Edited by
Toyin Ajibade Adisa
Chima Mordi
Emeka Oruh

Employee Voice in the Global South

Insights from Asia, Africa and South America

Employee Voice in the Global South

Toyin Ajibade Adisa
Chima Mordi • Emeka Oruh
Editors

Employee Voice in the Global South

Insights from Asia, Africa and South America

palgrave
macmillan

Editors
Toyin Ajibade Adisa
University of East London
London, UK

Chima Mordi
Brunel University London
Uxbridge, UK

Emeka Oruh
Brunel University London
London, UK

Toyin
To my parents, Oyin, Shasili, and Adam

Chima
To Prof and Dr (Mrs.) Mordi, Tonbara, Nathaniel, and Daniel

Emeka
To Maryam, Elijah, Ciara, and Monique

Contents

Notes on Contributors

Toyin Ajibade Adisa is a senior lecturer at the Royal Docks School of Business and Law, University of East London, UK. He holds master's and PhD degrees in international business management and human resource management from UEL and Brunel University London, respectively. He has taught and research issues in human resource management, organisational behaviour, employment relations, organisational culture, gender and inequality, flexibility and work-life balance, and reforms in emerging and developing economies. Toyin is a senior fellow of Higher Education Academy, a fellow of Chartered Management Institute (CMI), and a member of chartered institute of personnel development (CIPD). Toyin has authored articles in journals such as the *British Journal of Management (BJM)*, *Work, Employment and Society (WES)*, *Gender, Work & Organisation, Information Technology & People*, *Personnel Review, Employee Relations, Gender in Management*, *Journal of Managerial Psychology, and Career Development International*, among others. In addition, one of Toyin's articles was awarded the Emerald Literati Network Award: highly commended for best paper award 2017 Emerald Literati Network Awards for excellence. He is passionate about teaching and researching in HRM/OB subject area. Toyin is currently the associate director for Centre of Innovation, Management & Enterprise (CIME) and the course leader for the HRM undergraduate Programme at University of East London.

Muhammad Akhtar is Senior Lecturer in HRM and People Analytics at Royal Docks School of Business and Law, University of East London, UK. He obtained his PhD from Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China. His research interests include mainly employees and organisations with a special focus on employee organisation relationships (EOR), changes in psychological contracts, attitude and behavioural reactions of employees, organisational change, and strategy, new and changing nature of employment relations, HRM and technology, people and workforce analytics.

Muhammad Mehmood Aslam is a lecturer in the Department of Leadership and Management Studies at National Defence University, Islamabad, Pakistan. He is currently pursuing his PhD in Business Administration at NUST Business School, National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad, Pakistan. His research interests include employee voice behaviour, organisational culture, employee psychological safety, employee engagement, and organisational identification. He also holds professional experience of employment with Pakistan Tobacco Company (PTC) and Contact Plus (Pvt.) Limited. His professional experience consists of both academia and industry and is enthusiastic about teaching as well as doing quality research.

Wee Chan Au is a lecturer at the Newcastle University Business School, Newcastle University, UK. Her research interest lies in work, health, and well-being, especially the challenges in attaining work-life balance in today's fast-paced economy and rapid technological advancement. Focusing on Malaysia, she explores the manner and extent toward which organisational and HR practices affect work and well-being. Fundamentally, she is interested in people and the development of human capital—what motivates employees and entrepreneurs, and how do they respond to personal or structural constraints, setbacks, and challenges? She has published her work in edited books and in leading scholarly journals, such as the *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Business & Society*, *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship, and Personnel Review*. She has received funding from the British Council, Academy of Science Malaysia, and the Ministry of Higher education.

Rabeb Ben-Abdallah is Assistant Professor of Management at the College of Business Administration at the American University in the Emirates. She received her PhD in Management from the University of Paris-Est Marne La-Vallée, France. She also obtained Master's in Strategic Management from HEC, Tunisia. In addition to her teaching experience in the UAE, Tunisia, and France, Rabeb is dedicated to conduct workshops to assist and support social entrepreneurs during their incubation process. She is also an active researcher and has authored several articles in international journals of repute. Rabeb research interests are related to strategic management, human resources management, leadership and organisational performance, and social and solidarity economy.

Tamer K. Darwish is Reader in Human Resource Management (HRM) and the head of HRM Research Centre in the Business School, University of Gloucestershire. He is also an Academic Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. His research interests lie in the areas of strategic HRM, international and comparative HRM, and organisational performance. He has authored in these areas in leading management and HRM journals, including *Human Resource Management*, *British Journal of Management*, *Management International Review*, *European Management Review*, and *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, among others. He is also an associate editor of the *International Journal of Manpower* and serves on the Editorial Boards of a number of journals, including the *International Journal of Human Resource Management and Management Decision*.

Gisela Delfino (PhD, University of Buenos Aires) is a professor at Comillas Pontifical University (Madrid, Spain). She collaborates with the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET) of Argentina, and she is a visiting professor at Universidad Andres Bello (Doctorado en Educacion y Sociedad) in Chile. Her research interests are in psychological and social well-being and daily habits.

José Delfino (CPA, University of Buenos Aires) is a public accountant with extensive experience in health organisations and unions in Argentina. His research interests are in social issues, especially related to workforce health.

Ghada El-Kot is a university professor at Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport (AAST-MT) and deputy president for Strategic Affairs. She also has 35 years of experience as an international consultant, researcher, trainer, and reviewer in the HR and OB fields. Her main research interests have encompassed HRM practices and their effects on organisational performance and employees' effectiveness and well-being in Egypt. She obtained her PhD from the University of Plymouth, UK, in 2001, on teamwork effectiveness in Egypt, and she won the best PhD thesis. In 2011, she received an outstanding paper award for her research on "Work Engagement Among Managers and Professionals in Egypt: Potential Antecedents and Consequences." In 2020, she received a highly commended paper award for her research on "Egyptian Women's Supervisory Empowerment Behavior on Wellbeing Outcomes." The Women Leadership and Excellence Awards presented her with the Exemplary Woman Mentor Award 2020. She received the Women Leadership Award for the Middle East in 2020. She has authored peer-reviewed journal articles and contributed to different book chapters. She has been commissioned to undertake and lead many consultancy projects and training programmes by organisations in Egypt, other Arab countries, and Europe to develop HR systems.

Sarah Fahmy works at the intersection of performance and identity politics, Arab and North African theatres, and eco-feminism. She is a co-founder and chair of the Middle Eastern Theatre focus group at the Association of Theatre in Higher Education, and the co-chair of the MENATMA programming subcommittee. A PhD candidate in Theatre and Performance Studies and member of the Child Language Learning Lab at the University of Colorado Boulder, Sarah's dissertation presents a foundational theoretical praxis for supporting young Egyptian women author and embody their decolonial feminist identities. Sarah has devised multidisciplinary site-specific pieces, facilitated applied performance and Playback residencies with hundreds of participants internationally, ranging from creative climate communication with scientists to co-created workshops with youth for the UN Commission on the Status of Women and the Egyptian government. Sarah has spearheaded anti-racist university-wide strategic planning initiatives, as the president of the Graduate

and Professional Student Government, the Center for Teaching and Learning Theatre Lead Instructor, and the co-artistic producer of the New Play Festival, and by creating the first university library database dedicated to MENA Women Playwrights. Her publications appear in a range of journals and books ranging from Theatre Topics to PloS One.

Robert P. Karaszewski is a full professor at the American University in the Emirates. Karaszewski obtained a bachelor's and master's degree from the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun in management information systems, a PhD in total quality management and postdoctoral degree (habilitation) also from the Nicolaus Copernicus University. His title of professor was conferred by the president of the Republic of Poland in 2009. He was involved as EMBA program director in the process of AACSB, AMBA, NCA accreditation process. He holds the position of chief of Business Excellence Department. Karaszewski has supervised 12 doctoral student and more than 200 master's students. Karaszewski is a senior member of the American Society for Quality and a member of the International Leadership Association and the Knowledge Management Professional Society. He is on the editorial board and an ad hoc reviewer for several academic journals.

Osama Khassawneh has extensive experience in teaching HRM and Business, spanning over 20 years. He has taught at various universities in UAE, Oman, KSA, and Canada, including Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada, American University of Ras Al Khaimah in UAE, University of Sharjah in UAE, Granville College in Canada, University of Technology & Applied Science in Oman, and Laureate International University in Saudi Arabia. In addition to his current role as a faculty member at The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management, he also holds the position of acting director of Research and Innovation. He is a dedicated researcher with a focus on leadership, innovation, sustainability, HRM, and organisational behaviour.

Mike Leat Since retirement from the University of Plymouth, Mike has authored several book chapters and peer reviewed journal articles and is currently attached to the University of Exeter. Prior to retirement, Mike occupied several senior management roles in Plymouth Business School

including acting head, deputy director, and director of Undergraduate Programmes. Before becoming a senior manager, Mike was an active researcher and had authored a number of books and peer reviewed journal articles with Professor El-Kot on HRM in Egypt. His primary research interests are in international and comparative HRM, HR issues in the European Union, and employee relations.

Zhongqiu Li is a lecturer in the College of Economics and Management, Northeast Agricultural University. She received PhD in Management from the Harbin Institute of Technology. Her research interests include future work self, meritocratic beliefs, creativity, innovative behaviour, and voice. Her research has appeared in *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, *Psychological Reports*, *Current Psychology*, *Frontiers in Psychology*, *Managerial and Decision Economics*, and *International Journal of Manpower*.

Chao Ma is a lecturer in the Research School of Management at the Australian National University. He received BBA (with First Class Honours) from Hong Kong Baptist University and obtained MBus (with Merit), MPhil, and PhD in Management from Australian National University. His research interests include perceived overqualification and underemployment, career development, leadership, voice behaviour, proactivity, and HRM in China. His research has been published in *Human Resource Management*, *Journal of Business Ethics, Journal of Business Research*, *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, and *Personnel Review*.

Muntaser J. Melhem is Assistant Professor of Accounting at the University of Jordan. His research interests cross the fields of organisational theory, human resource management, and management accounting.

Chima Mordi is Reader in Human Resource Management and Employment Relations. He is director of Post Graduate Research Brunel Business School. He is also director for Brunel Business School and Ahlia University, Bahrain PhD without residence partnership. He is also a visiting professor at Coal-City University and external examiner to over 15 universities in the UK, Bahrain, Nigeria, Ghana, etc. Chima's research focuses on the social nature of labour problems in Sub-Saharan Africa,

Middle East, and Asia and their implications for the variable efficacy of Western management theories and practices. His primary research interests also lie in workload and work-life balance, work-life interface, flexible working arrangements, Employee voice and contemporary Employment relations. Chima has authored over 100 articles in refereed academic journals, practitioner outlets, international conference proceedings, and book chapters. His recent papers have appeared in various outlets, including *Work, Employment & Society (WES)*, *Gender, Work & Organization*, *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *Thunderbird International Business Review*, *Personnel Review, Employee Relations*, and *Career Development International Journal*. In addition, Chima is also a recipient of the Emerald Literati Network awards for excellence.

Tamara Mohammad is an Assistant Professor of Human Resource Management at American University in the Emirates. She instructed and advised students in HR Management, Business, Management and Organizational Behavior in various academic institutions and contributed to publishing significant papers in well-recognized journals. She holds a PhD with specialization in Human Resource Management from University of Gloucestershire in UK and dual of master's degrees in business administration and International Business from Vancouver Island University in Canada and University of Hertfordshire in UK. The research interests of Dr. Tamara is related to HR practices, diversity, social exchange, healthcare, institutional theory, and organizational performance.

Tonbara Mordi is Lecturer in Law at the Brunel University London, UK. She is a solicitor of the United Kingdom and barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria with over 20 years of experience. She has held other positions at the University of Worcester. Her work experiences are deeply rooted in academics and consultancy across United Kingdom and Africa.

Gladys Muasya is a senior lecturer in the School of Business and Leadership at St. Paul's University, Kenya. Her research interests include burnout, stress, the intersection of work and family, motherhood experiences, and framing, for example, critical approaches to work-life balance. Gladys is also interested in motherhood experiences in Kenya, employee empowerment with a focus on marginalized work groups, for example, domestic workers, boundary management, and employee voice.

Emeka Oruh is Senior Lecturer in Human Resource Management (HRM) and Organisational Behaviour (OB) at Brunel University London, UK, where he obtained a PhD in Employment Relations (ER) and Human Resource Management (HRM). Before now, he lectured at the University of Portsmouth School of Business and Law, UK. His key research examines OB, ER, and HRM issues within international business—particularly in emerging and developing markets. Emeka has authored several publications—most of which have appeared in ABS-rated international journals: *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *Journal of Managerial Psychology and Employee Relations,* among others.

Fred Walumbwa received his PhD from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is Professor and the Knight-Ridder Byron Harless Endowed Eminent Scholar Chair in Management at Florida International University (USA) in the College of Business' Department of International Business. His main research focuses on understanding how effective leaders emerge, evolve and develop, and how different clusters of leadership behaviours (i.e., positive forms of leadership such as authentic, ethical, servant, and transformational leadership and the dark side of leadership such as destructive leadership or abusive supervision) enhance or inhibit climates more open to corporate, work unit and employee citizenship and proactive behaviours, engagement, fairness, learning, thriving, voicing, creativity/innovation, knowledge sharing, and withdrawal behaviours across cultures.

Xue Zhang is a lecturer in the College of Philosophy, Law & Political Science at Shanghai Normal University. She received PhD in management from the Harbin Institute of Technology. Her research interests include perceived overqualification, moral voice, human resource management in the digital era, gig economy, and unethical behaviour in the workplace. Her research has been published in *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, *Personnel Review*, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, and *Management Communication Quarterly*.

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Boxes

1

Introduction: The Reality of Employee Voice in the Global South

Toyin Ajibade Adisa, Chima Mordi, and Emeka Oruh

Background to the Book

With a particular focus on countries in Asia, Africa, and South America, this book offers a unique but broad insight into the nature of employee voice in ten countries in the global south. The book considers how employee voice is experienced, regulated, influenced, and contested within the employment relationship. It identifies the significance and effects of different contexts, cultures, web and social media, and dissimilarities in institutional factors in terms of enhancing employee voice or promoting silence. In other words, the book addresses general issues affecting employee voice in the global south, giving readers an understanding of employee relations that is country-specific. Readers will

T. A. Adisa (✉)
University of East London, London, UK
e-mail: T.Adisa@uel.ac.uk

C. Mordi • E. Oruh
Brunel University London, Uxbridge, UK
e-mail: Chima.Mordi@brunel.ac.uk; emeka.oruh@brunel.ac.uk

1

understand the unique nature of employee voice in Nigeria, Egypt, Kenya, China, Pakistan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, and Argentina. Each chapter draws out the unique and diverse nature of employee voice in each country. The chapters discuss issues ranging from culture, activities of trade unions, institutional factors, web, and social media, to social and organisational justice (among others) and their effects of employee voice.

Employee Voice

The importance of employee voice in the current hypercompetitive business environment cannot be overemphasised. Employees' comments, ideas, and suggestions now matter more than they ever have before in the improvement of organisational functioning and performance. Senge (1990, p. 4) explains that it is 'just not possible any longer to "figure it out" from the top'. Morrison and Milliken (2000) and Edmondson (1999, 2003) also held similar opinion. Other researchers have argued that relevant issues that can enhance organisational growth; improve employee and organisational performance; and stimulate problem-solving ideas are brought to light when employees are allowed to speak (Bashshur & Oc, 2015; Chamberlin et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2010). A lack of voice can have a serious negative impact on all stakeholders. Despite the importance of voice to workers and organisations, many workers still perceive their workplace environment as unsafe for speaking up (Milliken et al., 2003; Ryan & Oestreich, 1998), which presents an unsettling situation for workers (Detert & Burris, 2007). Employee voice can be defined as an opportunity to 'have a say' in work-related issues. 'Having a say' is central to most definitions of employee voice (Freeman et al., 2007; Marchington, 2007; Morrison, 2011; Strauss, 2006; Wilkinson & Fay, 2011). Detert and Burris (2007, p. 869) systematically define voice as follows:

> *The discretionary provision of information intended to improve organisational functioning to someone inside an organisation with the perceived authority to act, even though such information may challenge and upset the status quo of the*

organisation and its power holders, is critical to organisational wellbeing yet insufficiently provided by employees, who see the risks of speaking up as outweighing the benefits.

