facilitates conformity, passive acceptance, and a tendency to avoid causing conflicts. Further, our findings suggest that power distance is not

associated with remaining silent due to fear of saying something that could offend powerful people (i.e., *quiescent silence*). As such, a contribution of our study is that it demonstrates differences between the power distance dimensions as conceptualized by Hofstede and GLOBE (see also Hofstede, 2006). The fear of raising issues with powerful people as a lone individual is central to Hofstede's power distance measure; in contrast, the GLOBE power distance measure does not directly ask about fear. The GLOBE measure thus reflects that the abuse of power (e.g., by leaders) may induce fear in followers; at the same time, trust in hierarchy, positions, and institutions can be comforting for individuals. The finding that none of the cultural dimensions from the GLOBE typology explained considerable variance in *quiescent silence* could also indicate that proximal factors such as leadership and team psychological safety (Edmondson, 2018) have a stronger influence on employees' fears than more distal factors such as societal culture.

Distinct relationships of silence with in-group and institutional collectivism support claims that collectivism is multidimensional (Vignoles et al., 2016), and indicate that wide-spread assumptions regarding collectivism and silence might need to be reconsidered. In-group collectivism which traditionally has been associated with conformity and thus a reluctance to express diverging viewpoints, was not related to any of the silence motives in our study. Instead, institutional collectivism—the second collectivism dimension that was introduced by the GLOBE study (Gelfand et al., 2004)—explained considerable variance in acquiescent silence. Moreover, while a positive association was expected between in-group collectivism and silence, institutional collectivism was negatively related to silence. In the GLOBE program's validation studies, institutional collectivism was linked to involvement, team-oriented leadership, and teamwork prompting Gelfand et al. (2004, p. 472) to suggest that societies that are characterized by institutional collectivism seek to accomplish their aims "through collective efforts, through practices which are concerned with others, and through practices which are not being assertive or power dominating". Our findings support this reasoning. In cultures characterized by high institutional collectivism, expressing one's views might not be perceived as dissent, but as a means to help the team develop and learn.

Promoting assertiveness, in contrast, seems not to be a way to overcome silence at work. We expected a negative relationship between assertiveness and silence based on the assumption that members of high assertiveness cultures are willing to engage in conflict, speak up, defend, and act in their own interest (Ames & Flynn, 2007; Kwon & Farndale, 2020). These features are proposed to facilitate voice at the individual level, but in cultures that value assertiveness, not only are individuals more assertive, they also have to work among assertive peers who may create a threatening context (Schneider, 1987). Given that a safe context is a precondition for employee voice (Chamberlin et al., 2018; Edmondson & Lei, 2014), employees in high assertiveness cultures may think twice whether challenging the status quo is worth the hassle. This hesitation might be reinforced by the opportunism that is associated with assertiveness as a cultural dimension (den Hartog, 2004; Doney et al., 1998).

Taras et al.' (2010) meta-analysis provided some support for this reasoning: masculinity, a culture dimension from the Hofstede (1980) framework that is associated with assertiveness, was negatively related to conflict avoidance, but it was also positively related to accommodating and compromising conflict management styles. Thus, our reasoning regarding a negative association between assertiveness and silence might have been misguided by an atomistic fallacy (Brewer & Venaik, 2014; Diez-Roux, 1998): cultural characteristics such as assertiveness might yield differing or even contradicting effects at the individual and collective level.

Opportunistic silence was also not significantly related to the three cultural dimensions for which existing theory and evidence recommended the development of specific hypotheses. Instead, opportunistic silence was negatively related to uncertainty avoidance, a cultural dimension that we included to explore potential relationships. This is an interesting finding given that voice is often associated with uncertain outcomes for the individual who speaks up, and challenging the status quo is supposed to induce uncertainty in systems. However, at the cultural level, change is essential for survival and should not be oppressed by fear of uncertainty (Schein, 2017). To secure development, cultures that view uncertainty as a problem that should be avoided, might provide employees with opportunities to overcome uncertainty (Kwon & Farndale, 2020). This could include procedures that guide change-oriented behaviors such as formal voice channels which, in turn, should reduce silence in such countries.

5.1 | Theoretical and practical implications

5.1.1 | Scale application and scale validity

We found evidence (i.e., internal reliabilities, factor structure, sufficient degree of homogeneity within countries, measurement invariance) that the Knoll and van Dick (2013) scale is a reliable and valid measure that can be used for international research projects and surveys that are concerned with employee participation, organizational learning, safety issues, or preventing wrongdoings. Having such measures is a precondition for identifying links between specific types of silence and specific country characteristics that eventually might help to disentangle the relations between country culture and silence.

5.1.2 | Relationships between culture (dimensions) and silence might be more complex than previously assumed

Cultural dimensions have been suggested as a starting point for examining the relationship between culture and employee silence. Studies suggesting that dimensions such as power distance and collectivism are responsible for differences in silence (e.g., Botero & van Dyne, 2009; Rhee et al., 2014), however, drew upon a limited number of (mostly prototypical) countries and used individual-level scores to represent culture characteristics. Results of our study challenge and specify established views of the potential of individual cultural dimensions as predictors of silence.

Results showed that only three out of the nine cultural dimensions included in the study significantly explained variance in employee silence. The pattern that they showed indicates that silence is more likely to occur in cultures which accept status differences and rely on established structures, and less likely in cultures in which collective efforts are ingrained in their societal practices. Strong in-group bonds did not make silence more likely to occur nor did societal practices characterized by assertiveness make silence less likely. Moreover, our study specifies the motives that are responsible for the reluctance to challenge authorities in high power distance cultures. The distinct relationships that we found between silence and in-group and institutional collectivism point at the necessity to challenge traditional views of collectivism and paves the way for more differentiated views (see Brewer & Venaik, 2011; Vignoles et al., 2016) and combinations with other dimensions as proposed in the concepts of horizontal and vertical collectivism (Singelis et al., 1995).