Often, many employees maintain silence because they feel that the personal risk and costs of speaking up outweigh the likely benefits thereof (Milliken et al., 2003; Van Dyne et al., 2003). Imagine a situation in which unethical behaviour that violates the principles and values of an organisation is perpetrated at the top level of the organisation. Employees tend to weigh the benefits of speaking up in this situation against the risk, depending on the context. Usually, especially in a high-power distance culture, many employees will choose not to speak up, because doing so might simply cause them troubles (Oruh & Dibia, 2020). In other words, the risks and personal costs of speaking up outweigh the likely benefits. Four broad lines of research have given various reasons why employees may choose voice over silence and vice versa. First, researchers have argued that employees' propensity and willingness to speak up depend on individual differences in personality and demographic characteristics (Crant, 2003; LePine & Van Dyne, 2001). This means that some employees are naturally more inclined to go the 'extra mile' to speak up than others (Detert & Burris, 2007). Second, other researchers, based on Hirschman's (1970) work, have argued that exit, voice, and loyalty are the primary options for employees who are dissatisfied with some aspects of the organisational functioning of their place of work (Rusbult et al., 1988; Withey & Cooper, 1989). This means that employees' attitudes towards exit, voice, and loyalty are primary determinants of voice. Third, the organisational context may also affect employees' propensity and willingness to speak up (Dutton et al., 1997; Edmondson, 2003; Milliken et al., 2003). Fourth, there is research that focuses on the role of leadership behaviours in influencing employees' decisions to speak up (Detert & Burris, 2007). Leadership behaviours and attitudes such as approachability (Milliken et al., 2003; Saunders et al., 1992), action taking (Edmondson, 2003; Ryan & Oestreich, 1998), and accessibility (Edmondson, 1999) often help employees to determine the risks involved in and the costs of speaking up.

Why the Global South?

The concept of 'voice' has varied significance and meaning in different countries and cultures. For example, in many countries in the global north, people express their concerns, ideas, and suggestions freely in line with their freedom of speech and egalitarian culture. The situation is, however, different in many high-power distance cultures in the global south, where older people and people in positions of authority are held in high esteem, and speaking up against their words or actions may be perceived as rude and improper. Besides, countries in the global south have different cultures, systems, and institutions to those of the global north; thus, it cannot be assumed that voice is the same everywhere. Furthermore, most studies on employee voice have been undertaken in the global north (Detert & Burris, 2007; Dutton et al., 1997; Edmondson, 2003; Hirschman, 1970; Milliken et al., 2003; Wilkinson & Fay, 2011; Wilkinson et al., 2004, 2010, 2018, 2020), leaving the global south under-researched. As Connell et al. (2018) note, elite knowledge institutions in the global north still function as the centre of a worldwide economy of knowledge, which privileges knowledge produced in (and in the style of) that sphere over other ways of knowing and reinforces its own centrality via resource inequalities between north and south scholars, and the intellectual framing of knowledge produced in the global north as being the highest standard of universal (not northern) knowledge. The concept of employee voice has begun to gain momentum in workplaces and among academics in the global south; for example, Klerck (2016) in Namibia; Machokoto and Dzvimbo (2020) in Zimbabwe; Oruh (2017) and Oruh et al. (2022) in Nigeria; Botha et al. (2022) in South Africa; Subhakaran et al. (2020) in India; Zhang et al. (2015) in China; Yee and Sandaran (2018) in Malaysia; Eldaghashy et al. (2022) in Egypt; Arin et al. (2022) in Saudi Arabia; Atzeni (2016) in Argentina; Rawashdeh and Tibor (2020) in Jordan; and Hunjra et al. (2010) in Pakistan. However, these studies still represent a small part of a large body of research undertaken on employee voice globally. Therefore, given the predominant western permeation of conceptualisations, methods, and operationalisation in employee voice studies, this book presents a collection of

studies on employee voice in ten countries in the global south. Furthermore, instead of treating voice as a universal concept that applies to all workers (Bell et al., 2011), Syed (2020) and Pyman et al. (2016) argue that national and workplace contexts may enable employee voice or prevent it from being heard. Therefore, to contribute to our understanding of employee voice in the global south, Chap. 1 provides the background information of the book, presents explanation of employee voice, and sets out the objectives for each chapter. Chapter 2 focuses on an under-researched group of domestic workers in a non-western setting, where sociocultural and structural factors subject them to unfavourable employment conditions, examining voice (and silence) among domestic workers in Nigeria. The chapter reveals how domestic workers exert agency within a very constrained context. In Chap. 3, El-Kot, Fahmy, and Leat examine the impact of social media on employee voice in Egyptian organisations. The chapter discusses how social media is changing the nature of employee voice in Egypt and how organisations are embracing it. The chapter then concludes and makes recommendations for managers, HR practitioners, and employees on how to use social media to effectively express their voices internally and externally in Egypt. In Chap. 4, Muasya and Walumbwathe examine the role of trade unions in providing a voice mechanism that addresses employee grievances in Kenya. The chapter applies a content analysis of published and grey literature regarding trade unions to explore the extent to which trade unions in Kenya have enhanced employee voice. The chapter thus finds that trade unions in Kenya have acted as a springboard for better political governance—political independence, better terms of work in the colonial era, and post-independence multiparty political campaigns and reforms. In Chap. 5, Ma, Zhang, and Li examine the history and development of employee voice in China. The chapter explores employee voice research in terms of the antecedents, outcomes, mediating mechanisms, and boundary conditions in China. In Chap. 6, Melhem and Darwish contextualised employee voice in Jordan. The chapter examines the challenges that Jordanian employees face in their efforts to express their voice. In Chap. 7, Wee Chan Au examines the voices of live-in migrant domestic workers in Malaysia. Women's labour force participation rates have increased in Malaysia over time. Thus, migrant domestic workers play a

critical role in filling in the household chores and childcare gap, given that more Malaysian women are becoming involved in the formal work-force. Live-in migrant domestic workers are a unique group of vulnerable workers who leave their home country and live and work in their employers' family home. The study finds that live-in migrant domestic workers in Malaysia are often isolated as they carry out their duties within the household. Furthermore, given the nature of their job, their needs, feelings, and basic rights are often ignored or deprived. The chapter uses the capabilities approach to uncover migrant domestic workers' unheard voices by relating and analysing their capabilities set at the individual, societal, and institutional levels. In Chap. 8, Aslam and Akhtar provide holistic insights into the current state of knowledge on employee voice in Pakistan from various theoretical perspectives while considering the con-clusive evidence of past research. The chapter highlights the implications for key stakeholders in terms of how they can encourage employees to speak up, and it explains the gap in the literature that the chapter poten-tially fills. In Chap. 9, Khassawneh evaluates the significance of employee voice and the role of cultural and institutional factors in the United Arab Emirates. The chapter also examines the role of the government in pro-moting employee voice and highlights strategies for fostering employee voice. In Chap. 10, Mohammad, Ben-Abdallah, and Karaszewski exam-ine the role of culture (which is basically Islamic) on employee voice in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The chapter finds that employees in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are willing to speak up only if doing so is ben-eficial and safe. The chapter further identifies key variables that contrib-ute to the creation of voice norms in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Finally, the chapter examines the role of national and organisational cul-ture on voice safety and develops a multilevel conceptual framework of employee voice. In Chap. 11, Delfino and Delfino examine Argentina's trajectory of social justice through its level of trade union activities. With Argentina's 40% of workers affiliated with a union, 20% for Brazil and Chile with 20%, and less than 10% for Mexico (Tomada et al., 2018), Argentina appears to be the most employee voice-friendly nation in South America. The chapter presents a detailed revision of the extant lit-erature, enriched by leaders' opinions, trade union magazines, and spe-cialised journalists. Finally, the chapter reviews the origin of trade

unionism, its ideological evolution, and its operations in Argentina. The current state of trade union activities and possible future developments are highlighted. These chapters contribute to cross-cultural research and the extant literature on employee voice. The chapters expand the scope of debate and thereby broaden our knowledge and understanding of the subject. Issues discussed in each chapter are not absolute. Rather they are intended to stimulate further thinking and open frontiers for further research on employee voice in the global south. This book thus calls for further country-specific research on employee voice across the globe to better understand the topic in different contexts.

References

Arin, G. A., Bhatti, Z. A., Crawshaw, J. R., Ali, I., & Papa, A. (2022). Does LMX always promote employee voice? A dark side of migrant working in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Manpower, 43*(1), 148–167.

Atzeni, M. (2016). The constant and continuous voice of workers in Argentina. In *Employee voice in emerging economies* (Advances in Industrial & Labour Relations) (Vol. 23, pp. 1–18). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Bashshur, M. R., & Oc, B. (2015). When voice matters: A multilevel review of the impact of voice in organizations. *Journal of Management, 41*(5), 1530–1554.

Bell, M. P., Özbilgin, M. F., Beauregard, T. A., & Sürgevil, O. (2011). Voice, silence, and diversity in 21st century organizations: Strategies for inclusion of gay, lesbian, sexual, and transgender employees. *Human Resource Management, 50*(1), 131–146.

Botha, L., Steyn, R., & O'Connor, D. (2022). Employee voice and innovative work behaviour: empirical evidence from South Africa. *Cogent Psychology, 9*(1), 1–19.

Chamberlin, M., Newton, D. W., & Lepine, J. A. (2017). A meta-analysis of voice and its promotive and prohibitive forms: Identification of key associations, distinctions, and future research directions. *Personnel Psychology, 70*(1), 11–71.

Connell, R., Pearse, R., Collyer, F., Maia, J., & Morrell, R. (2018). Re-making the global economy of knowledge: Do new fields of research change the structure of North–South relations? *British Journal of Sociology, 69*(3), 738–757.

Crant, M. J. (2003). *Speaking up when encouraged: Predicting voice behaviour in a naturally occurring setting*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management.

Detert, J. R., & Burris, E. R. (2007). Leadership behaviour and employee voice: Is the door really open? *Academy of Management Journal, 50*(4), 86–884.

Dutton, J. E., Ashford, S. J., O'Neil, R. M., Hayes, E., & Wierba, E. E. (1997). Reading the wind: How middle manager assess the context for selling issues to top managers. *Strategic Management Journal, 18*, 407–425.

Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behaviour in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 44*(2), 350–383.

Edmondson, A. C. (2003). Speaking up in the operating room: How team leaders promote learning in interdisciplinary action teams. *Journal of Management Studies, 40*(6), 1419–1452.

Eldaghashy, R., Zayed, A., & Gaber, H. R. (2022). The role of employee voice in moderating the relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement Applied study in one of the governmental sector in Egypt. *Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, Egypt, 42*(1), 41–65.

Freeman, R., Boxall, P., & Haynes, P. (Eds.). (2007). *What workers say: Employee voice in the Anglo-American workplace*. Cornell University Press.

Hirschman, A. O. (1970). *Exit, voice, and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organisations, and state*. Harvard University Press.

Hunjra, A. I., Ali, M. A., Chani, M. I., Khan, H., & Ur-Rehman, K. (2010). Employee voice and intent to leave: An empirical evidence of Pakistani banking sector. *African Journal of Business Management, 4*(14), 3056–3061.

Kim, J., MacDuffie, J. P., & Pil, F. K. (2010). Employee voice and organizational performance: Team versus representative influence. *Human Relations, 63*(3), 371–394.

Klerck, G. (2016). *'Breaking the Wire': The evolution of employee voice in Namibia. Employee voice in emerging economies* (Advances in Industrial & Labor Relations) (Vol. 23, pp. 193–223). Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Bingley.

LePine, J. A., & Van Dyne, L. (2001). Voice and cooperative behaviour as contrasting forms of contextual performance: Evidence of differential relationships with Big Five personality characteristics and cognitive ability. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(2), 326–336.

Machokoto, W., & Dzvimbo, M. A. (2020). The employee voice behaviours in African context: The case of Zimbabwe. *Asian Journal od Interdisciplinary Research, 3*(1), 125–135.

Marchington, M. (2007). Employee voice systems. In P. Boxall, J. Purcell, & P. Wright (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of human resource management* (pp. 231–250). Oxford University Press.

Milliken, F. J., Morrison, E. W., & Hewlin, P. F. (2003). An exploratory study of employee silence: Issues that employees don't communicate upward and why. *Journal of Management Studies, 40*(6), 1453–1476.

Morrison, E. (2011). Employee voice behaviour: integration and directions for future research. *Academy of Management Annals, 5*(1), 373–412.

Morrison, E. W., & Milliken, F. J. (2000). Organizational silence: A barrier to change and development in a pluralistic world. *Academy of Management Review, 25*(4), 706–725.

Oruh, E. S. (2017). Managerial capture of employee voice in unionised and non-unionised employee representations (NERs) setting: An empirical evidence from Nigeria. A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy (PhD) in management studies research (Employment Relations) at Brunel University London.

Oruh, E. S., & Dibia, C. H. (2020). Employee stress and the implication of high-power distance culture: Empirical evidence from Nigeria's employment terrain. *Employee Relations, 42*(6), 1381–1400.

Oruh, E. S., & Dibia, C. H. (2022). Corporate governance principles and the challenges of high-power distance culture: The experience of Nigeria's employment terrain. In K. O. Omeihe & C. Harrison (Eds.), *The African context of business and society* (pp. 115–135). Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited. ISBN 13: 9781801178532.

Pyman, A., Gollan, P. J., Wilkinson, A., Xu, C., & Kalfa, S. (2016). *Employee voice in emerging economies* (Advances in Industrial and Labour Relations) (Vol. 23, pp. i–xiv). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Rawashdeh, L., & Tibor, D. (2020). Aligned employee voice and manager voice affecting innovation work behaviour: A case study in Jordanian banks. In *57th International Scientific Conference on Economic and Social Development—Online Conference*, August 06.

Rusbult, C. E., Farrell, D., Rogers, G., & Mainous, A. G. (1988). Impact of exchange variables on exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect: An integrative model of responses to declining job satisfaction. *Academy of Management Journal, 31*(3), 599–627.

Ryan, K. D., & Oestreich, D. K. (1998). *Driving fear out of the workplace* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Saunders, D. M., Sheppard, B. H., Knight, V., & Roth, J. (1992). Employee voice to supervisors. *Employee Rights and Responsibilities Journal, 5*(2), 241–259.

Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. Doubleday.

Strauss, G. (2006). Worker participation-some under-considered issues. *Industrial Relations, 45*(4), 778–803.

Subhakaran, S. E., Dyaram, L., Dayaram, K., Ayentimi, D. T., & Khan, N. (2020). Leaders' accounts on employee voice in the Indian context: an exploratory study. *Asian Pacific Journal of Human Resource, 58*(4), 485–503.

Syed, J. (2020). Diversity management and missing voices. In A. Wilkinson, J. Donaghey, T. Dundon, & R. B. Freeman (Eds.), *Handbook of research on employee voice* (pp. 486–508). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Tomada, C., Schleser, D., & Maito, M. (2018). Radiografía de la sindicalización en Argentina [Radiography of unionisation in Argentina]. Universidad Nacional de San Martin. http://noticias.unsam.edu.ar/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/sindicalizacion.pdf

Van Dyne, L., Ang, S., & Botero, I. C. (2003). Conceptualizing employee silence and employee voice as multi-dimensional constructs. *Journal of Management Studies, 40*(6), 1359–1392.

Wilkinson, A., Dundon, T., Donaghey, J., & Freeman, R. (2020). Employee voice: Charting new terrain. In *The handbook of research on employee voice* (2nd ed.). Edward Elgar Press.

Wilkinson, A., Dundon, T., Marchington, M., & Ackers, P. (2004). Changing patterns of employee voice. *Journal of Industrial Relations, 46*(3), 298–322.

Wilkinson, A., & Fay, C. (2011). New times for employee voice?'. *Human Resource Management, 50*(1), 65–74.

Wilkinson, A., Gollan, P., Lewin, D., & Marchington, M. (2010). Conceptualising participation in organisations. In A. Wilkinson, P. J. Gollan, M. Marchington, & D. Lewin (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of participation in organisations* (pp. 3–25). Oxford University Press.

Wilkinson, A., Gollan, P. J., Kalfa, S., & Xu, Y. (2018). Voices unheard: employee voice in the new century. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 29*(5), 711–724.

Withey, M. J., & Cooper, W. H. (1989). Predicting exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 34*(4), 521–553.

Yee, L. S., & Sandaran, S. C. (2018). Employee voice and the communication of dissent in an organisational setting in Malaysia: A Case Study. *LSP International Journal, 5*(1), 23–47.

Zhang, Y., Huai, M., & Xie, Y. (2015). Paternalistic leadership and employee voice in China: A dual process model. *The Leadership Quarterly, 26*(1), 25–36.

2

Keep Quiet: Unheard Voices of Domestic Workers in Nigeria

Toyin Ajibade Adisa, Chima Mordi, Emeka Oruh, and Tonbara Mordi

Introduction

This chapter explores the phenomenon of silence and unheard employee voice among domestic workers in Nigeria. While voice involves the presence and processes that facilitate two-way communication between management and employees (Marginson et al., 2010), unheard voice is a situation in which employees express their voice, and it is ignored. Silence is where employees fail to express their voice, either because of the risks involved in doing so or because of the perceived futility in doing so (Detert and Treviño, 2010; Grant, 2013). When the perceived risks of voicing outweigh the perceived benefits, silence is likely to ensue: the withholding of any form of genuine expression about a perceived or

T. A. Adisa (✉)
University of East London, London, UK
e-mail: T.Adisa@uel.ac.uk

C. Mordi • E. Oruh • T. Mordi
Brunel University London, Uxbridge, UK
e-mail: Chima.Mordi@brunel.ac.uk; emeka.oruh@brunel.ac.uk

11

experienced injustice from persons capable of effecting change or redress (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Conceptually, silence is the failure to voice (Morrison, 2011, 2014), and there is research interest in how employers perpetuate a climate of silence concerning a range of issues (Donaghey et al., 2011). The term 'Employee voice' refers to the ways in which employees attempt to have a say—formally and/or informally, collectively and/or individually—potentially to influence organisational affairs relating to issues that affect their work, interests, and the interests of managers and owners (Wilkinson et al., 2020a, p. 5). In the extant literature on industrial relations, voice is concerned with workers' issues while in organisational behaviour and human resource management literature, the focus is more on organisational improvement (see Oyetunde et al., 2022; Wilkinson et al., 2021). While voice is considered critical to both employees and employers, notions of voice are very much rooted in western scholarship, and research on voice remains concentrated in traditional organisations in formal economies within Anglo-American countries (Pyman et al., 2016; Wilkinson et al., 2020b). The few studies conducted on employee voice in regions of the global south suggest that voice may have limited applicability to contexts in which cultural values and working conditions differ considerably to those in western nations (Mellahi et al., 2010; Soltani et al., 2018).

In this chapter, we therefore seek to expand current knowledge on the extent to which voice can be exercised by workers who have heretofore largely been ignored in academic literature. Research on employee voice often treats voice as a universal concept that applies to all workers (Bell et al., 2011), but Syed (2020) notes that depending on the national or workplace context, there may be employee voices that are not heard and/or situations in which vehicles for voice are not present (see also Pyman et al., 2016). We explore the extent to which voice can be exercised by domestic workers and potentially give space for some of these missing voices. Drawing on Hirschman's (1970) exit, voice, and loyalty framework and Rusbult et al.'s (1982) neglect framework, and inspired by Gunawardana's (2014, p. 453) attention to how voice can be enacted in controlled spaces, even 'no-voice' spaces (Willman et al., 2006), we consider how institutional and cultural factors specific to our study context impede the provision of opportunities for and expression of employee

voice among domestic workers in Nigeria—preventing them from having a voice to allow for positive workplace change (Oruh et al., 2018). Therefore, we examine how employees (with no formal avenue for voice) can carve out spaces for expressing themselves.

Our study contributes to the literature on the abovementioned topic in three key ways. First, scholars have posited that employees in precarious work in developing economies have limited avenues to express voice and are likely to withhold suggestions for resolving problems and making improvements to work processes let alone suggestions to improve their working lives (Burgess et al., 2013; Wilkinson et al., 2020b). We provide empirical support for this proposition and show how the construct of employee voice, although often contested, is predicated on western values for employee participation and self-expression that are antithetical to the preferred people management styles practised by employers of domestic workers in Nigeria. The present study therefore extends our understanding of the relevance of western concepts for explaining voice and silence to an employment context that is characterised by extreme asymmetrical power relations. Second, we extend the exit, voice, loyalty, neglect (EVLN) framework to demonstrate how the vulnerable workers in our study are unable to engage in formal voice, exit, or neglect, and that 'loyalty' has a different meaning in a context in which employers expect unquestioning obedience as default employee behaviour. Thus, we unpack the concept of voice, which has largely been focused on formal channels (at least in the human resource management and industrial relations literature) to include more informal and peer-to-peer avenues. Third, given the disorganised and unregulated nature of the Nigerian informal sector, our findings lend themselves to important policy implications, and we identify the role of labour unions and the government with regard to protecting employees' rights at work.

In the sections below, we review the EVLN model and common conceptualisations of voice and silence. We then outline the employment context for domestic workers in Nigeria, focusing on the unregulated nature of the informal economy in which domestic employment is undertaken and the intersection of gender, age, and occupation that places domestic workers near the bottom of Nigeria's hierarchical social structures, rendering them vulnerable to mistreatment in the workplace. After

describing the research design and data analysis, we present our findings and discuss their implications for theory and practice.

Theoretical Framework: Exit, Voice, Loyalty, Neglect

Hirschman (1970) proposed the exit, voice, and loyalty framework, to which Rusbult et al. (1982) added Neglect (EVLN). It is in this context that we consider the four potential employee responses to adverse circumstances in the workplace: leave the organisation (exit), speak up about concerns (voice), patiently await improvement (loyalty), or wilfully underperform (neglect). However, the tendency for employees to opt for any of these four options (EVLN) is a function of the sociocultural, economic, and institutional environment, which is hostile, particularly for domestic employees in the precarious sectors, who are often left with no option but silence (Morrison, 2014). Nigerian workers most frequently opt for silence due to the expectation of absolute loyalty and respect for one's superior, which shows how motives for voice or silence may manifest differently in different sociocultural settings and other (economic, employment-related, and institutional) contexts (Umar & Hassan, 2013; Oruh et al., 2018). With no right to or expectation of voice, silence reflects what could be seen as akin to modern slavery (Crane, 2013). This is because such employees do not have the choice to exit their employment, to formally voice, or to neglect, while the consequent loyalty is a pretence or forced behaviour, which Caruana et al. (2021) refer to as a 'sad and sorry state of a non-field'; hence, such employees need to find innovative and unsanctioned ways to exercise their voice (Gunawardana, 2014). In this study, we therefore widen the concept of voice from its common usage in the EVLN model to include unofficial informal voice whereby workers create their own informal and individual spaces for expressing voice themselves (Atzeni, 2016). This approach may include embracing interpersonal relationships and contextual social interaction with their employers. At times, they may seek advice from external organisations such as non-governmental organisations, agencies, and other

relevant actors, including relatives, who can support them with advice (Gunawardana, 2014).

Domestic Workers and the Nigerian Informal Sector

Domestic work is highly gendered, with women or girls hired to undertake various household chores, such as laundry, cooking, cleaning, and childcare, while their male counterparts are mostly employed as drivers, gardeners, and gatekeepers (Nesbitt-Ahmed, 2016). Domestic employment is common in Nigeria, where children (often from underprivileged homes in rural areas) are trafficked to work in 'well-to-do' households in the city (Tade & Aderinto, 2012). The rise in demand for domestic workers in Nigeria has been attributed to a number of factors such as increasing workloads among middle-class white-collar workers, particularly in dual-earner couple households; the scarcity and high cost of time- and effort-saving household appliances; and the preference for household assistance from 'outsiders' rather than family members, which is driven by a decline in the extended family structure system (Ladan, 2005; Olayiwola, 2019; Tade & Aderinto, 2012).

In Nigeria, many workers—including domestic workers—are in the informal economy, which is excluded from the coverage of the Labour Act (Agomo, 2011). In other words, most Nigerian workers are not in jobs that are subject to labour standards such as freedom of association, freedom from forced labour, freedom from child labour, and non-discrimination in employment. They have no legal protection from unsafe working conditions or workplace abuse (Akinwale, 2014). The workers in this sector tend to have little or no education, are generally unskilled, and have very limited access to financial resources (Yusuf, 2014). Employers often dictate domestic workers' employment conditions informally, without any legal backing or legal contracts (Awosusi & Adebo, 2012). The majority of domestic workers in Nigeria live under the control of their employers, who are commonly referred to as *oga* or 'madam', meaning 'boss' (Nesbitt-Ahmed, 2016). The *ogas* decide the

working hours, pay, and location of residence of their domestic workers. Domestic workers typically work very long hours and have little or no autonomy over their schedule (Adisa et al., 2021), and anecdotal reports of exploitation and sexual abuse are common (Olayiwola, 2019). This phenomenon in domestic employment in developing economies is all too common (Dwyer, 2012; Atzeni, 2016), where the socioeconomic and institutional context, among other factors, fuels and sustains this form of modern slavery (Crane, 2013; Caruana et al., 2021).

Intersectional Disadvantage

As young women employed in low-skilled, unregulated jobs are performed in people's home, domestic workers are particularly vulnerable to workplace mistreatment. Research conducted in the global north demonstrates how precarious working conditions and service-sector priorities for customer satisfaction combine to silence young hospitality and retail workers from speaking out against the sexual harassment they experience from customers (Good & Cooper, 2014, 2016). Similarly, Kensbock et al. (2015) show how women working as room cleaners in five-star Australian hotels are subject to high levels of sexual harassment due in part to the gendered nature of their jobs; a low value is placed on domestic work conducted in people's living spaces and the 'workplace' is a private, intimate location, a bedroom, with no third-party oversight to discourage harassment. When jobs are low skilled and workers can easily be replaced, workers have no power with which to negotiate better treatment. This is particularly true in strongly hierarchical and patriarchal cultures such as is prevalent in Nigeria (Arisi & Oromareghake, 2011), where power distance is high and cultural norms emphasise the supremacy of age over youth, men over women, and superiors over subordinates (Hofstede, 1980), all of which are antithetical to the expression of voice (Morrison, 2014).

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative methodology because of its exploratory nature (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and the need for more studies on employer–employee relationships in Nigeria's domestic work sector. The study adopts an interpretivist philosophy, which facilitates the collection of rich data and the interpretation of a lived social-corporate reality using words/text (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative data were collected via semi-structured interviews with 21 domestic workers and 11 employers of domestic workers. Due to the difficulty in gaining access to domestic workers who were working in private households at the time of this study, participants were recruited through the lead author's personal network and via snowball sampling (Noy, 2008). The lead author knows several individuals whose relatives are domestic workers and arranged to contact them. Those who declined to participate were asked to recommend other domestic workers who might be willing to do so, and each new participant was also asked to suggest another domestic worker to interview. A similar technique was used for recruiting employers to the study, with the initial participants being known to the lead author and recommending subsequent participants. Snowball sampling permits researchers to access samples that may otherwise be difficult to reach and represents a time- and cost-efficient way of sourcing participants and securing their involvement (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). The potential disadvantage of this technique is the increased potential for sampling bias, because the participants are known to each other and may have more characteristics in common than would be the case in a random sample of the overall population of domestic workers in Nigeria.

We conducted the study in Lagos, the most populous city in Africa, with more than 20 million residents (World Population Review, 2019). Interviews were conducted in English and took place at locations of the participants' choice, such as cafés for domestic workers and workplaces for the employers of domestic workers. The average duration of the interview was one hour. The interviews were built on two central questions for domestic workers and one main question for employers, all derived from the literature on voice and silence (Barry & Wilkinson, 2016; Pinder &

Harlos, 2001): (1) What are the challenges that you experience as a domestic worker? (2) How do you express your views, concerns, or opinions to your employer? (3) As an employer, do you involve your domestic worker in decisions that affect her working life? These open-ended questions allowed the participants to elaborate on their own views and experiences and prompted follow-up questions over the course of the interview process related to the hours of work for which the domestic workers work and the existence of employment contracts. No participants consented to audio recording of the interviews, despite assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. The domestic workers were concerned that their voices could potentially be identified by their employers and could lead to a loss of employment, while the employers were concerned that they could be identified by the authorities. Therefore, detailed notes were taken and read back to the participants at the end of each interview to confirm that what was recorded was a true representation of the participants' statements. All participants were assigned pseudonyms to maintain their anonymity.

The demographic characteristics of the study participants can be seen in Tables 2.1 and 2.2. The participants' ages ranged from 19 to 23 years old for domestic workers and from 38 to 52 years old for employers. Domestic workers worked between 12 and 15 hours a day, and the majority resided at their employers' homes. All the domestic workers were single, with no children of their own. Employers were middle-class individuals from the three major tribes (Yoruba, Hausa, and Ibo) in Nigeria who worked as business owners, bankers, or medical doctors. While their marital statuses varied, all employers had childcare responsibilities. We drew on Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach to interpret the interview data. The two authors who conducted the interviews read through the first set of interview notes and created initial codes based on chunks of text representing specific ideas or concepts (e.g. assault, fear of dismissal, working 'on-call' hours). The second set of notes were then read and coded using both the codes already generated and new ones pertaining to concepts that had not appeared in the first interviews. This process continued for all the interview notes, with the two authors working independently and then coming together to confirm or challenge each other's coding. The third author was then given a subset of

Table 2.1 Sample characteristics (domestic workers)

No.	Pseudonyms	Gender	Education completed	Age	Years in domestic employment	Hours worked per day	Sleep-in or Sleep-out
1	Josephine	Female	Secondary	20	3	15	Sleep-in
2	Chaney	Female	Secondary	19	2	14	Sleep-out
3	Daisy	Female	Primary	20	4	12	Sleep-in
4	Florence	Female	Secondary	22	4	12	Sleep-in
5	Camila	Female	Secondary	21	4	13	Sleep-in
6	Diana	Female	Primary	18	5	14	Sleep-in
7	Gabrielle	Female	Primary	20	6	15	Sleep-in
8	Gail	Female	Primary	21	7	14	Sleep-in
9	Della	Female	Primary	20	6	12	Sleep-in
10	Aggie	Female	Primary	20	4	14	Sleep-out
11	Alberta	Female	Secondary	21	4	14	Sleep-in
12	Marina	Female	Primary	19	3	15	Sleep-in
13	Sandra	Female	Primary	22	6	12	Sleep-in
14	Anita	Female	Primary	23	6	12	Sleep-in
15	Amber	Female	Secondary	21	4	13	Sleep-out
16	Prissy	Female	Secondary	21	3	14	Sleep-in
17	Belinda	Female	Primary	23	6	15	Sleep-in
18	Beverley	Female	Secondary	19	2	13	Sleep-in
19	Cheryl	Female	Secondary	19	3	14	Sleep-in
20	Doris	Female	Primary	20	6	12	Sleep-out
21	Jenny	Female	Primary	21	7	14	Sleep-in

Note: 'Sleep-in' means the participant resides at the employer's home, while 'sleep-out' means the participant resides elsewhere

the interview notes to code. We discussed any differences and reconciled to produce a final, agreed list of codes. Our analysis then moved from this first-order coding of participant statements to the identification of themes into which we sorted the codes. For example, 'fear of dismissal', 'physical punishment', and 'social learning' were grouped together under the theme 'perceived repercussions of voice'. We reviewed each theme for internal and external heterogeneity following Patton (2002), seeking to ensure that the codes within each theme fit together and that clear distinctions existed between themes. This latter task was particularly

Table 2.2 Sample characteristics (employers of domestic workers)

Serial No.	Pseudonyms	Gender	Profession	Age	Marital status	No of children
1	Yin	Female	Banker	39	Single	2
2	Fernandez	Male	Medical doctor	52	Married	3
3	Binta	Female	Business owner	46	Divorced	2
4	Andrew	Male	Banker	39	Single	2
5	Bukky	Female	Business owner	40	Married	3
6	Cristina	Female	Business owner	38	Divorced	2
7	Hamah	Female	Medical doctor	42	Single	1
8	Ana	Female	Business owner	46	Divorced	2
9	John	Male	Banker	38	Divorced	3
10	Khadya	Female	Business owner	40	Married	2
11	Shade	Female	Business owner	43	Single	2

challenging as some broad codes (such as 'fear of exercising voice') were applicable to more than one theme.