5.1.3 | Associations of silence with specific countries need to be reconsidered

Our results show that various countries ranked high (e.g., Croatia, Slovenia, Canada, and Iran) as well as low (Denmark, China, and Chile) on silence motives, and some countries ranked rather differently across the four silence types (e.g., Greece and Togo). Furthermore, the country clusters suggested by the GLOBE study showed no consistent pattern regarding the countries' silence scores (see Table 2 and Figures S1 and S2). These findings support prior research (e.g., Gudykunst et al., 1996; Hasegawa & Gudykunst, 1998) in challenging the validity of widespread assumptions regarding the use and value of silence in different cultures. They indicate that there are no typical countries in which silence is high or low, and silence motives are not necessarily all high or all low in any given country.

The amount of variance that cultural dimensions could explain in our study recommends caution when using cultural dimensions to predict silence and assign countries as high- or low-silence countries—at least for two reasons. First, different culture characteristics might be responsible for the same silence scores. While for some countries in our study silence might be driven by low institutional collectivism, the driver for others might be high power distance. Expecting a silent workforce due to their score on one particular cultural dimension would thus be misleading. Second, the effect of cultural dimensions could be substituted or neutralized by the work context and/or by country-specific features that are not necessarily represented in a cultural dimension. These features may result, for example, from specific traditions of providing participatory rights (see Szabo et al., 2002) and collective experiences relevant for silence (so-called "remote historic

drivers"; Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018). The latter may include a socialization in authoritarian cultures (as it is the case in former Communist countries in Eastern Europe or countries with a history in colonization; den Hartog & Dickson, 2012) and growing up or living in difficult socio-economic conditions (Ehrenreich, 2001; Leana et al., 2012).

5.2 | Limitations and directions for future research

Cross-cultural research is challenging and, while results in terms of psychometric qualities justified scale adaptation, our study does not meet all the criteria emphasized for comparing results across cultures (Spector et al., 2015; Tsui et al., 2007). We address some of these limitations and suggest how overcoming them provides opportunities to further improve international research on employee silence.

5.2.1 | Sample characteristics and geographical coverage

Due to limited resources, we were not able to obtain samples that are representative of their respective countries and are completely similar in features that might influence silence tendencies (e.g., gender, occupational sector, and managerial status). Besides collecting representative samples with respect to demographics or regions, representativeness could also be justified by measuring cultural variables (e.g., individualism) and showing that the scores of the sample match the scores as achieved in large cultural studies. Data collection procedures also differed by country (see Table S1). However, using superficially equivalent data collection procedures such as online surveys in each country might not solve this problem as data collection procedures can have different implications across countries (see Spector et al., 2015).

Furthermore, while all of the GLOBE cultural clusters are represented in our samples with at least two countries, European samples dominate. One of the purposes of conducting this research was to make scales available in many languages, which eventually allows for extending silence research geographically. This is necessary as very few studies have been conducted in Arab countries, Latin America, and Africa leaving the diverse models of selfhood and silence that prevail in these regions marginalized (see Vignoles et al., 2016).

5.2.2 | Country as a unit of analysis for examining cultural influences

While statistical measures (i.e., ICC) justified treating country as a unit of analysis in our study, the amount of explained variance by country was not large. As this is rather common in cross-cultural research (Tsui et al., 2007), some researchers challenge viewing countries as shared meaning systems (see Schwartz, 2014; Tung & Stahl, 2018).

Indeed, individuals are subject to several influences within their country of origin and countries themselves are not homogeneous societies (Chao & Moon, 2005; Peterson et al., 2018). They can comprise subcultures and regions with distinct learning histories due to specific historical developments or geographical specifics. Further, differences in socioeconomic development can be a source of cultural variation within countries (Marcus et al., 2019). Future research could identify whether sources of within-country-variation might also explain variance in silence.

5.2.3 | Complementing social scientific with ethnographic approaches

When discussing approaches to cross-cultural studies, we introduced the distinction between social scientific and ethnographic approaches (Ting-Toomey, 2010). While the social scientific approach that we drew upon is useful for the purposes of this study (which was comparison of silence tendencies across countries and cultural dimensions), conducting ethnographic studies could advance research on culture and silence and provide insights into some of our more ambiguous findings. For example, the low silence scores in China and the high silence scores in the Anglo cluster might be based on the fact that members of different cultures do not just behave differently in a particular situation, but define the situation itself differently (Leung & Cohen, 2011; Mendoza-Denton & Mischel, 2007). Situations related to silence and voice might be of high or low relevance for members of a culture and thus remaining silent becomes more salient and more likely to be remembered. Besides, ethnographic studies could reveal culture-specific motives for silence that we did not examine in our study (see Fontes', 2007, ethnographic study on shame as an important motive for silence in Latino cultures).

5.2.4 | Going beyond GLOBE and cultural dimensions

The current study investigated silence motives in relation to the cultural framework of the GLOBE study (House et al., 2004). Starting with this established typology had the advantage that a relatively broad range of cultural characteristics could be related to silence, and scores for these characteristics were available for a large number of countries. However, the cross-cultural research literature is complex and offers various approaches to characterize and contrast cultures including high-/low-context cultures (Hall, 1976) and the World Values Survey (Inglehart, 2018; for more exhaustive lists, see Lytle et al., 1995; Taras et al., 2009). For some of these approaches—Schwartz' (2006) cultural value orientations, Hofstede's (1980) typology of cultural dimensions, Minkov et al.' (2017) revision of Hofstede's individualism–collectivism dimension, and the concept of cultural tightness (see Gelfand et al., 2006)—we provide brief descriptions and analyses in Appendix S1.