Research Findings

Below, we present the themes that we identified in the data and interpret them in the context of the theory on voice and silence. We begin by describing the workplace context for domestic workers in Nigeria as evidenced in their accounts of their working lives and in employers' accounts of the employment relationship. We then move on to examine workers' interactions with their employers in terms of voicing their work-related views and concerns. We draw on the accounts of both workers and employers to explore their perceptions of entitlement to and the outcomes of employee voice for domestic workers.

The Nigerian Workplace Context for Domestic Workers

In this section, we describe the key challenges associated with being a domestic worker in Nigeria. The participants' narratives reveal an absence of formal contracts of employment and job descriptions, which contributes to long working hours, with no set start or finish times and often with harassment and sexual abuse. This situation produces an employment relationship that both domestic workers and employers compare to slavery.

Informal Contracts and Job Descriptions

Our participants' accounts reveal that none signed a contract of employment or saw a written job description for their role. The majority of the domestic workers in our study (15) secured their jobs through relatives and were simply informed by their parents or guardians that they would be going to work in the city without being told any specifics about the job. The following statements typify the participants' experiences.

> I was told only two days before my departure from our village to Lagos about the job. To be honest, I was happy that I was going to be living in the city. All I knew was that I would be helping my madam with general household chores. I was not aware of any contract of employment, and no job description was given. (Marina, 19 years old, domestic worker)

> Perhaps because the job of a domestic workers requires no academic qualifications to do it, and it is such a 'lowly' job…a formal contract of employment and a job description are not involved. I do everything that I'm asked to do, without hesitation, and I receive no benefits except my salary, which is paid to my parents. (Cheryl, 19 years old, domestic worker)

The remaining six participants were recruited by unregistered employment agents who took them from their family homes to those of their new employers. Among all the participants, many accounts featured references to the importance of working without complaint so as not to bring shame upon one's family. The domestic workers in our study were

keen to protect their family reputation by being loyal to the employers and not complaining.

> The agent discussed the job with my parents, and I was brought to Lagos by the agent. I stayed in her house for one week and was then brought to my madam. I did not sign any contract. I do everything…yes, everything…without complaining. My mum even warned me before I left to be obedient and not to complain about anything. (Diana, 18 years old, domestic worker)

When the employers participating in this study were probed concerning the issue of formal contracts and job descriptions, all reported that they saw no rationale for formalising the employment relationship and potentially limiting the range of tasks a domestic worker might be expected to perform by identifying specific duties in a legal document.

> I couldn't offer her a contract of employment…that might reduce the scope of her work, and besides, we are talking about house-help here—there's no need for all that…I don't think that is done anywhere in Nigeria. I decide everything about her work and her life. (Shade, 43 years old, employer)

> The contract of employment was verbally agreed between me and the agent who brought her: that she would be my housemaid. And the job description is that she would do all jobs. (Binta, 46 years old, employer)

Employers benefit from the absence of formal legal arrangements covering domestic workers' employment, because this absence grants employers unrestricted discretion over domestic workers' job roles and working hours. It is therefore unsurprising that none of the employers in our study expressed an interest in providing employment contracts.

Long and Unstructured Working Hours

All the domestic workers who participated in this study reported that they work long hours, without a clear schedule. The average hours worked per day among the participants was 13.3 and some participants worked as many as 105 hours per week (see Table 2.1).

I do not have a start or finish time, as I am summoned at any time of the day and night to attend to the children or any household chore. For example, I was summoned around 3 a.m. this morning to attend to my madam's two-year-old child who was crying, and I did go back to sleep, because the boy went back to sleep at around 6 a.m. and I just carried on with my usual routine. I can say my working hours are roughly 15 hours a day or, let me just say, I work all the time, because I live with my employer. (Josephine, 20 years old, domestic worker)

Without the protection of employment legislation and formal contracts stipulating working times, workers in the informal economy often work extremely long hours (Davy et al., 2019). Even in nations where domestic employment is subject to legislation, the maximum working hours are often set at a higher level for domestic workers than for workers in other sectors (Blofield, 2009), and the ability of domestic workers to assert their employment rights is often severely constrained by their migrant status and potential live-in requirements, which gives employers coercive power over domestic workers, who are dependent on their employers for accommodation and subsistence (Cox, 2012). As illustrated by the domestic worker below, expectations for long working hours are standard among employers.

I have not worked less than 90 hours a week in the last 3 years. I worked at two places before here, and the story is the same, perhaps worse. It is work all the time. I can speak to you now because I am on an errand; otherwise, I have no time. (Belinda, 23 years old, domestic worker)

Gender-Based Violence

Domestic workers' vulnerability to physical abuse is heightened by the isolation and intimacy of their workplace—they carry out their work in the employer's home, where unwanted attention is unlikely to be interrupted by third-party oversight. More than half of the domestic workers in our study indicated that they have been sexually harassed or sexually assaulted by either their employer or members of their employer's family. These participants never reported the incidents due to their fear of being dismissed.

It has happened to me twice. I did not report it, because I knew I would be sacked if I did. I have seen it happen before, so I keep it to myself in order to keep my job. (Jenny, 21 years old, domestic worker)

I could not have reported it because whether my madam would believe me or not, I will be the one to leave. Her brother, a university graduate, sexually harassed me, but I keep it to myself…he warned me not to mention it to anyone. I don't want to lose my job and go back to the village. (Beverley, 19 years old, domestic worker)

The remainder of the domestic workers in our study declined to comment on this issue, citing concerns that their employers may find out they spoke about this subject, and they would lose their jobs as a consequence. We can speculate from this reluctance to speak on the topic that these workers have undergone similar experiences to those who reported being subjected to sexual harassment and assault or have witnessed such incidents happening to co-workers. These findings are in line with those of many researchers, who argue that fear of reprisal, fear of not being believed, and fear of adverse career consequences are some of the reasons why sexual harassment is under-reported in the workplace (e.g. Adkins, 2020).

Employer Receptiveness to Voice

When employers were asked whether domestic workers could voice their concerns or opinions about their jobs, none were of the view that this would be appropriate. They felt that the domestic workers' subservient status with regard to both their age and job role, made doing so inappropriate. Indeed, nearly all the employers interviewed interpreted 'concerns or opinions' as complaints, rather than constructive suggestions for improving working conditions or productivity.

Why should my domestic worker complain? First of all, it is wrong for a young person to complain when they are sent on an errand by an elder…not to talk of my domestic worker who was employed to serve me. Second, I don't think it's

ethical, because I give them a job, and they are complaining about doing the job. (John, 38 years old, employer)

This excerpt reflects the culture of high-power distance that is prevalent in Nigeria and the cultural norm that requires young people to show respect and deference to their elders (Emelifeonwu & Valk, 2019). Another employer contrasted voice unfavourably with work ethics and courtesy:

You call it 'voice', but to me, it is rudeness and laziness. How could my servant, someone I employed to serve me, complain about the job? I think it's an insult. I have never experienced it. I don't think I could stand such a domestic worker…they normally are very obedient. (Khadya, 40 years old, employer)

Similarly, when asked if domestic workers were consulted with regard to decisions that affected their work, employers were universal in their negative response. Paying for labour is associated with complete authority over the labourer:

Come on, they are domestic workers, I don't see a need for that…. (Fernandez, 52 years old, employer)

No, I don't involve my domestic worker in any decisions. That is insulting. I just give orders, and she complies. (John, 38 years old, employer)

I pay for her time. So, I decide how, when, and where that time is spent. She has no say in it at all. I am the decision-maker here. (Cristina, 38 years old, employer)

The prospect of having discussion—let alone consulting or negotiating—with domestic workers on job-relevant decisions was perceived by employers as unnecessary at best and entirely inappropriate at worst. Ascribing any value to the views of someone they consider socially inferior was perceived as demeaning. Employers framed domestic worker subservience and employer authoritarianism as social norms within the deeply hierarchical social structure of Nigeria, unrelated to 'good' or 'bad'

people management (Adisa et al., 2021). As evidenced in the excerpt below, a dictatorial management style and the expectation of workers' total compliance were not seen as antithetical to treating one's staff well:

> *I think it's the culture here for housemaids to just comply with whatever their masters say. Employers don't like to hear complaints or suggestions from house-maids. Even myself—as much as I love to treat my housemaid well, she dares not complain about anything. (Yin, 39 years old, employer)*

Two key points can be taken from the above narrations. First, voicing any job-related dissatisfaction to their employers places domestic workers at risk of termination of employment. Second, this situation is at least in part due to employers perceiving employee voice in the context of domestic employment to represent a challenge to their authority. This challenge is seen as culturally unacceptable given its juxtaposition with Nigeria's cultural norms of respect and obedience towards one's elders and one's employer, particularly when the latter is of a higher socioeconomic status (see Emelifeonwu & Valk, 2019).

The Perceived Negative Repercussions of Voice and Silence as Alternative

Participants who reported having expressed their voice in the workplace on previous occasions invariably suffered adverse consequences and opted for silence thereafter.

> *I complained about my workload and long working hours to my previous madam. I thought we could arrive at a compromise whereby my workload and working hours would be reviewed. But she dismissed me the following day complaining that I was lazy. I think that keeping utterly quiet is the best way a domestic worker can avoid troubles and keep her job…which is what I'm doing now. (Gold, 21 years old, domestic worker)*

Silence, which has been defined as withholding any genuine expression about a perceived or experienced injustice (Pinder & Harlos, 2001), is a tactic that was learned not only by those who had direct experience with

the repercussions of expressing voice in the workplace but also by those who engaged in social learning through observing the experiences of others:

> We were two domestic workers—me and another lady. She was dismissed a few months ago, because she complained that madam's brother woke her at around 2 a.m. to prepare food. This angered madam a lot and she smacked her severely and dismissed her. I remember madam saying, 'How dare you complain of doing what I bought you to do?' So, for me, complaining about anything is like a first-class ticket to getting dismissed. (Florence, 22 years old, domestic worker)

Florence's story demonstrates the commonly held view among domestic workers that it is not safe voice one's dissatisfaction in work-related matters, because this has been seen to lead to physical assault and ultimately termination of employment. Employers agree with the view that a domestic worker who expresses their voice would be penalised.

> I sometimes ask her if the job is too much for her, but she always says 'no'. I would have sacked her if she had said yes, because it means she's lazy. (Khadya, 40 years old, employer)

In an informal economy, where unskilled labour is cheap and plentiful, employers view their domestic workers as replaceable. In the excerpt above, offering workers the opportunity to express their voice was less about their concern for domestic workers' well-being and more of a trap designed to catch workers who were dissatisfied with their heavy workload.

Domestic Employment as 'Slavery'

The workplace experiences recounted by the participants demonstrate that domestic workers are subject to heavy job demands and job insecurity, and they fear job loss or sanctions from their employer, thereby restricting their ability to report mistreatment. In some accounts, participants compared these working conditions to enslavement.

My oga once called me an idiot slave. My days are planned by my madam…I am always on duty, and I dare not complain about anything, because I will lose my job. I am like my madam's property. (Anita, 23 years old, domestic worker)

Let me just tell you exactly what it is. Domestic workers are slaves, while their employers are the slave owners. For a domestic worker to enjoy a good working relationship with her master and keep her job requires her not to complain about anything, good or bad…just do exactly as you are told. (Prissy, 21 years old, domestic worker)

The notion of domestic workers being personal property also arose in many of the employers' accounts. One employer referred to domestic workers' status as 'slave-like' and saw this situation as an unavoidable by-product of the job they perform, distancing herself from her own role as an employer in upholding this status.

I decide what my domestic worker does and plan her days…I basically plan her life. She carries out my instructions to the letter and has never complained about anything…She has never looked into my eyes…I call that slavery, but that is unfortunately the nature of her job. (Ana, 46 years old, employer)

By ascribing a universality to these asymmetrical power relations and emphasising domestic workers' freedom of choice regarding their occupation, employers evade personal responsibility for perpetuating the slavery-like working conditions.

Honestly, they are like slaves that you purchase. Feed them and use them for all sorts of things. I basically programme my domestic worker's life. I am not proud of it, but that is exactly what is it, and it is sort of universal in Nigeria. (Bukky, 40 years old, employer)

If you call it slavery, then it is voluntary, because they knew what the job would entail before they came into it. (Binta, 46 years old, employer)

Domestic workers' lives are under the control of their employers. While they are compensated financially for their work, the wages are low, even more so considering the long hours worked. Pay is typically sent

home to the domestic workers' parents and the obligation the domestic workers feel to honour the employment arrangements their parents made on their behalf is a strong motivation for them to continue in what is perceived as a difficult job. This could be likened to late-nineteenth-century indentured labour (Castles & Miller 1998). We argue that the nature of a domestic worker's job presents debilitating implications for their voice to be heard in the workplace.

Adapting and Creating Informal and Individual Spaces for Expressing Voices

While Nigerian domestic workers do not have the luxury of exiting, voicing about, or neglecting their role due to the constraining socio-environmental factors, genuine loyalty to their employers is also not present. Yet, such workers must find a way of expressing their voice in some small way by adapting to or finding small spaces within the environment in which they find themselves. The work of domestic workers in Nigeria depends on outsourcing (unregistered) agencies, which organise and distribute the workers to their various employers, or they work directly for the agencies. As one participant noted, 'The nature of this work is based on an individual arrangement—only one of us can be sent to a particular work location at one time, making it difficult for domestic employees like us to come together, let alone organise and develop resistance' (*Alberta, 21 years old, domestic worker*). Insights from some of the participants show that the harshness and individuality of this nature of work is common among domestic workers, and it essentially offers little space for solidarity. According to one participant, who reflects the opinion of the majority:

> *Every two weeks, I come to this agency office to sign a document or discuss my work process. I often meet the same faces, people in a similar situation to me. As time went on, we started talking and sharing our experiences. Sometimes, we even met on the street and started bonding and sharing advice, tips, and measures that one can adopt to navigate this lonely and cruel work arrangement,*

where employers use and abuse us as they wish. (Della, 20 years old, domestic worker)

Another domestic worker commented on such peer-to-peer or sideways voice as follows.

I know a few girls in this neighbourhood who are also domestic workers…We occasionally meet up when we run errands for our bosses to discuss our plights, share experiences, and advise each other…We normally advise ourselves on the importance of keeping quiet. (Josephine, 20 years old, domestic worker)

Notably, this peer-to-peer voice process (Loudoun et al., 2020) has been enabled by the very precarious and untenable nature of domestic work, including 'the agony of being exploited' (*Anita, 23 years old, domestic worker*), which domestic workers have in common, and the opportunity to share their similar complaints and situations. In this way, by coming to the agency office, while individualising their unique experiences, these domestic workers become more visible and interconnected, leading to informal meetings wherein they share complaints and ideas to mitigate their situations. Furthermore, some of the participants commented that they use the relatives of their employers as a voice mechanism. As Gail commented:

My boss and his wife are very hostile towards me. They treat me worse than a slave. But mercifully, the mother of my boss is very empathetic and caring. So, I seized the opportunity to tell her my stories. We interacted more deeply and developed a social bond and emotional intimacy. We discussed the reality of social deprivation and related emotions. She gives me advice and tips on when and how to best appeal to my boss. (Gail, 21 years old, domestic worker)

Jenny commented on how she uses prosocial behaviour to engage and develop a good relationship with her boss:

I usually tell her what she likes to hear whenever she queries me about any issue. For example, I said no when she asked if her nephew had harassed me…that way, she is happy with me. (Jenny, 21 years old domestic worker)

The quote above illustrates that it is not as simple as the worker simply trying to help the boss. In this case, they see it as part of a strategy to gain confidence, so this is very much the first step in a longer process that might not be all about pleasing the boss. Rather, telling the boss what they want to hear is prosocial, but the motivation might be otherwise. Beyond interpersonal relationships and social interactions, one of the ideas shared by domestic workers is that they can '*find support from outside their workplace*' (*Binta, 46 years old, employer*) by talking to their relatives and agencies, who often advised them to endure the situation in order to keep their jobs. According to one participant, 'I normally complain to my mum when I talk to her on the phone, but she always advises me to endure whatever the treatment is in order to keep my job' (*Agie, 20 years old, domestic worker*). Furthermore, the peer-to-agency relationship can be another viable strategy for accessing and expressing informal and individual voice.

> *My agency often advises me not to discuss whatever happens in my place of work with anybody, because I will lose my job and it will get me in trouble. Sometimes, she promises to talk to my boss but yes, I often tell my agency. (Diana, 18 years old domestic worker)*

As one participant commented, 'the agency lady is so compassionate and caring—she once told my boss to take it easy with me, because I was going through emotional distress because of a family problem' (*Gabrielle, 20 years old, domestic worker*). Another participant shared that although most of these workers are mindful of their jobs, 'They are quite thoughtful. Madam Clara (the agent) is a star, she understood my predicament and initiated my move to my present place of work' (*Doris, 20 years old, domestic worker*). One employer admitted, 'Agencies represent the link between domestic workers and employers' (*Andrew, 39 years old employer*); hence, they are influential in employment relations concerning domestic workers. This means that domestic workers can develop social capital and interpersonal relationships with their agents (as they do with their peers) in order to express their voice. Therefore, securing peer-to-peer support, interpersonal relationships, and contextual social relationships (with employers and their relatives) as well as external support (from relatives

and agencies) are strategies that some of the participants employ when adapting to their environment and creating space to informally and individually make their voices heard (Gunawardana, 2014).

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, we explored the extent to which voice can be exercised by domestic workers in Nigeria and the strategies they can adopt to potentially find space for expressing their voices. Similar to other developing countries, including South Africa, Buenos Aires, and Sri Lanka (Dwyer, 2012; Gunawardana, 2014; Atzeni, 2016), domestic workers in Nigeria face difficult and often dangerous working conditions characterised by long working hours (with no set start or finish times), a complete lack of autonomy over their time and work tasks, and the threat of physical and/ or sexual abuse. Their position as marginalised members of society on account of their gender, age, and lack of occupational and educational qualifications places them in an extremely vulnerable position with their employers, whose power over them is near-absolute (Umar & Hassan, 2013; Oruh et al., 2018). Employers exhibit an authoritarian people management style, in line with Nigerian cultural norms, thereby distancing themselves from any felt responsibility for the unfavourable working conditions experienced by their staff. This harsh reality at times is tantamount to modern slavery (Caruana et al., 2021), but even within this context, workers try to create their own space to express their voice (Gunawardana, 2014).

Theoretical Implications

We examine our findings through the lens of the EVLN framework in order to uncover the structural constraints in the form of state regulation (or lack thereof) and cultural norms, which disable domestic workers in Nigeria from responding to unjust and potentially dangerous working conditions with any options other than silence, which is a form of modern slavery (Crane, 2013; Caruana et al., 2021). Hence, workers must be

creative in order to adapt to their environment by making the most of what is obtainable, such as embracing interpersonal relationships and contextual social interactions with their employers as well as using peer-to-peer or sideways voice with other workers. They can also relate their experiences to and bond with their agency to gain sympathy and support or seek advice and support from external non-government organisations and other relevant actors—all possible ways of creating space for voice expression (Gunawardana, 2014). If the domestic worker exits her job, this may reflect poorly on both the domestic worker and her family, and given that working conditions are similar across employers, the expectation of finding a more favourable position is likely to be low. Domestic workers are young, female, poor, and in possession of few educational qualifications. In a hierarchical society in which age, masculinity, and financial resources are most prized, such domestic workers are marginalised members of society with few (if any) attractive alternative employment options.

As can be seen in our findings, if a domestic worker voices their concerns to their employer, they are risking physical abuse and/or termination of employment. Engaging in 'neglect' by showing a lack of interest in work or not fully engaging in job tasks is likewise not a viable option. While Allen (2014, p. 46) suggests that neglect may 'enable employees to exert some power over their employers by getting the employer to pay for work that has not actually been done'. This would not be the case for the domestic workers who participated in our study. They are low skilled and can be easily replaced. Finally, the 'loyalty' response doesn't carry the same meaning as it might in a western organisation. In the global north, there is evidence that employees' loyalty to their employer increases their propensity to engage in voice, as they are highly invested in improving their workplaces (Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2009). In Nigeria, however, employers of domestic workers expect unquestioning obedience as a matter of course. 'Loyal' domestic workers are simply trying to not lose their jobs. It is not that they are patiently and confidently waiting for working conditions to improve. As the findings of our study show, the concept of employee voice is predicated on western values connected o 'speaking up', which are not shared by all cultures—particularly in developing countries, such as Nigeria, where the reality of domestic workers is akin

to modern slavery. This means the EVLN framework (and the notion of voice more generally) needs to be adapted to the Nigerian context. Hence, we have expanded EVLN by considering what voice means in this context, as workers do not have the same tools that are available in the west, so they must adjust in order to find ways of expressing voice themselves (Gunawardana, 2014).

While voice is contested in the west there is at least some acceptance that speaking up is normal and the issue becomes the how and to what extent voice is facilitated (Wilkinson et al. 2010, 2018). The employers in our study demonstrated a near total unwillingness to consider any acceptable level of workers' voices. This rejection of voice for employees can be attributed to the cultural norms prevalent in Nigeria. Hofstede (1980) describes how, in high-power distance cultures, there is no assumption of existential equality between superiors and subordinates. The social hierarchy is based on a fundamental inequality between workers and their *ogas*. To accept views or suggestions from a social inferior implies some deficiency on the part of the employer, and this threatens their status. In this context, employee voice is equivalent to telling employers they are incompetent with regard to managing their staff.

Policy and Human Resource Management Implications

Domestic workers have no legal protection from unsafe working conditions and workplace abuses, and they are effectively voiceless. The onus is thus on the government and policymakers to enact and enforce laws that regulate the informal sector of the economy. A key consideration for policymakers (at both federal and state levels) is to make Nigeria a signatory to the International Labour Organization Domestic Workers Convention and extend the provisions of the Nigerian Labour Act to include domestic workers and other players in the informal sector, including both employers and the currently unregulated agents who place domestic workers with households. In the context of an amended Labour Act that extends protection to the informal economy, human resource

practitioners would contribute by compiling job descriptions for domestic workers and establishing advisory services to provide guidance to domestic workers on their employee rights and how to claim them. Even in the currently unregulated context of the informal economy, labour unions could play a key role in educating domestic workers about their employment rights under articles 23 and 24 of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which specifies (among other rights) just and favourable conditions of work, reasonable limitations on working hours, and holidays with pay.

A more difficult challenge lies in shifting employers' attitudes towards domestic workers. Educational initiatives by the government and human resource practitioners may have difficulty gaining immediate traction given the strong cultural norms in Nigeria in relation to power distance and obedience towards one's elders (Hofstede, 1980). A more fruitful avenue may be attempts to manipulate perceptions of social status. If employing domestic workers is currently seen as a symbol of superiority (Olayiwola, 2019), emphasising the need for more progressive and humane treatment of staff (for instance, a transformational leadership style) as indicative of one's sophistication and good taste may be a more successful route to change.

Conclusions, Limitations, and Recommendation for Future Research

This study extends the extant literature on employee voice by showing how institutional factors and cultural norms disempower domestic workers in Nigeria and prevent them from effecting positive change in their workplaces. We build on extant research to demonstrate how in the face of structural factors that inhibit voice, exit, and neglect, domestic workers in Nigeria respond to unfavourable work conditions in the only way that is available to them: adapt, which includes employing acquiescent and defensive silence to avoid conflict with their employers and thereby retain their jobs, while seeking external support and advice (Gunawardana, 2014). In combination with the lack of legislative protection afforded to

domestic workers in Nigeria, high EVLN contributes to the use of low-quality, authoritarian people management practices by employers (Hofstede, 1980). Thus, Nigerian cultural norms governing the supervisor–subordinate relationship preclude the meaningful use of employee voice as it is understood in a western context. However, by investigating what voice means in the restricted environment (occasioned by cultural and patrimonial constraints, such as in Nigeria), where workers lack similar tools to what is available in the west and are therefore required to make relevant adjustments, the voice prospects of domestic workers can then be better managed (Gunawardana, 2014). Our work has limitations. With few male employers compared to female employers as study participants, we could not identify potential gender dynamics in the employment relationships. Interviews with employer–employee pairs would have provided greater scope with which to examine perceptions and expectations of working conditions and critical incidents from opposing perspectives; however, securing the participation of domestic workers whose employers were being interviewed would have proven very difficult if not impossible, given their concerns about being identifiable. Perhaps most crucially, our inability to produce verbatim transcripts of the interviews may have impacted our analyses.

Notwithstanding these limitations, this study provides a basis from which it is possible to investigate employee voice further in under-researched contexts and among disenfranchised populations. Future research with domestic workers might examine whether voice is more likely to occur in households employing multiple domestic workers: Is there any safety in numbers or any solidarity among co-workers in this context? What are the long-term consequences of silence for domestic workers in terms of health, well-being, and economic activity? When does silence lead to exit? And perhaps most crucially for change to take place, how can employers be persuaded to improve working conditions for domestic workers given how they seem to benefit from the status quo? Answering these questions has value not only for the employee voice literature, but for the lived experiences of millions of women in domestic employment in Nigeria and globally.

References

Adisa, T. A., Adekoya, O. D., & Okoya, O. (2021). Modern-day slavery? The work-life conflict of domestic workers in Nigeria. *Gender in Management: An International Journal, 36*(4), 519–535.

Adkins, K. (2020). Exit only: Harms from silencing employee voice *JCOM 19*(05), 1–18.

Agomo, C. K. (2011). *Nigerian employment and labour relations law and practice*. Concept Publications.

Akinwale, A. A. (2014). Precarious working conditions and exploitation of workers in the Nigerian informal economy. *Social Science Diliman, 10*(1), 117–146.

Allen, M. M. C. (2014). Hirschman and voice. In A. Wilkinson, J. Donaghey, T. Dundon, & R. Freeman (Eds.), *The handbook of research on employee voice* (pp. 36–51). Edward Elgar Press.

Arisi, R. O., & Oromareghake, P. (2011). Cultural violence and the Nigerian woman. *African Research Review, 5*(4), 369–381.

Atzeni, M. (2016). Beyond trade unions' strategy? The social construction of precarious workers organizing in the city of Buenos Aires. *Labour History, 57*(2), 193–214.

Awosusi, O., & Adebo, M. (2012). Domestic servants and rural-youth urban migration in Nigeria: Issues for national intervention. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 2*(5), 271–278.

Barry, M., & Wilkinson, A. (2016). Pro-social or pro-management: A critique of the conception of employee voice as a pro-social behaviour within Organisational Behaviour. *British Journal of Industrial Relations, 54*(2), 261–284.

Bell, M. P., Özbilgin, M. F., Beauregard, T. A., & Sürgevil, O. (2011). Voice, silence and diversity in 21st century organizations: Strategies for inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender employees. *Human Resource Management, 50*(1), 131–146.

Biernacki, P., & Waldorf, D. (1981). Snowball sampling: Problems and techniques of chain referral sampling. *Sociological Methods and Research, 10*(2), 141–163.

Blofield, M. (2009). Feudal enclaves and political reforms: Domestic workers in Latin America. *Latin American Research Review, 44*(1), 158–190.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101.

Burgess, J., Connell, J., & Winterton, J. (2013). Vulnerable workers, precarious work and the role of trade unions and HRM. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 24*(22), 4083–4093.

Caruana, R., Crane, A., Gold, S., & LeBaron, G. (2021). Modern slavery in business: the sad and sorry state of a non-field. *Business and Society, 60*(2), 251–287.

Castles, S., & Miller, M. (1998). *The age of migration* (2nd ed.). Macmillan.

Cox, R. (2012). Gendered work and migration regimes. In R. Aslaug Sollund & L. Leonard (Eds.), *Transnational migration, gender and rights* (pp. 33–52). Emerald.

Crane, A. (2013). Modern slavery as a management practice: exploring the conditions and capabilities for human exploitation. *Academy of Management Review, 38*(1), 49–69.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.

Davy, J., Rasetsoke, D., Todd, A., Quazi, T., Ndlovu, P., Dobson, R., & Alfers, L. (2019). Analyses of time use in informal economy workers reveals long work hours, inadequate rest and time poverty. In S. Bagnara, R. Tartaglia, S. Albolino, et al. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 20th Congress of the International Ergonomics Association (IEA 2018)* (Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing) (Vol. 819). Springer.

Detert, J. R., & Treviño, L. K. (2010). Speaking up to higher-ups: How supervisors and skip-level leaders influence employee voice. *Organisation Science, 21*(1), 249–270.

Donaghey, J., Cullinane, N., Dundon, T., & Wilkinson, A. (2011). Reconceptualising employee silence: problems and prognosis. *Work, Employment & Society, 25*(1), 51–67.

Dwyer, P. (2012). Book review: Shireen Ally, from servants to workers: South African domestic workers and the democratic state. *Work, Employment & Society, 26*(3), 543–545.

Emelifeonwu, J. C., & Valk, R. (2019). Employee voice and silence in multinational corporations in the mobile telecommunications industry in Nigeria. *Employee Relations, 41*(1), 228–252.

Good, L., & Cooper, R. (2014). Voicing their complaints? The silence of students working in retail and hospitality and sexual harassment from customers. *Labour & Industry, 24*(4), 302–316.

Good, L., & Cooper, R. (2016). 'But it's your job to be friendly': Employees coping with and contesting sexual harassment from customers in the service sector. *Gender, Work & Organization, 23*(5), 447–469.

Grant, A. M. (2013). Rocking the boat but keeping it steady: The role of emotion regulation in employee voice. *Academy Management Journal, 56*(6), 1703–1723.

Gunawardana, S. J. (2014). Reframing employee voice: A case study in Sri Lanka's export processing zones. *Work, Employment & Society, 28*(3), 452–468.

Hirschman, A. (1970). *Exit, voice, and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states*. Harvard University Press.

Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: international differences in work-related values*. Sage.

Kensbock, S., Bailey, J., Jennings, G., & Patiar, A. (2015). Sexual harassment of women working as room attendants within 5-star hotels. *Gender, Work & Organization, 22*(1), 36–50.

Ladan, M. T. (2005). *The rights of child domestics as victims of human rights violation and trafficking in Nigeria*. Paper presented at an Anti-Trafficking Agency (NAPTIP) and UNICEF workshop. Retrieved February 22, 2021, from http://www.gamji.com/article5000/NEWS5993.htm

Loudoun, R., Townsend, K., Wilkinson, A., & Mowbra, P. K. (2020). The role of peer-to-peer voice in severe work environments: organisational facilitators and barriers. *Industrial Relations Journal, 51*(6), 556–571.

Marginson, P., Edwards, P., Edwards, T., Ferner, A., & Tregaskis, O. (2010). Employee representation and consultative voice in multinational companies operating in Britain. *British Journal of Industrial Relations, 48*(1), 151–180.

Mellahi, K., Budhwar, P. S., & Li, B. (2010). A study of the relationship between exit, voice, loyalty and neglect and commitment in India. *Human Relations, 63*(3), 349–369.

Morrison, E. W. (2011). Voice and silence within organizations: literature review and directions for future research. *The Academy of Management Annals, 5*(1), 373–412.

Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behaviour, 1*(1), 173–197.

Nesbitt-Ahmed, Z. (2016). *The same, but different: The everyday lives of female and male domestic workers in Lagos, Nigeria*. A thesis submitted to the Department of Geography and Environment of the London School of Economics and Political Science for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Retrieved January 15, 2020, from http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/3359/1/Nesbitt-Ahmed-The_Same_But_Different.pdf

Noy, C. (2008). Sampling knowledge: The hermeneutics of snowball sampling in qualitative research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 11*(4), 327–344.