5.2.5 | Culture as a moderator

Our study focused on the direct effects that culture characteristics might have on employee silence. However, culture may also have a moderating effect on the relationships between more proximal antecedents and silence, and cultural dimensions might interact in a similar way as individual traits do (Judge & Long, 2012; Spector et al., 2015; Tsui et al., 2007). For example, as cultural differences exist regarding the role of seniority and gender in societies, in societies in which older and male employees have a higher status, the barrier to overcome silence is higher for younger and female employees. Older and male employees, in turn, may experience greater responsibility to speak up. Kwon and Farndale (2020) suggested that cultural tightness (i.e., the extent to which cultures are characterized by strong norms and low tolerance of deviance; Gelfand et al., 2006, Triandis, 1996) could function as moderator between other cultural dimensions and silence. For example, the relationships between silence and power distance and institutional collectivism might be stronger if examined in tight cultures, because cultural tightness restricts the range of permissible behavior.

6 | CONCLUSION

Securing effective communication and dealing with challenges to the status quo are central issues for the sustainable development of societal and organizational cultures. Despite frequent reports of detrimental silence in organizational practice across the globe, there is little common ground, empirically or from a measurement standpoint, on which to build a coherent body of knowledge on employee silence in different cultures. In the first large-scale study examining differentially-motivated employee silence, we validated scales in 21 languages that can facilitate international silence research. We further provided scores for 33 countries that can function as a benchmark for future research in these countries as well as orientation for practitioners doing business in increasingly diverse economic settings. Making a first step toward explaining international differences and similarities in silence motives, we linked culture dimensions from the GLOBE framework to silence. Results suggest that silence motives (with the exception of quiescent silence) are related to power distance, institutional collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance. Results also suggest that relationships between cultural dimensions and silence are more complex than previously believed, and that stereotypical assumptions regarding cultural dimensions and the use of silence in specific countries need to be reconsidered. We recommend that—besides replicating our findings with stratified random samples—future research could benefit from complementing social scientific with ethnographic approaches, extending silence research geographically and conceptually, considering units of culture other than nations and cultural frameworks beyond GLOBE, and examining culture not just as an antecedent but as moderator between more proximal antecedents and silence.

ORCID

Michael Knoll https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1148-0260
Martin Götz https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1415-1240
Elisa Adriasola https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1252-0762
Amer Ali Al-Atwi https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1799-0066
Alicia Arenas https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5918-8760
Kokou A. Atitsogbe https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3469-1738
Anindo Bhattacharjee https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3824-365X
Norman D. Blanco https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2690-7060
Grégoire Bollmann https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4169-219X
Janine Bosak https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5701-6538
Cagri Bulut https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3291-673X
Madeline Carter https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3232-2317
Matej Černe https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5049-588X
Susanna L. M. Chui https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0574-6787
Donatella Di Marco https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2612-7961
Gesa S. Duden https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3196-0755
Vicki Elsey https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9334-4595
Paola Gatti https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6174-5052
Chiara Ghislieri https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4002-8756
Steffen R. Giessner https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8035-5092
Kenta Hino https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3022-9944
Joeri Hofmans https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6619-0706
Thomas S. Jønsson https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5098-996X
Pazambadi Kazimna https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9081-9172
Kevin B. Lowe https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0929-7018
Juliana Malagón https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9198-6359
Hassan Mohebbi https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3661-1690
Anthony Montgomery https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1118-7398
Lucas Monzani https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3375-068X
Anne Nederveen Pieterse https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0405-1898
Emir Ozeren https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4219-8401
Deirdre O'Shea https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9107-1434
Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4084-5246
Jennifer Pickett https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3181-9786
Anna A. Rangkuti https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9853-9968

Sylwiusz Retowski [iD] https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6133-0658

Farzad Sattari Ardabili [iD] https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9734-7921

Silvia A. Silva [iD] https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1304-2923

Ana Šimunić [iD] https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0476-8415

Niklas K. Steffens [iD] https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3990-2592

Susana M. Tavares [iD] https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0146-8433

Rolf van Dick [iD] https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6308-9466

Sut I. Wong [iD] https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0663-4496

Hannes Zacher [iD] https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6336-2947

ENDNOTE

[1] We also tested whether the fit of the four-correlated factors in each sample (Table S2). In general, the four-correlated factors fit the respective sample data well, but yielded suboptimal fit indices for Colombia, Pakistan, and Togo. Thus, we tested the competing measurement models as outlined above again in the full sample, this time excluding Colombia, Pakistan, and Togo—the results and conclusions regarding the choice of the four-correlated factors as the best fitting measurement model remained the same.

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Michael Knoll is researcher and lecturer at Leipzig University. His research focuses on issues related to employee silence and voice, leadership, organizational development, and culture.

Martin Götz is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Zurich's Department of Psychology. His research interests include (workplace) deviance, questionable research/reporting practices, and quantitative methods.

Elisa Adriasola is a researcher and lecturer at Universidad Adolfo Ibanez, Chile. Her research focuses on issues related to leadership in teams, motivation, leader development, diversity and multilevel phenomena.

Amer Ali Al-Atwi is a professor of organizational behavior at Al Muthanna University. His research focuses broadly on leadership, organizational misbehavior, work stress, organizational identification, and issues in social network.

Alicia Arenas is associate professor at Universidad de Sevilla. Her research is currently focused on diversity and occupational health, paying attention to develop diversity policies in order to create more inclusive, sustainable, and healthy workplaces.

Kokou A. Atitsogbe is a graduate of Msc in work and organizational psychology and currently a PhD student and a Junior FNS researcher in career counseling at the University of Lausanne. His domains of research include career counseling and occupational integration, career development, cross-cultural psychology, psychometrics, and personality psychology.

Stephen Barrett is researcher at Technical University Dublin. His research focuses on applied machine learning and statistics.

Anindo Bhattacharjee is an assistant professor of General Management at Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS), Mumbai, India. His research focuses on leadership, management of public/private health systems in emerging markets, organizational psychology, and ethics. He also actively speaks on ancient wisdom for modern management to youth and business leaders in various forums and has been a TEDx speaker in 2019.

Norman Blanco is a political scientist and student of the master's degree in urban government at the National University of Colombia and member of the security and defense research group at the same university. He has research experience in security and defense, civil-military relations, citizen security, and organizational silence.

Sabina Bogilović is researcher and lecturer at Faculty of Public Administration, University of Ljubljana. Her research focuses on issues related to creativity, innovation, knowledge exchange, and diversity.

Grégoire Bollmann is senior lecturer at the University of Zurich. His research interests include contextual influences of unethical behaviors at work and dynamics of career events, resources, and well-being.

Janine Bosak is professor of work and organizational psychology at Dublin City University. Her research interests lie in the areas of women and leadership, employee well-being in organizations, and culture.

Cagri Bulut is a professor and director of the Strategy and Excellence Office at Yasar University. His research focuses on strategic orientations, innovation management, and employee attitudes.

Madeline Carter is an organizational psychologist and a senior lecturer at Northumbria University. Her research focuses on workplace bullying and incivility, training and learning, and employee silence in healthcare.

Matej Cerne is associate professor at the University of Ljubljana. His research interests include the study of creativity and innovation, knowledge hiding, leadership, digital work, and multi-level issues in management.

Susanna L. M. Chui is an assistant professor of the Department Management at the Hang Seng University of Hong Kong. Her research interests include leadership and identity, leadership development, social entrepreneurship, and hybrid organizing.

Donatella Di Marco is assistant professor at Universidad de Sevilla (Spain) and researcher at the Business Research Unit of Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (Portugal). Her research focuses on participation at work, diversity management, and inclusive organizations.

Gesa Solveig Duden is a researcher at the University of Osnabrueck, the University of Leipzig, Germany, and the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil. Her research centers around culture and psychology, mostly related to questions of transcultural psychiatry, mental health, migration, and intercultural communication.

Vicki Elsey is an associate professor of occupational and organizational psychology at Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK. Her research focuses on sustainable employability and factors that impact on career development and choice.

Makoto Fujimura is an associate professor at Fukuoka Jo Gakuin University. Her research areas are social psychology and organizational psychology.

Paola Gatti is a post-doctoral research fellow at the University of Torino Department of Psychology (Italy). Her research interests focus on leadership and followership, well-being and motivation at work, and identity dynamics on the job.

Chiara Ghislieri is an associate professor at the University of Torino Department of Psychology (Italy). Her research addresses a variety of issues associated with employee well-being at work, leadership and followership, work-family balance, and vocational guidance.

Steffen R. Giessner is professor of organizational behavior and change at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University. His primary research topics are employee support during organizational merger, follower's perceptions of leadership, antecedents of leader behavior, and non-verbal communication of power.

Kenta Hino is a researcher and professor at Komazawa University. His research concern is organization theory and organizational behavior, especially leadership studies.

Joeri Hofmans is professor of work and organizational psychology at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium. His primary research interests focus on the role of personality, leadership, and motivation at work, with particular emphasis on within-person fluctuations and temporal dynamics.

Thomas F. Jønsson is an associate professor at Aarhus University, Denmark. His research focuses on psychological perspectives on employee involvement and leadership.

Pazambadi Kazimna is a researcher and lecturer at the Department of Applied Psychology, University of Lomé, Togo. His research focuses on issues related to work design and career development.

Kevin B. Lowe is the professor in leadership at the University of Sydney Business School. His research focuses on leadership, followership, and cross-cultural management.

Juliana Malagón is researcher and assistant professor at Universidad de Los Andes School of Management. Her research focuses on issues related to financial markets, idiosyncratic risk, and price dynamics.

Hassan Mohebbi's main research interests are individual differences, writing, and assessment literacy. He is an editorial board member of *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education* (Springer), *Language Testing in Asia* (Springer), *Language Teaching Research Quarterly* (EUROKD), *Frontiers in Psychology*, and *Frontiers in Communication*.

Anthony Montgomery is professor of work and organizational psychology at the University of Macedonia, Greece. His research focuses on issues related to job burnout, patient safety, quality of care, and organizational interventions in healthcare.

Lucas Monzani is an assistant professor of organizational behavior at Ivey Business School in Western University (Canada). His research interests are positive leadership and promoting sustained excellence in organizations.

Anne Nederveen Pieterse is associate professor of organizational behavior at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University Rotterdam. She has a PhD from Rotterdam School of Management. Her research interests include leadership, self-management, team information processing, goal orientation, team diversity, and innovation.

Muhammed Ngoma is a researcher and professor at Makerere University Business School. He holds a PhD in Business Administration. His current research interests are in the areas of firm internationalization/international entrepreneurship, cross-cultural issues in international business, employee silence, and graduate employability.