Olayiwola, P. (2019). ILO's Decent work agenda and domestic workers in Nigeria: Challenges and complexities. *Labour, Capital and Society, 49*(1), 161–186.

Oruh, E. S., Nwagbara, U., Mordi, C., & Mushfiqur, R. (2018). Legitimisation strategies and managerial capture: a critical discourse analysis of employment relations in Nigeria. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 31*(22), 1–27.

Oyetunde, K., Prouska, R., & McKearney, A. (2022). Voice in non-traditional employment relationships: a review and future research directions. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 33*(1), 142–167.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Pinder, C. C., & Harlos, K. P. (2001). Employee silence: quiescence and acquiescence as responses to perceived injustice. *Research in Personnel and Human Resource Management, 20*, 331–369.

Pyman, A., Gollan, P. J., Wilkinson, A., Xu, C., & Kalfa, S. (Eds.). (2016). *Employee voice in emerging economies* (Advances in Industrial and Labour Relations) (Vol. 23, pp. i–xiv). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Soltani, E., Liao, Y. Y., Gholami, A. K., & Iqbal, A. (2018). Saying it without words: a qualitative study of employee voice in the Iranian building sector. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 29*(5), 1015–1055.

Syed, J. (2020). Diversity management and missing voices. In A. Wilkinson, J. Donaghey, T. Dundon, & R. B. Freeman (Eds.), *Handbook of research on employee voice* (pp. 486–508). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Tade, O., & Aderinto, A. (2012). Factors influencing the demand for domestic servants in Oyo state, Nigeria. *International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies, 4*(1), 521–545.

Tangirala, S., & Ramanujam, R. (2009). The sound of loyalty: Voice or silence? In J. Greenberg & M. S. Edwards (Eds.), *Voice and silence in organizations* (pp. 203–224). Emerald.

Umar, M., & Hassan, Z. (2013). Antecedents and outcomes of voice and silence behaviours of employees of tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria. *Procedia-Social and Behavioural Sciences, 97*, 188–193.

Wilkinson, A., Dundon, T., Donaghey, J., & Freeman, R. (2020a). Employee voice: Charting new terrain. In *The handbook of research on employee voice* (2nd ed.). Edward Elgar Press.

Wilkinson, A., Gollan, P., Lewin, D., & Marchington, M. (2010). Conceptualising participation in organisations. In A. Wilkinson, P. J. Gollan, M. Marchington, & D. Lewin (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of participation in organisations* (pp. 3–25). Oxford University Press.

Wilkinson, A., Gollan, P. J., Kalfa, S., & Xu, Y. (2018). Voices unheard: employee voice in the new century. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 29*(5), 711–724.

Wilkinson, A., Sun, J. M., & Mowbray, P. K. (2020b). Employee voice in the Asia Pacific. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources, 58*(4), 471–484.

Wilkinson, A., Knoll, M., Mowbray, P. K., & Dundon, T. (2021). New Trajectories in Worker Voice: Integrating and Applying Contemporary Challenges in the Organization of Work. *British Journal of Management, 32*(3), 693–707.

Willman, P., Bryson, A, & Gomez, R. (2006). The sound of silence: Which employers choose no employee voice and why? *Socio-Economic Review, 4*(2), 283–299.

World Population Review. (2019). Lagos population 2019. Retrieved July 29, 2019, from http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/lagos-population/

Yusuf, S. A. (2014). Informal sector and employment generation in Nigeria. Retrieved March 20, 2020, from https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/55538/

3

The Impact of Social Media on Employees' Voice in Egypt

Ghada El-Kot, Sarah Fahmy, and Mike Leat

Introduction

In line with Egypt's Vision 2030 goal of creating "digital Egypt", Kamel (2021, pp. 16–17) stated that Egypt was among the top-performing countries in terms of digital inclusion. The 2020 Digital Inclusion Index includes elements such as assisting individuals and societies in effectively adopting information and communications technology (ICT) and improving their ability to contribute to the digital economy. Based upon Statista (2021), in January 2021, there were 49 million active social

G. El-Kot (✉)
Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport,
Alexandria, Egypt
e-mail: gelkot@aagsb.aast.edu

S. Fahmy
Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL, USA

M. Leat
University of Plymouth, Plymouth, UK

media users, representing 47.4% of the population, with a 16.7% increase from January 2020. The potential of using social media for improving organisational communications, interactions, and knowledge exchange is becoming more widely recognised, as is its potential value for achieving employee voice-related goals. Sharma and Bhatnagar (2016) argued that the role of social media should be expanded and to be used as a tool to engage employees at work. Ferreira and Plessis (2009) and North (2010) revealed that using social media improves collaboration and knowledge sharing, which in turn increased employee productivity. Most frequent use of social media organisations has been focused on marketing research, consumer behaviour research, improving customer relations, and recruitment (Koch et al., 2018; Korzynski et al., 2020), whereas the use of social media for employee participation and employee engagement necessitates further investigation.

This chapter examines the impact of social media on employee voice in Egypt. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the various perspectives and purpose of employee voice, looking at both internal and external employee voice. The second section assesses the existing use of social media in organisations and its impact on employee voice. The third section describes Egypt's social media profile and analyses the findings of a pilot study conducted with three organisations across different sectors in Egypt to evaluate how social media may support employees to express themselves. The fourth section draws conclusions and makes recommendations for managers, human resource practitioners, and employees on how to use social media to enable employees to effectively express their voice either internally or externally in Egypt.

Employee Voice Perspectives and Purposes

Employee involvement, employee participation, employee engagement, and employee empowerment are all terms that are used interchangeably with employee voice in the literature (Gifford et al., 2005 and Budd et al., 2010). Both CIPD (2013) and Gifford et al. (2005) considered employee voice is an antecedent for broader concept of employee

engagement. Employees that are more involved will be able to contribute to their organisations by speaking up and expressing their voice in a helpful manner. Budd et al. (2010) referred to Hirchman's (1970) research on individual employee voice, which was based on the exit-voice-loyalty framework. In which the employees could express their dissatisfaction by complaining or quitting their jobs. Employee voice was also used by employees who suffered from silence or were unsure that things at work will improve. According to CIPD (2013), the rising acknowledgement that is given to employees to explore their opinions is advantageous for organisational performance.

There are several distinguishing classifications of employee voice that vary across human resources to organisational behaviour traditions. First, employee relation or human resource traditions perceive employee voice in terms of employees having an element of control and participation in decision making, their ability to express dissatisfactions and concerns with their work activities and their terms and conditions of employment. Their ability to do so facilities and embeds employee empowerment. Martin et al. (2015) and O'Shea and Murphy (2020) express this purpose in terms of employee voice providing employees with a platform to raise issues and advance interests as well as potentially contributing to management thinking and decision making. Second, organisational behaviour traditions perceive the purpose of employee voice as primarily being about communications and for employees to share their knowledge skills and insights with management to solve problems, suggest innovations and improvements to processes and systems which will benefit the organisation through greater productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, or competitiveness and potentially yielding enhanced employee commitment and engagement (Morrison, 2014). Later, Ghani and Malik (2022) simplified the perspectives on employee voice into two types: one of which focuses on expressing and seeking resolution of employee dissatisfactions, and one which focuses on suggestions and ideas for organisational improvements. In this study, we use Ghani and Malik's perspective of employee voice.

Employee Voice Benefits and the Risk of Silence

Offering the space for employee voice provides a variety of benefits. According to Strauss (2006), doing so creates a win–win situation by giving employees the chance to meet their needs, while also allowing organisations to successfully accomplish their goals. According to Wilkinson and Fay (2011), employee voice is not just about having a say in the organisation, but also about fostering engagement and providing transparency to employees. Previous research, such as Morrison (2014), demonstrates the link between employee voice and organisational advantages such as employees are more satisfied, committed, efficient, and engaged. According to Farndale et al. (2011), confidence in senior management is an important mediator of the link between employee voice and organisational commitment. Cassinger and Thelander (2020) noted that employee satisfaction with voice mechanisms and a sense of being heard by management leads to better levels of engagement and job satisfaction (Morrison and Milliken, 2000; Rees et al., 2013; Wilkinson et al., 2018). From a management and organisational standpoint, the claimed potential benefits include increased employee loyalty and commitment, increased organisational performance, and reduced employee absenteeism (Wilkinson et al., 2018), improved teamwork (Raub & Robert, 2013), improved employee involvement, engagement, performance and productivity, innovation, improved decision making and conflict resolution (Dromey, 2016), and increased creativity (Ng & Feldman, 2012; Singh & Vanka, 2019; Karkoulian et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2021). There is also evidence that employee voice is related to and a predictor of employee retention (Morrison, 2014; Abou-Shouk et al., 2021). From the employee's perspective, they benefit from increased levels of employee empowerment, participation, satisfaction, well-being, and engagement (Dromey, 2016; Singh & Vanka, 2019). Employee voice also enhances employees' perceptions of their value and esteem and offers them psychological safety (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006) and protection from negative emotions such as resentment, anger, and dissatisfaction (Ghani & Malik, 2022).

However, as Liu et al. (2010) distinguished, there are differences between employee voice as speaking up, and employee voice as speaking out. Speaking up refers to voice behaviour focused on supervisors and upper management, whereas speaking out is intended more at co-workers and peers, implying a concentration on the employee voice's objective. In contrast, Kougiannou and Holland (2022) observed that employees' silence may arise when there is a lack of confidence in management or when employees are afraid to speak their opinions due to workplace inequality. In the context of employee voice, there are two broad categories of silence: silence for whatever reason employees intentionally withhold or refuse to express their voice, and silence due to an absence or inadequacy of appropriate mechanisms for the worker to express voice, which may also include silence due to discrimination. Employee silence is more than just not having anything to say or offer. Mowbray et al. (2015) noted that a climate of silence can be perpetuated in an organisation, citing Morrison and Milliken's (2000) model, which suggests that silence is encouraged in instances when managers are afraid of negative feedback and criticism, or believe that it is their right to manage and that they know best, or believe that employees are only self-interested, and that conflict and dissent should be avoided.

In Egypt, there is growing interest in the different types of employee voice. Burke and El-Kot (2010) investigated the potential antecedents and consequences of job engagement in a sample of male and female Egyptian managers and professionals working in diverse companies and industries. They discovered that work engagement predicts a variety of work outcomes, including job satisfaction and intent to quit, as well as a variety of psychological well-being outcomes. They advised firms to prioritise boosting employee engagement by developing supportive work environments that are aligned with good human resource management practices. CIPD (2013, p. 1) noted that employee voice remains unknown, advocating for the use of annual employee surveys as an internal communication method to learn about employees' voice at organisations. Elsetouhi et al. (2018) discovered that speaking out was a predictor of speaking up in a recent study in Egypt. Eldaghashy et al. (2022) further state that employee voice offers the link between transformative leadership and employee engagement in Egypt's public sector. They

advocated for changes to organisational practices in the government sector to gauge employee engagement.

There is a variety of mechanisms and platforms that employees can use to express their voice. Voice mechanisms, according to Gomez et al. (2010), include collective and individual, direct and indirect, official and informal, trade union or non-union, and combinations thereof. Mowbray et al. (2015) proposed a consensus on definitions of formal and informal employee voice, with formal referring to codified, prearranged, and regular structures that act as constraints on management's discretion, whereas informal refers to the often ad hoc, non-programmed, and day-to-day voicing of ideas and concerns expressed directly to supervisors and outside structured processes. In addition to the day-to-day and other procedures, management has a variety of methods and forums at its disposal to facilitate and capture employee voice. Employee attitude and other types of surveys are common, as are meetings of various types and levels, including those with teams, departments, project groups, and focus groups. Each of these methods and forums has advantages and is best suited to achieving certain goals.

Social Media and Employee Voice in Organisations

As new technologies are continuously being developed, social media platforms and networks may offer new expansive methods for employee voice. Singh and Vanka (2019) claim that the importance of employee voice is increasing as technology advances and new options for employees to communicate their issues arise. Dromey (2016) and Kougiannou and Holland (2022) claim that social media could allow improved decision making and boost employees' feeling of involvement and engagement by harnessing the "wisdom of the crowd", the belief that groups of people may make better judgments and better decisions. There is a growing interest in the prospects and benefits of using social media within organisations. However, as stated earlier, much of this attention has been focused on using social media for marketing research, consumer

behaviour research, strengthening customer relations, and recruitment purposes only (Koch et al., 2018; Korzynski et al., 2020). Numerous social media platforms and tools are available for use in the workplace, such as online blogs, microblogging, social networking sites, video sharing apps, wikis, media sharing sites, and gaming technologies. IBM (2015), for instance, suggested hiring trained staff, familiar with social media to support employees express their voice, as well as the importance of leaders in promoting and supporting the employees in learning how to do so (Martin et al., 2015).

Social media's potential to improve communications, interactions and knowledge exchange within organisations is becoming more widely recognised as is its potential value for achieving objectives associated with employee voice. According to Silverman et al. (2013) and Kougiannou and Holland (2022), social media provides the opportunity for a true paradigm shift in employee voice by facilitating collective voice, enabling employees to engage with each other across organisations, enabling employees to raise issues and exert more control over discussions and decision making, and facilitating online consultation and discussion with management in real time. As Martin et al. (2015) point out, using social media to encourage collective voice, increase control sharing, enable collaborative decision making, and improve democracy in the workplace requires managerial support. They added that the workplace culture must be supportive to employees freely expressing their interests. It has been argued that social media is a powerful tool that can encourage collaboration, communication, and consultation in the workplace and provides the opportunity for dialogue and two-way communication in real time and that it is an effective means of encouraging employee voice (Ghani & Malik, 2022; CIPD, 2013; Dromey, 2016; Arain et al., 2022). Both Dromey (2016) and Safko and Brake (2009) argued there is consensus around social media being an online virtual activity, that uses platforms, websites, and applications, to enable user-generated content to be communicated and shared among communities of people engaged in social networking and interaction. Some platforms, like Glassdoor (commonly used in Egypt), offer employer branding, as well as a virtual space for employees to rate their workplace, and indicate if their organisation uses social media. In addition, Struys (2018) noted that social media remains

one of the most successful platforms for contacting employees and gaining their confidence, and she emphasised the necessity of adopting social media for employee communication.

Dromey (2016) noted that Enterprise Social Networks incorporate external social network services such as publishing announcements, microblogging (short, character-limited blog posts), questions or inquiries, special interest groups, following others, and participating in conversations, but they are restricted and exclusive to members of the organisation. CIPD (2014) describes an Enterprise Social Network as an internal social media platform which is a "gated community, creating a safe place for open discussions between named colleagues". In addition to facilitating improved decision making, Enterprise Social Networks may help organisations develop networks and communities, improve engagement with and by remote workers, and promote real-time communications. As noted by Holland et al. (2016), social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have evolved into potent communication tools both within and outside of the workplace. They argued that little attention had been paid to using social media constructively to improve human resource management practices. In their exploratory study to examine the link between social media use and job satisfaction using data from the Australian Electronic Workplace Survey, Holland et al. (2016) found that social networking is not often utilised to express employees' voice at workplace. They found that social media is not commonly used to voice concerns related to work. Their findings also revealed that the level of job satisfaction is a factor in the desire to use social media to voice concerns related to work. Ghani and Malik (2022) further identified social media as an effective means of influencing how information was exchanged and obtained in organisations. They suggested that social networking sites that provide a visual communication channel may attract a big number of individuals, whereas blog communities allow users to conduct extended, in-depth debates through frequent blog posts.

The Use of Social Media to Encourage Employee Voice in Organisations

Several considerations must be addressed to utilise social media as an effective tool to foster and encourage employee voice inside organisations. Ghani and Malik (2022) suggest the multidirectional use of social media to justly and efficiency support employees raise their voice and ensure that managers respond quickly and fairly to all employees. Dromey (2016) identified the need for developing a simple and a clear social media policy, with a positive voice culture to allow employers and managers to show leadership that promote the use of social media for employee voice, and to be willing to engage with their staff openly, trust them, let go of some control and respond towards their suggestions and concerns, this would help in demonstrating the impact that employee voice has. Management also should provide a range of channels for voice. He identifies several reasons why employees might not be keen to use social media for employee voice and these include the fear, futility and need for senior management support the reasons for employee silence. The organisational level voice is likely to be encouraged where appropriate mechanisms and platforms are available and easily accessible to employees, and managers are willing to listen and respond to employees' ideas and complaints without discriminating against them (Ng & Feldman, 2012; Burke & Cooper, 2013, Mowbray et al., 2015; Venkataramani et al., 2016, Zhu et al., 2022). It appears likely that a democratic, empowering, supportive (Dundon et al., 2004), and fair organisational culture (characterised by high trusting relationships) will facilitate and encourage employees to express their views and concerns and make suggestions for improvements in work practices and processes. To effectively support employee voice, Miles and Mangold (2014) noted that managers and organisations must create an appropriate organisational framework, build voice mechanisms that are compatible with management's goal of encouraging employee voice, and then listen and respond. At the level of the individual's voice, the employee needs to feel psychologically safe and valued and without fear of the consequences (Zhu et al., 2022). Propensity to express one's voice may also be influenced by employee personality

traits, confidence, self-esteem, perceptions of their efficacy and personal influence (Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Gender, sexuality, race, religion, and perceptions of power are also potential influences the propensity to engage with employee voice (Ghani & Malik, 2022). In their practical guidance to managers on encouraging individual employee voice, CIPD (2021) identifies the important role that line managers play, stressing the need for supervisors to openly listen to employees' concerns and issues that matter to them. CIPD encourages creating a structure to share observations and concerns, to help to create an organisational culture of safety and trust. They also stress the importance of senior management in arguing that if employees see senior management members listening and valuing their input, they will be motivated to use their own voice.

Additionally, there has been substantial focus on the roles of leadership, supervisors and supervisory relations in developing, implementing and controlling informal employee voice. Supervisors and middle managers are accountable for carrying out senior management's policies, and their involvement in building a voice climate and supporting and encouraging employee voice has been recognised as critical by several research studies (Marchington & Suter 2013; Detert & Treviño, 2010). Elsetouhi et al. (2018), for example, asserted the importance of leadership integrity in influencing employees' perceptions of safety in expressing their voice and argued that empowering leaders' behaviour is also important. Boxall and Purcell (2011) identified trust in leadership as a critical variable underpinning effective employee voice. Other researchers have focused on leadership styles and have variously argued the importance of ethical (Walumbwa et al., 2012; Zhu et al., 2022), authentic (Hsin-Hua, 2012; Walumbwa et al., 2012) and transformational leadership approaches (Detert & Treviño, 2010; Liu et al., 2010) to encouraging employee voice. Several studies have addressed issues of leadership in Egypt; for example, Shahin and Wright (2004) suggested the desirability of charismatic leadership and social integration as an appropriate leadership style that would match with the Egyptian culture. Elsetouhi et al. (2018) further added that leaders greatly influence employees' desire to exercise their employee voice, as leaders play a major role in determining whether employees feel safe to express their views. They demonstrated that

employee voice has beneficial effects on the leader's integrity and found that empowering the leader behaviours positively influenced employee voice. Specifically, when a leader demonstrates ethical behaviour, a willingness to delegate authority and engage employees in decision making, they create a climate of trust and loyalty which facilitates the expression of employees' ideas and opinions. These findings and conclusions are consistent with El-Kot (2004) who investigated the determinants of managerial performance among middle-level managers in Egypt and found support for the importance of the participative leadership style.

Egyptian Context

A thorough investigation of the aforementioned studies deduces the need for a variety of factors to encourage the use of social media for employee voice in Egypt. These necessitate the cultivation of generating a positive, trusted organisational culture that supports employees voice, which includes participative leadership style, and the use of advanced technologies in the organisation to enhance employees' participation in the organisational decisions. Egypt is a relatively large Muslim country with a population of 105.2 million (January 2022). In Egypt, there are several cultural factors that may also support the implementation of employee voice at organisation. For example, religious values, traditions, and social dynamics that are all conducive to a collaborative leadership style (El-Kot & Leat, 2008; El-Kot & Burke, 2014; Soltani et al., 2018). As El-Kot (2016) argued, Egypt is still trying to revive its economy in the aftermath of the 2011 revolution and the subsequent political, social, and economic turmoil and threats to national security. The Egyptian government launched a new economic stimulus package in 2013 and dedicated explicit visioning towards digital development and the human capital to support it in digital transformation initiative in 2019, and the "Egypt's Vision 2030" strategic plan. According to Egypt digitalisation report by Ghoneim (2021), Egypt invested in its digital infrastructure with 17% growth in the ICT sector in Q2 of 2020/2021. Additionally, there is significant investment in digital transformation based upon a digital strategy and qualified leadership/staff for digital transformational process.

El-Kot et al. (2022) referred to the use of Digital HRM in many organisations in Egypt and argued for the importance of transformational leadership and employees' involvement for the digital transformation in the country.

Digital Profile of Egypt

Al-Tonsi (2016) referred to the importance of social media in Egypt and argued that Web 2.0 is the current generation of the Web. It is a platform with many applications including social media. Anderson (2008) argued that social software focuses on supporting the social relationships. Bonsignore et al. (2011) add that Web 2.0 refers to accessible social media that supports collaboration in a community of practice. Using social media enables people to engage in tailored learning content and experiences. According to Al-Tonsi (2016), Web 2.0 brings people together to talk, make new friends, and share ideas, activities, and interests. They include social media such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook, Edmodo, My Space, YouTube, and many other applications. Web 2.0 interactive media are free, easy to access, and designed to support collaborative knowledge creation and sharing (Dede, 2011).

The Digital Egypt report (2022) shows the ever-growing use of the internet and social media in Egypt. Thus, it is essential to investigate which platforms are the most popular among employees used on a regular basis. As different social media platforms appeal to different generations, it is important for organisations to gauge their employees' interest first, and meet them where they are already communicating, for the most effective implementations of employee voice. Ginac (2021), for example, noted that there are different benefits to using each social media tool for improving employee engagement. She argued that giving employees multiple channels to engage with the organisation helps them feel more connected continuously, which would improve employees' engagement over time.

The data based upon the Digital Egypt Report 2022 are listed as follows:

- Internet use in Egypt 2022: There were 75.66 million internet users in Egypt (in January 2022); Kepios (an advisory firm that enables organisations everywhere to understand how to use digital technologies to improve success) analysis indicates that internet users in Egypt increased by 1.4 million (+1.9%) between 2021 and 2022. For perspective, these user figures reveal that 29.55 million people in Egypt did *not* use the internet at the start of 2022, meaning that 28.1% of the population remained offline at the beginning of the year. However, issues relating to COVID-19 continue to impact research into internet adoption, so actual internet user figures may be higher than these published numbers suggest.
- Social Media use in Egypt 2022: There were 51.45 million social media users in Egypt in January 2022. The number of social media users in Egypt at the start of 2022 was equivalent to 48.9% of the total population, but it's important to note that social media users may not represent unique individuals. According to Kepios analysis, social media users in Egypt increased by 2.5 million (+5.0%) between 2021 and 2022.
- The following part provides some statistics concerning the use of other social media methods in Egypt in 2022, all indicators revealed that there is an increase in the use of social media in Egypt in 2022 as seen in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 The use of social media in Egypt

No.	Social media method used	Number of users in 2022 in million	Percentage of total population in 2022
1	Facebook	44.70	42.5%
2	YouTube	46.30	44.0%
3	Instagram	16.00	15.2%
4	TikTok	20.28	26.8%
5	Facebook Messenger	34.60	32.9%
6	LinkedIn	6.40	6.1%
7	Snapchat	13.60	12.9%
8	Twitter	5.15	4.9%
9	Mobile connections	98.29	93.4%

Source: Egypt Digital Data Report (2022)

Employee Voice and Social Media in Egypt

Mercer Global Talent Trend (2022) focused on the employees' engagement in the Middle East, including Egypt. Employee engagement is defined as the extent to which employees commit energy and effort to help their organisation succeed. They argued that engaged employees are motivated, committed, proud, and advocates. According to their report on employees in the Middle East, 73% of them feel empowered to influence their work, 75% feel that they have the authority needed to do the job effectively, and 80% feel free to take informed risk in getting the work done. In their assessment of Middle Eastern companies, Mercer Global Talent Trend reported that the key areas of strength regarding employee engagement include compensation and benefits, work-life balance, learning and development, career opportunity and communication and collaboration. They also offered different methods to improve the employee engagement levels in the Middle East, such as Annual Employee Engagement Surveys (which is the most common), continuous listening throughout the employees' lifecycle, and personalised experience based upon the unique needs of employees (Mercer Global Trend Report, 2022).

According to JOBMASTER, the human capital solutions in Egypt (2022), the Employee Engagement Survey measures employees' passion towards their organisation, leaders, and jobs. The survey covers all aspects that effect employee motivation, satisfaction, and engagement in the organisation. The results of the survey assist the organisation in capitalising on the strengths and focus on the key development aspects concerning their employees. Elkholi (2021) noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way company owners and executives think in Egypt, especially regarding internal communication with the employees. According to the employee engagement survey in Egypt that used to determine the best methods of employee engagement, 70% of business owners need to focus on the mental health of employees to support their well-being, while 55% give more attention to motivational initiatives, 60% showed that they have clear plans regarding their vision of employee engagement and organisational culture.

Elkholi's (2021) survey in Egypt indicated several notable results. First, one in three employees felt that the internal communication with the company's human resources was missing; second, two out of five employees felt pressured when assisting others; and third, one in every five employees felt an increase in work stress. If employers change and redirect internal communication strategies to focus on employees' well-being, they will reduce operational expenses and achieve the highest performance and productivity levels from their employees. His findings also indicate the importance of increasing the internal communication to listen to employees and to increase employee engagement by using the digital transformational methods. The greater the employee engagement, the greater the positive the work outcomes, such as outperforming competition (increases by 20%), higher sales (up to 37%), satisfaction (achieved 50%), and reduced absenteeism (10 times fewer sick days). According to a study of more than 2000 employees done by EMP Trust HR company in Egypt, 50% of employees post content on social media that is connected to their jobs, including images or videos. Some organisations may be concerned about the usage of social media, but other businesses have chosen to harness it and use it for their benefit. Starting to integrate social media into their HR strategy seems to be a new shift towards employees' voice. EMP Trust HR noted that internal social media may be used to advance an organisation's goals through communications among its employees. This could be through two forms: Enterprise social media and well-known social media sites. They argued that enterprise social media is designed for intra-organisational communication, while the well-known social media sites, such as Twitter and LinkedIn, are used for internal and external communication where content is shared with both the organisation and the general public.

EMP Trust HR in Egypt also provided statistics on employees' use of social media at the workplace. The top three reasons include to take a mental break from their jobs (34%), to interact with their loved ones while working (27%), and to foster professional relationships (25%). Close runners-up include to find information that helps them with their jobs (20%), to improve relationships with co-workers (17%), to learn more about someone they work with (17%), and to ask questions about their jobs to people inside or outside the company (17%). These results

indicate the value of combining social media with employee involvement and engagement in the organisations. For example, involving leaders to support effective use of social media in the workplace, and to teach employees what's in it for them and help employees in acquiring the skills required to get started with the use of the technology at their work activities. The use of social media in Egypt is not only for the internal communication but also for the external communication, for example, the Glassdoor website that focuses on employer branding via employee voice. There are 555,666 companies listed in Egypt using this website; accordingly, employees are encouraged to submit their review about their employer. The organisations use social media methods to ask employees to rate their employer by allowing them to submit anonymous employee reviews. For example, employees at IBM rate their employer a 4.1 out of 5. Other top-rated companies in Cairo include Vodafone rated 4.0 out of 5, Tele performance with a rating of 4.2 out of 5, Amazon with a 3.8 out of 5, and Microsoft rated 4.4 out of 5 by employees. This list of top companies in Cairo, Egypt, is based on anonymously submitted employee reviews. Adjust the rating filter to view companies with higher or lower average ratings as mentioned by JOBMASTER; The human capital solutions in Egypt (2022).

A Pilot Investigation in Egypt

To our best knowledge, very few studies have documented the use of social media for employee voice in Egypt, and there are no practical investigations on the impact of social media on employees' voices in Egypt. This study therefore presents a preliminary investigation to explore how social media is really used internally by organisations to listen to the employees' voice.

Methodology

The main aim of the pilot study is to investigate how employees express their voice in organisations via social media, clarifying the potential benefits and barriers of the use of social media to encourage employee voice

in organisations. Convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method, was used in this pilot study due to the willingness of the three organisations to participate in the research during the data collection period. This pilot investigation took place in three different organisations across the manufacturing and service sectors in Alexandria and Cairo, focusing on organisations that represent different fields: communication, the food industry, and HR development. Before distributing the survey among managers in the chosen organisations, three interviews were made with three human resource managers in the selected organisations asking them about the use of social media and to take a company approval to distribute this survey to some managers in their organisations for the research purposes only. The three managers agreed and confirmed that social media is being used in their organisations on a different level compared to the use of social media with customers' voice. All the participants were managers. The survey was distributed via e-mail to the managers in the chosen organisations. Thirty-five surveys were completed from the three organisations (13, 9, and 13 respectively). While this is a very small convenience sample that cannot produce generalised results, it is the first trial to explore the use of social media for employees' voice in Egypt. To administer this pilot study, we developed a survey based on the literature review that focused on use of social media in organisations. The survey aimed to (1) understand how employees express their voice in each organisation, (2) investigate the use of the internet and social media for the expression of employees' voice in organisations, and how this is done, and (3) clarify the potential benefits of and barriers to the use of social media for the expression of employee voice. This survey started by investigating the organisational type (manufacturing or service) and organisation size (large, medium, or small). The rest of the survey consisted dichotomous scale (Yes/No) questions, followed by open-ended questions. For example, a sample question used to investigate the use of social media was: "Is social media currently being used for the expression of employee voice?" Then they were asked a question focused on determining which methods are being used as a social media in the organisation such as one-to-one meetings, employees' surveys, department meetings, online platforms, chatrooms, enterprise/organisation social networks,

suggestion schemes, team meeting, intranet, teams or zoom, online team discussions, or any other methods.

Another sample question investigated other methods used to express employees' voice if social media is not available, such as Directly to their supervisor, Team, or department meetings, Focus groups, Via a representative consultative framework, or other methods. Another important point investigated in the survey was to assess if the managers thought their employees generally felt free to express their voice in their organisation. And if not, why they thought so. The survey also focused on investigating if the organisations provide the employees with feedback or not concerning their voice questions such as Do employees receive feedback when they do express their ideas, concerns, or dissatisfaction? And how do employees receive this feedback? Final part is about listing if there are any benefits of employees expressing their voice in your organisation. Or are there any concerns about employees expressing their voice in the organisation? One of the researchers distributed the survey to the managers in the chosen organisations in October 2022 and collected the completed ones back by November 2022.