Emir Ozeren is an associate professor of management and organization studies in the Faculty of Tourism at Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey. He has been also affiliated as a member of the research group in the Centre for Inclusive and Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CISEI) at the University of Southampton, UK. He holds a PhD degree with "excellent cum laude" from the University of Rome "Tor Vergata," Italy. His research focuses on issues related to equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace, gender, queer, and critical management studies, social sustainability, organization behavior, and tourism sociology.

Deirdre O'Shea is senior lecturer in work and organizational psychology at the Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick, Ireland. Her research focuses on psychological resource based interventions, self-regulation, work motivation, trust, and various work-related behaviors, including proactive behavior, voice, silence, and incivility.

Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen is a management consultant specializing in diversity and inclusive leadership. Previously a PostDoc at the Department of Psychology, Aarhus University, where she received her PhD.

Jennifer Pickett, PhD, is a work psychologist, Alaskan fisherpoet, and freelance writer. She specializes in personality at work and enhancing employee well-being in maritime and extreme environments.

Anna Armeini Rangkuti is a lecturer of psychology at Universitas Negeri in Jakarta, Indonesia. Her research focuses on learning, academic integrity, peer reporting, and silence. Now she is a PhD student at Faculty of Psychology Universitas Indonesia.

Sylwiusz Retowski is researcher and lecturer at SWPS University (Poland). His research focuses on issues related to organizational attitudes, leadership, coping with situations of uncertainty, and organizational change.

Farzad Sattari Ardabili is assistant professor in the Department of Management, Islamic Azad University, Ardabil Branch, Ardabil, Iran. His research focuses on leadership and organizational behavior, especially on managerial wisdom, career adaptability, ambidextrous behavior, and self-efficacy.

Dr. Razia Shaukat is a research fellow at Comsats University, Islamabad. Her research focuses on issues related to employees' silence, interpersonal conflict, workplace well-being, and performance.

Silvia A. Silva is associate professor and researcher at ISCTE - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa. Her research focuses on issues related to employee safety and health at work, climate, learning, silence, and voice.

Ana Šimunić is an assistant professor at the Department of Psychology of the University of Zadar, Croatia. She is involved in courses on psychometrics, scientific methodology, and ecological psychology. Her research interests are related to topics in organizational and ecological psychology, especially work-life integration issues.

Niklas K. Steffens is Australian Research Council DECRA fellow and senior lecturer in the School of Psychology at The University of Queensland. His work centers on leadership and followership, group processes and team work, and health and well-being in applied contexts.

Faniya Sultanova works as a specialist in educational and methodical work at Lomonosov Moscow State University. Her research interests focus on mental health and its cognitive and emotional bases.

Daria Szücs was born in Timişoara and received her BSc from Chemnitz University of Technology. She is currently doing her MSc in psychology at the University of Hamburg.

Susana M. Tavares is researcher at the Business Research Unit of ISCTE-Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, Portugal. Her research focuses on issues related to innovation and employee creativity, organizational identification, well-being at work, work-family interface, and entrepreneurship.

Arun Tipandjan is research psychologist at International Centre for Psychological Counselling and Social Research, Puducherry, India. His research focuses on cross cultural comparison.

Rolf van Dick is Professor of Social Psychology at Goethe University Frankfurt (Germany) and he is interested on social identity processes in organizations, with a focus on leadership and health.

Dimitri Vasiljevic is associate professor at NEOMA Business School. His research focuses on issues related to group dynamics at work, emotions, and negotiation.

Sut I. Wong is professor and head of Department of Communication and Culture at BI Norwegian Business School. Her research focuses on leadership, employee proactivity, new ways of working, digital teams, team innovation, and coordination.

Hannes Zacher is a professor of work and organizational psychology at Leipzig University. In his research program, he investigates aging at work, health and well-being, and action regulation.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

APPENDIX A.

TABLE A1 Translations of the items of the four types of employee silence as published in English in Knoll and van Dick (2013)

Item	English	Spanish	German	Italian	Turkish	Arabic
1	...because I would not have found a sympathetic ear, anyway.	... porque, en cualquier caso, no habría encontrado a nadie comprensivo que quisiera escuchar.	... weil ich damit ohnehin kein Gehör finde.	... perchè non avrei trovato in ogni caso un ascolto comprensivo.	... beni dinleyecek birinin olmaması.	لأنني لم أجد أذنا متعاطفة معي.
2	...because nothing would have changed, anyway.	... porque, en cualquier caso, nada habría cambiado	... weil sich sowieso nichts ändern wird.	... perchè non sarebbe cambiato nulla, in ogni caso.	... nasıl olsa hiçbir şeyin değişmeyeceği.	لأنه مهما قلت لن يتغير شيء.
3	...because my superiors are not open to proposals, concerns, or the like.	... porque mis superiores no están abiertos a nuevas propuestas, preocupaciones, etc.	... weil meine Vorgesetzten nicht offen für Vorschläge, Bedenken und ähnliches sind.	... perché i miei capi non sono aperti alle proposte, alle preoccupazioni o ad altro.	... üstlerimin öneri, endişe vb. düşüncelere açık olmaması.	لأن رؤسائي غير منفتحين على الإقتراحات أو المخاوف أو ما شابه.
4	... because of fear of negative consequences.	... por miedo a posibles consecuencias negativas.	...weil ich Angst vor negativen Konsequenzen habe.	... perché ho paura delle conseguenze negative.	... olumsuz sonuçlardan korkuyor olmam.	بسبب الخوف من العواقب التي قد تحدث لي.
5	... to not make me vulnerable in the face of colleagues or superiors.	... para no estar en una posición vulnerable frente a compañeros o superiores.	...um mich gegenüber Kolleg(inn)en und Vorgesetzten nicht angreifbar zu machen.	... per non rendermi vulnerabile di fronte a colleghi o superiori.	... iş arkadaşlarımın veya üstlerimin karşısında zor duruma düşmemek.	حتى لا أبدو ضعيفاً بين زملائي أو مديري. في العمل
6	... because I feared there would be disadvantages from speaking up.	.... porque tuve miedo de las posibles desventajas de hablar.	...weil ich Angst habe, dass mir daraus Nachteile entstehen.	...perché temevo gli svantaggi che sarebbero derivati dal prendere posizione.	... açıkça konuşmanın getireceği olumsuzluklardan korkmam.	لكي لا تظهر عيوبي عند التكلم.
7	... because I did not want to embarrass others.	... porque no quise avergonzar a otros.	...um andere nicht bloßzustellen.	... perché non volevo mettere in imbarazzo gli altri.	... başkalarını utandırmak istememem.	لأنني لم أرد أن أتسبب بحرج للآخرين.
8	... because I did not want to hurt the feelings of colleagues or superiors.	... porque no quise dañar los sentimientos de compañeros o superiores.	...um nicht die Gefühle von Kolleg (inn)en und/oder Vorgesetzten zu verletzen.	... perché non volevo ferire i sentimenti di colleghi o superiori	... iş arkadaşlarımın veya üstlerimin duygularını incitmek istememem.	لأنني لم أرغب في خدش مشاعر زملائي أو مديري المباشر في العمل.
9	... because I did not want others to get into trouble.	... porque no quise meter a otros en problemas.	...damit andere keinen Ärger bekommen.	... perchè non volevo che altri finissero nei guai	... başkalarının sorun yaşamasını istememem.	لأنني لا أريد للآخرين أن يقعوا في المشاكل.
10	... because that would have led to avoidable additional work.	... porque me habría llevado a tener que hacer trabajo adicional.	...weil sonst nur unnötiger Aufwand auf mich zukommt.	... perché avrebbe portato a fare un lavoro aggiuntivo evitabile.	... aksi halde kaçınılmaz olarak daha fazla çalışmak zorunda olmam.	لأن ذلك قد يعطيني أقوم بعمل إضافي يمكن تجنبه.
11	... because of concerns that others could take an advantage of my ideas.	... por la preocupación de que otros podrían aprovecharse de mis ideas.	...weil ich Bedenken habe, dass andere von meinen Ideen profitieren könnten.	... per la preoccupazione che altri possano trarre vantaggio dalle mie idee.	... başkalarının benim fikirlerimden faydalanabileceği endişesi.	خشية أن يستفيد الآخرون من أفكاري.
12	... to not give away my knowledge advantage.	... para no perder la ventaja que me daba aquello que sabía.	...um meinen Wissensvorsprung nicht preiszugeben.	... per non rivelare il mio vantaggio in termini di conoscenza.	... bilgi avantajımı kaçırmak/ kaybetmek istememem.	لأني لم أرد إعطاء خبراتي ومعرفتي للآخرين.

(Continues)

TABLE A1 (Continued)

Item	Polish	French	Chinese	Persian (Iran sample)	Slovenian
1	… bo i tak nie znalazłbym/ znalazłabym zrozumienia.	… parce que de toute façon, on ne m'écouterait pas.	…是因为即我说了，也有人会心。	زیرا گوش شنوایی پیدا نمی کنم	… saj tako ali tako ne bi našel sočutnega ušesa.
2	… bo i tak nic by się zmieniło.	… parce que de toute façon, cela ne changerait rien.	…是因为说了也无济于事，事情根本不会因此而有所改变。	چون چیزی تغییر نمی کرد	… ker se tako ali tako nič ne bi spremenilo.
3	… ponieważ moi przełożeni nie są otwarci na propozycje, wątpliwości i tym podobne kwestie.	… parce que mes supérieurs ne sont pas ouverts aux propositions, préoccupations ou autres.	…是因为我的上级并不乐于接受意见、建议或者其他的想法。	چون مافوق من به پیشنهادات و دغدغه ها یا مسایل این چنینی اهمیت نمی دهد	… ker moji nadrejeni niso odprti za predloge, pomisleke ali podobno.
4	… ponieważ bałem/bałam się konsekwencji.	… parce que je crains des conséquences négatives.	…是因为我害怕得到消极反应。	زیرا از پیامدهای منفی آن می ترسم	… zaradi strahu pred negativnimi posledicami.
5	… żeby nie narazić się kolegom lub przełożonym.	… pour ne pas me rendre vulnérable vis-à-vis de mes collègues et supérieurs.	…是为了不被同事或上级责备。	نمی خواهم وجهه ام را در مقابل همکاران یا مافوق از دست بدهم	… da ne bi izpadel ranljiv pred kolegi ali nadrejenimi.
6	… ponieważ bałem/am się ujemnych stron mojego wystąpienia.	… parce que je crains me retrouver en position défavorable.	…是因为我害怕自己会陷入劣势之中	از عواقب بد آقدا کردن می ترسیم	… ker sem se bal neprijetnosti, ki bi lahko izhajale iz tega.
7	… ponieważ nie chciałem/ chciałam innych wprawić w zakłopotanie.	… pour ne pas mettre autrui dans l'embarras.	…是为了不让其他人不感到难堪。	زیرا نمی خواستم دیگران را ذارا احت کنم	… ker nisem hotel osramotiti drugih.
8	… ponieważ nie chciałem/ chciałam urazić uczuć kolegów lub przełożonych.	… pour ne pas blesser les susceptibilités de collègues et/ou de supérieurs.	…是为了不害同事或者上级的感情。	زیرا نمی خواستم احساسات همکاران و مافوق را جریحه دار کنم	… ker nisem hotel prizadeti občutkov sodelavcev ali nadrejenih.
9	… ponieważ nie chcę, żeby inni mieli kłopoty.	… pour éviter des difficultés à autrui.	…是因此，其他人不会有所心。	زیرا نمی خواستم دیگران را به دردسر بیاندازم	… ker nočem, da bi drugi zašli v težave.
10	… ponieważ to skończyłoby się przydzieleniem dodatkowej pracy, której można było uniknąć.	… parce que cela me ferait perdre du temps inutilement.	…是因为这会导致更多的工作量，消更多的时间和精力。	زیرا منجر به انجام کارهای بیشتری می شود	… ker bi to pripeljalo do dodatnega dela, ki se ga je mogoče izogniti.
11	… ponieważ obawiałem/am się, że inni wykorzystają na swoją korzyść moje pomysły.	… parce que je crains que d'autres puissent profiter de mes idées.	…是因为我觉得，其他人从我法中获益。	بخاطر اینکه دیگران ایده های مرا از نظر من بدزدند و برای خود بردارند	… zaradi skrbi, da bi drugi lahko izkoristili moje ideje.
12	… żeby nie ujawnić mojej przewagi wiedzy.	… pour ne pas divulguer mes connaissances.	…是因为我的不愿意把自己所知道的信息都暴露出来。	افشا کنم و از گکردانده ام را و از گکردنه اطلاعاتم را نمی	…da ne bi izdal prednosti, ki izhajajo iz mojega znanja.

TABLE A1 (Continued)

Item	Romanian	Danish	Japanese	Norwegian	Bahasa Indonesia
1	… pentru că nu aş fi găsit o ureche care să mă asculte, oricum.	… fordi ingen ville have hørt på mig alligevel.	…いずれにせよ、共感してくれそうな人がいないなかったからだ。	.. fordi jeg ville uansett ikke ha opplevd at noen ville høre på meg.	… karena saya belum menemukan pendengar yang peduli kepada saya.
2	… pentru că nimic nu s-ar fi schimbat, oricum.	… fordi det ikke ville have ændret noget alligevel.	…いずれにせよ、何にもかわらないと思ったからだ。	.. fordi det ville uansett ikke ha endret noe.	…karena tidak ada yang akan berubah meskipun saya bersuara.
3	… pentru că superiorii mei nu sunt deschişi la propuneri, preocupări sau altele asemenea.	… fordi mine overordnede ikke er åbne overfor forslag, bekymringer eller lignende.	…私の上司は提案や疑念に耳をかそうとしないから だ。	…fordi mine overordnete ikke er åpne for bekymringer, forslag og den slags.	… karena atasan saya tidak terbuka untuk usulan, keprihatinan, atau hal sejenis lainnya.
4	… din cauza fricii de consecinţe negative.	… på grund af frygt for negative konsekvenser.	…よくない結果を恐れたから だ。	..av frykt for negative konsekvenser.	…karena saya takut akan konsekuensi negatif yang mungkin terjadi.
5	… să nu mă fac vulnerabil faţă de colegi sau superiori.	… for ikke at gøre mig sårbar overfor kolleger eller overordnede.	…上司や同僚の前で傷つきたくなかったからだ。	..for ikke å gjøre meg sårbar overfor kolleger og overordnete.	…karena saya tidak sanggup menghadapi reaksi negatif rekan kerja atau atasan.
6	… pentru că m-am temut de dezavantajele de a vorbi.	… fordi jeg frygtede at det ville være til ulempe for mig at sige noget.	…口に出すことによる不利益を恐れたからだ。	..fordi jeg fryktet at det å si fra ville være en ulempe for meg.	… karena saya takut akan timbulnya kerugian akibat membuka suara.
7	… pentru că nu am vrut să îi încurc pe ceilalţi.	… fordi jeg ikke ville sætte andre i en pinlig situation.	…他人を困らせたくなかったからだ。	..fordi jeg ikke ønsket å sette andre i forlegenhet.	…karena saya tidak ingin mempermalukan orang lain.
8	… pentru că nu am vrut să rănesc sentimentele colegilor sau superiorilor.	… fordi jeg ikke ville såre kollegers eller overordnedes følelser.	…同僚や上司の気持ちを傷つけたくなかったからだ。	..fordi jeg ikke ønsket å såre følelsene til mine kolleger og overordnete.	…karena saya tidak ingin menyakiti perasaan rekan kerja atau atasan saya.
9	… pentru că nu vreau ca alţii să intre în necazuri.	… fordi jeg ikke ville bringe andre i vanskeligheder.	…他人を面倒ごとに巻き込みたくないからだ。	..fordi jeg ikke ønsker å skape problemer for andre.	…karena saya tidak ingin orang lain mendapat masalah.
10	… pentru că acest lucru ar fi dus la o muncă suplimentară care poate fi evitată.	… fordi det ville have medført ekstra arbejde, der ellers kunne undgås.	…本来だったらしなくてよいことが増えると思ったからだ。	..fordi det ville føre til ekstra arbeid som ellers hadde blitt unngått.	… karena itu akan menyebabkan adanya pekerjaan tambahan yang sebenarnya dapat dihindari.
11	… din cauza îngrijorărilor că alţii ar putea profita de ideile mele.	… på grund af bekymring for, at andre kunne udnytte mine ideer til deres egen fordel.	…自分のアイデアに他人が乗りすることを懸念したからだ。	.. fordi jeg var bekymret for at andre kunne dra fordeler av mine ideer.	… karena kekhawatiran bahwa orang lain dapat mengambil keuntungan dari ide-ide saya.
12	… să nu renunţ la avantajul cunoştinţelor mele.	… for ikke at opgive min fordel ved at besidde særlig viden.	…自分の有利な知識を見せたくなかったからだ。	.. fordi jeg ikke ville gi fra meg fordelen ved å vite om dette.	… agar tidak ada yang memanfaatkan informasi yang saya ketahui.

(Continues)

TABLE A1 (Continued)

Item	Portuguese	Croatian	Greece	Dutch (Belgium/Netherlands)	Russian
1	… porque, de qualquer modo, não teria encontrado ninguém que me ouvisse.	… jer svejedno ne bih naišao/la na suosjećajnog sugovornika.	…γιατί δεν θα βρω κάποιον να με ακούσει με κατανόηση, έτσι και αλλιώς.	… omdat ik sowieso toch geen luisterend oor gevonden zou hebben.	… потому что я бы не нашел того кто захочет послушать.
2	… porque, de qualquer maneira, nada mudaria.	… jer se ionako ništa ne bi promijenilo.	…γιατί έτσι κι αλλιώς δεν θα αλλάξει τίποτα.	… omdat er sowieso toch niets zou veranderen.	… потому что ничего не изменилось бы.
3	… porque os meus superiores não estão abertos a propostas, preocupações ou coisas parecidas.	… jer moji nadređeni nisu otvoreni za prijedloge, zabrinutosti ili slično.	…γιατί οι προϊστάμενοι μου δεν είναι ανοιχτοί σε προτάσεις, ανησυχίες κ.λπ.	… omdat mijn leidinggevenden niet openstaan voor voorstellen, bedenkingen enzovoort.	… потому что моё начальство не открыто для предложений, проблем и тому подобного.
4	… por medo de consequências negativas.	… zbog straha od negativnih posljedica.	…γιατί φοβάμαι ενδεχόμενες αρνητικές συνέπειες.	… omwille van angst voor negatieve gevolgen.	… из-за страха перед негативными последствиями.
5	… para não me tornar vulnerável face a colegas ou superiores.	… da ne postanem ranjiv/-a pred kolegama ili nadređenim.	…για να μην είμαι ευάλωτος/η απέναντι στους συναδέλφους ή στους προϊσταμένους μου.	… om me niet kwetsbaar op te stellen ten opzichte van collega's of leidinggevenden.	… чтобы не сделать себя уязвимым перед коллегами или начальством.
6	… porque temi as desvantagens de falar desses temas.	… jer sam se bojao/la nepovoljnog položaja ako progovorim.	…γιατί φοβάμαι μην πέσω σε δυσμένεια, εάν μιλήσω.	… omdat ik bezorgd was om de nadelen van het aankaarten van de zaken.	… потому что я боялся неудобств от разговора.
7	… porque não queria envergonhar os outros.	… jer nisam htio/htjela posramiti druge.	…γιατί δεν θέλω να ντροπιάσω τους άλλους.	… omdat ik anderen niet voor schut wou zetten.	… потому что я не хотел никого смущать
8	… porque não queria ferir os sentimentos de colegas ou superiores.	… jer nisam htio/htjela povrijediti osjećaje kolega ili nadređenih.	…γιατί δεν θέλω να πληγώσω τα συναισθήματα των συναδέλφων ή των προϊσταμένων μου.	… omdat ik de gevoelens van collega's of leidinggevenden niet wou kwetsen.	… потому что я не хотел обидеть коллег или начальника.
9	… porque não quero que os outros arranjem problemas.	… jer ne želim da drugi udu u nevolje.	…γιατί δεν θέλω οι άλλοι να μπλέξουν σε μπελάδες.	… omdat ik niet wou dat anderen in de problemen zouden komen	… потому что я не хочу, чтобы у других были неприятности.
10	… porque isso levaria a um trabalho adicional evitável.	… jer to bi dovelo do dodatnog posla koji se inače može izbjeći.	…γιατί αυτό θα σήμαινε ότι πρέπει να κάνω πρόσθετη δουλειά, που μπορώ να αποφύγω.	… omdat dat tot vermijdbaar extra werk zou geleid hebben	потому что это привело бы к дополнительной работе.
11	… porque não quero que os outros se aproveitem das minhas ideias.	… zbog zabrinutosti da bi drugi mogli iskoristiti moje ideje.	…γιατί φοβάμαι ότι άλλοι θα μπορούσαν να εκμεταλλευτούν τις ιδέες μου.	… omdat ik bezorgd was dat anderen hun voordeel konden halen met mijn idee.	… из-за опасений, что другие могут воспользоваться моими идеями.
12	… para não afetar a vantagem que me dá o meu conhecimento.	… da ne izgubim prednost koju imam pred drugima zbog postojeće spoznaje.	…για να μην χάσω το πλεονέκτημα της γνώσης μου.	… om mijn kennisvoordeel niet uit handen te geven.	… потому что не хочу делиться этой информацией.

Note: Items 1–3 = acquiescent silence, items 4–6 = quiescent silence, items 7–9 = prosocial silence, items 10–12 = opportunistic silence. In the respective surveys, items were presented in the following order: 4, 5, 7, 8, 1, 2, 3, 10, 9, 11, 6, 12. All items followed the item stem: "I remained silent at work, …"