The findings of the preliminary investigation based on managers' opinion (N = 35) as shown in Table 3.2 represented two organisational types, service organisation (74.3%) and manufacturing organisation (25.7%), and three organisational sizes, large (37.1%), medium (25.7%), and small (37.1%). The respondents agreed that they implement social media in their organisations to express employees' voice (88.6% yes, and only 11.4% no). When describing the method being used in the social media, answers varied. The majority of the respondents mentioned the use of traditional methods, such as the use of one-to-one meetings (74.3%), employee surveys (62.9%), departments meetings (80%), and suggestion schemes (14.3%); when it comes to the other technological methods, we found the use of online platform (20%), chatroom (25.7%), enterprise/ organisation social network (31.4%), team meeting (80%), intranet (20%), teams or zoom (74.3%), and online team discussions (62.9). When there is no use of social media to express employees' voice, other methods are used. The findings revealed that the majority agreed that the employees can express their voice directly to their supervisors (94.3%), followed by via Team or department meetings (57.1%), then via Focus

Table 3.2 The frequency distribution of the respondents (*N* = 35)

Item		Frequency	%
Organisation type			
Manufacturing		9	25.7%
Service		26	74.3%
Organisation size			
Large (more than 5000)		13	37.1%
Medium (between 1000 and 5000)		9	25.7%
Small (less than 1000)		13	37.1%
Using social media to express employee voice			
	Yes	31	88.6%
	No	4	11.4%
Methods being used			
One-to-one meeting			
	Yes	26	74.3%
	No	9	25.7%
Employees' surveys			
	Yes	22	62.9%
	No	13	37.1%
Department meetings			
	Yes	28	80%
	No	7	20%
Online platform			
	Yes	7	20%
	No	28	80%
Chatroom			
	Yes	9	25.7%
	No	26	74.3%
Enterprise/organisation social network			
	Yes	11	31.4%
	No	24	68.6%
Suggestion schemes			
	Yes	5	14.3%
	No	30	85.7%
Team meeting			
	Yes	28	80%
	No	7	20%
Intranet			
	Yes	7	20%
	No	28	80%
Teams or Zoom			
	Yes	26	74.3%
	No	9	25.7%

(*continued*)

Table 3.2 (continued)

Item		Frequency	%
Online team discussions			
	Yes	22	62.9%
	No	13	37.1%
Methods being used: others			
Yes		0	0%
No		35	100%
Other social methods:			
Directly to supervisor			
	Yes	33	94.3%
	No	2	5.7%
Team or department meetings			
	Yes	20	57.1%
	No	15	42.9%
Focus group			
	Yes	7	20%
	No	28	80%
Representative consultative framework			
	Yes	1	2.9%
No	No	34	97.1%
Others			
	Yes	1	2.9%
	No	34	97.1%
Employees feel free to express their voice			
	Yes	33	94.3%
	No	2	5.7%
Employees receive feedback			
	Yes	30	85.7%
	No	5	14.3%
Concerns about expressing voice			
	Yes	3	8.6%
	No	32	91.4%

groups (20%) and very few respondents use it via a representative consultative framework (2.9%). The findings also revealed that the majority of the respondents agree that the employees feel free to express their voice (94.3%) and the majority agreed that the employees receive feedback upon their comments, opinions, complaints, or suggestions (85.7%), and the majority of the respondents found that there are no concerns in their organisations towards allowing employees to express their voices (91.4%).

The findings revealed similarities between respondents from the three chosen organisations, as follows. When asked "what are the benefits of employees expressing their voices in the organisation?" respondents from the first company mentioned that it may help create creating a positive workplace culture, increase employee's engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty, and ultimately their retention. They also mentioned that it would help increase productivity and innovation, and create a safe, comfortable work environment wherein they could develop a feeling of belonging value to the community. Respondents from the second company similarly shared that they would feel that employee voice would encourage positive working conditions that would increase their engagement and satisfaction. They believed that this healthy working environment would encourage trust, and appreciation and respect towards all employees. Respondents from the third company unanimously agreed that the benefits would include an increase loyalty and stability, and a decrease in turnover.

When asked "how do employees receive feedback?" *the responses varied across the organisation.* Respondents from the first and second company mentioned receiving feedback via in-person forums such as face-to-face meetings, discussion meetings, one-to-one meetings, or from a direct supervisor, and virtually, via e-mail or online meetings. In the third company, respondents shared receiving feedback through one-to-one meetings, e-mail, and team meetings. When asked "do you have any concerns about employees expressing their voice in the organisation?" the respondents from the three organisations agreed that they do not have any concerns. However, some respondents from the first company noted that some employees perceived that they are not being heard or they are afraid of being evaluated in subjective way and being treated differently in the organisation from their managers. Whereas the second and third company respondents did not mention any concern about employees expressing their voice.

Conclusion, Practical Implications, and Recommendations

This study demonstrates the considerable scope for using social media to facilitate and enhance employee voice in Egypt. As new technologies continue to emerge, they present new avenues and mechanisms, new and enhanced opportunities for the expression of employee voice, and new opportunities for multidirectional, direct, and effective communication. Social media offers more opportunities for enhanced employee involvement and engagement, and enhanced employee contribution to better decision making, innovation, and improved organisational performance. Thus, there is an opportunity for a real paradigm shift in the power relationships within the workplace. There is little evidence available of employee perceptions and experience of expressing their voice and this is clearly a research gap that needs further investigation to support the use of social media in employee voice. The pilot study conducted by the authors demonstrates more optimism regarding the expression of employee voice and the use of social media in Egypt. There are some practical implications and recommendations for managers, human resource practitioners, and employees in order for organisations to reap the benefits of utilising social media to enhance employee voice in Egypt such as:

- Senior management must demonstrate support for and a willingness to invest in the new social media technologies and in employees in order to achieve the benefits available.
- Managers must demonstrate integrity and ethical behaviours; they must encourage employees to use the new social media avenues and technologies available to speak up; and employees' views and concerns must be listened and responded to taking advantage of the new opportunities for multidirectional and real time communication.
- Managers and employees must be provided with the necessary opportunities and training in the use of social media to enable access for all.

- Managers must encourage social dialogue, remove restrictions, and encourage the expression of employee interests and concerns without fear of repression their ideas.
- Management and human resource managers and practitioners must ensure that workplace cultures and leadership approaches encourage supportive and empowering behaviours and a climate of mutual trust and psychological safety without fear of victimisation or retribution.
- HRM practitioners should take responsibility for leading cultural change, the development of new leadership approaches, and ensuring access for all. They must promote the use of social media and encourage employees to express their voice.
- Employees must take advantage of the opportunities provided, engage with the new social media technologies and voice avenues, and be willing to contribute their knowledge and experience to the benefit of the organisation as well as pursuing their interests and concerns.

References

Abou-Shouk, M., Elbaz, A. M., & Maher, A. (2021). Breaking the silence of travel agency employees: The moderating role of gender. *Tourism and Hospitality Research, 21*(4), 487–500.

Al-Tonsi, H. (2016). Social media: A new perspective of TEFL. *CBDELT Occasional Paper, 62*(1), 113–132. https://opde.journals.ekb.eg/article_86790_04adc193f3c63872b5881a9750242ccf.pdf

Anderson, T. (Ed.). (2008). *The theory and practice of online learning* (2nd ed.). Athabasca University Press.

Arain, G. A., Bhatti, Z. A., Crawshaw, J. R., Ali, I., & Papa, A. (2022). Does LMX always promote employee voice? A dark side of migrant working in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Manpower, 43*(1), 148–167.

Bonsignore, E., Hansen, D., Galyardt, A., Aleahmad, T., & Hargadon, S. (2011). The power of social networking for professional development. In T. Gray & H. Silver-Pacuilla (Eds.), *Breakthrough teaching and learning: How educational and assistive technologies are driving innovation* (pp. 25–52). Springer Science+Business Media.

Boxall, P. F., & Purcell, J. (2011). *Strategy and human resource management.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Budd, J. W., Gollan, P. J., & Wilkinson, A. (2010). New approaches to employee voice and participation in organizations. *Human Relations, 63*(3), 303–310.

Burke, R., & El-Kot, G. (2010). Work engagement among managers and professionals in Egypt: Potential antecedents and consequences. *The African Journal of Economics and Management Studies, 1*(1), 42–60.

Burke, R. J., & Cooper, C. L. (Eds.). (2013). *Voice and whistleblowing in organisations: Overcoming fear, fostering courage and unleashing candour*. Edward Elgar.

Cassinger, C., & Thelander, Å. (2020). Voicing the organization on Instagram: Towards a performative understanding of employee voice. *Public Relations Inquiry, 9*(2), 195–212.

CIPD. (2013). Social Media and employee voice: The Current landscape. Sustainable organization performance. https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/social-media-and-employee-voice_2013-current-landscape-sop_tcm18-10327.pdf

CIPD. (2014). Putting social media to work—Lessons for employers. Research Report. https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/putting-social-media-to-work-lessons-from-employers_tcm18-10319.pdf

CIPD. (2021). Guide to using individual voice channels. Practical Advice for HR professionals. https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/guide-to-using-individual-voice-channels-web_tcm18-100114.pdf

Dede, C. (2011). Reshaping the role of technology in education. In G. Tracy & S. Heidi (Eds.), *Breakthrough teaching and learning. How educational and assistive technologies are driving innovation* (pp. 1–3). Springer Science+Business Media.

Detert, J. R., & Treviño, L. K. (2010). Speaking up to higher-ups: how supervisors and skip-level leaders influence employee voice. *Organization Science, 21*, 249–270.

Dromey, J. (2016). Going digital? Harnessing social media for employee voice. ACAS Research Paper. https://www.bollettinoadapt.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Going-digital-harnessing-social-media-for-employee-voice.pdf

Dundon, T., Wilkinson, A., Marchington, M., & Ackers, P. (2004). The meanings and purpose of employee voice. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 15*(6), 1149–1170.

Eldaghashy, R., Zayed, A., & Gaber, H. (2022). The role of employee voice in moderating the relationship between transformational leadership and

employee engagement applied study in one of the governmental sector in Egypt. *Trade and Finance Journal, 42*(1), 41–65.

ElKholi, M. (2021). Digital transformations force companies to rethink internal communications, employee engagement. *Daily News Egypt*. https://dailynewsegypt.com/2021/03/25/digital-transformations-force-companies-to-rethink-internal-communications-employee-engagement/

El-Kot, G. (2004). Determinants of managerial performance among middle-level managers: A preliminary investigation in an Egyptian context. *Journal of the Faculty of Commerce for Scientific Research, Faculty of Commerce, Alexandria University, 41*(2), 1–23.

EL-Kot, G. (2016). Human resource management in Egypt. In P. Budhwar & K. Mellahi (Eds.), *Handbook of human resource management in the Middle East* (pp. 205–225). Edward Elgar Publishing.

El-Kot, G., & Burke, R. (2014). The Islamic work ethics among employees in Egypt. *International Journal of Islamic & Middle East Finance and Management, 7*(2), 228–235.

El-Kot, G., & Leat, M. (2008). A survey of recruitment and selection practices in Egypt, Education. *Business and Society Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues, 1*(3), 200–212.

El-Kot, G., Leat, M., & Masry, S. (2022). Digital human resource management in Egypt. In T. A. Adisa & C. Mordi (Eds.), *HRM in the global south* (pp. 371–398). Springer.

Elsetouhi, A. M., Hammad, A. A., Nagm, A. E. A., & Elbaz, A. M. (2018). Perceived leader behavioral integrity and employee voice in SMEs travel agents: the mediating role of empowering leader behaviors. *Tourism Management, 65*, 100–115.

Farndale, E., Van Ruiten, J., Kelliher, C., & Hope-Hailey, V. (2011). The Influence of perceived employee voice on organizational commitment: an exchange perspective. *Human Resource Management, 50*(1), 113–129.

Ferreira, A., & Plessis, T. (2009). Effect of online social networking on employee productivity. *South African Journal of Information Management, 11*(1), 1–16.

Ghani, B., & Malik, M. A. (2022). Social media and employee voice: a comprehensive literature review. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2022.2126329

Ghoneim, A. W. (2021). Egypt digitalization report in alignment with Egypt Vision 2030 for SDGS. The Egyptian Cabinet Information and Decision Support Centre. https://idsc.gov.eg/Upload/DocumentLibrary/Attachment_A/4798/3%20-%20EGYPT%20DIGITALIZATION.pdf

Gifford, J., Neathey, F., & Loukas, G. (2005). Employee involvement: information, consultation and discretion, IES Research Networks, IES report 427. Institute for Employment Studies. https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/427.pdf

Ginac, L. (2021). Does social media really boost employee engagement? *Spiceworks*. https://www.spiceworks.com/hr/engagement-retention/guest-article/does-social-media-really-boost-employee-engagement/#:~:text=For%20instance%2C%20Facebook%20makes%20it,This%20improves%20engagement%20over%20time.

Gomez, R., Bryson, A., & Willman, P. (2010). Voice in the wilderness? The shift from union to non-union voice in Britain. In A. Wilkinson, P. J. Gollan, M. Marchington, & D. Lewin (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of participation in organizations* (pp. 383–406). Oxford University Press.

Hirschman, A. O. (1970). *Exit, voice, and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organisations, and states*. Harvard University Press.

Holland, P., Cooper, B. K., & Hecker, R. (2016). Use of social media at work: a new form of employee voice? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 27*(21), 2621–2634.

Hsin-Hua, H. (2012). Authentic leadership and employee voice behavior: A multi-level psychological process. *Journal of Business Ethics, 107*(3), 349–361.

IBM. (2015). Amplifying employee voice. IBM Institute for Business Values and IBM Smarter Workforce Institute. https://www.ibm.com/thought-leadership/institute-business-value/report/employeevoice

JOBMASTER; The human capital solutions in Egypt. (2022). https://www.glassdoor.com/Explore/top-companies-cairo_IL.14,19_IM1175.htm

Kamel, S. (2021). The potential impact of digital transformation on Egypt. ERF Working Papers Series, No. 1488. Economic Research Forum. https://erf.org.eg/app/uploads/2021/09/1488.pdf

Karkoulian, S., Kertechian, K. S., Balozian, P., & Nahed, M. B. (2021). Employee voice as a mediator between leader-member exchange and creative performance: empirical evidence from the Middle East. *International Journal of Process Management and Benchmarking*. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJPMB.2021.10044012

Koch, T., Gerber, C., & De Klerk, J. J. (2018). The impact of social media on recruitment: Are you LinkedIn? *SA Journal of Human Resource Management, 16*(1), 1–14.

Korzynski, P., Mazurek, G., & Haenlein, M. (2020). Leveraging employees as spokespeople in your HR strategy: How company-related employee posts on

social media can help firms to attract new talent. *European Management Journal, 38*(1), 204–212.

Kougiannou, N., & Holland, P. (2022). Employee voice and silence in the digital era. In N. Kougiannou & P. Holland (Eds.), *The Emerald handbook of work* (Workplaces and disruptive issues in HRM) (pp. 513–531). Emerald.

Liu, B., Li, F., Chang, S., & Lei, Q. (2021). Give a plum in return for a peach: linking employee caring practice to employee voice behaviour. In 81st Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, AOM 2021, Academy of Management Proceedings.

Liu, W., Zhu, R., & Yang, Y. (2010). I warn you because I like you: voice behavior, employee identifications, and transformational leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly, 21*(1), 189–202.

Marchington, M., & Suter, J. (2013). Where informality really matters: patterns of employee involvement and participation (EIP) in a non-union firm. *Industrial Relations Journal, 52*(1), 284–313.

Martin, G., Parry, E., & Flowers, P. (2015). Do social media enhance employee Voice all the time or just some of the time? *Human Resource Management Review, 25*(4), 541–562.

Mercer Global Talent Trend. (2022). https://www.mercer.com/our-thinking/career/global-talent-hr-trends.html

Miles, S., & Mangold, G. (2014). Employee voice: untapped resource or social media time bomb? *Business Horizons, 57*(3), 401–411.

Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 1*(1), 173–197.

Morrison, E. W., & Milliken, F. J. (2000). Organizational silence: a barrier to change and development in a pluralistic world. *Academy of Management Review, 25*(4), 706–725.

Mowbray, P., Wilkinson, A., & Tse, H. (2015). An integrative review of employee voice: identifying a common conceptualization and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Review, 17*(3), 382–400.

Nembhard, I. M., & Edmondson, A. C. (2006). Making it safe: the effects of leader inclusiveness and professional status on psychological safety and improvement efforts in health care teams. *Journal of Organization Behaviour, 27*(7), 941–966.

Ng, T. W. H., & Feldman, D. C. (2012). Employee voice behaviour: A Meta-analytic test of the conservation of resources framework. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 33*(2), 216–234.

North, M. (2010). An evaluation of employees' attitudes toward social networking in the Workplace. *Issues in Information Systems, 11*(1), 192–197.

O'Shea, D., & Murphy, K. (2020). Individual voice in informal and formal contexts in organizations. In A. Wilkinson, T. Dundon, J. Donaghey, & R. Freeman (Eds.), *The handbook of research on employee voice* (pp. 418–436). Edward Elgar.

Pinder, C. C., & Harlos, K. P. (2001). Employee silence: quiescence and acquiescence as responses to perceived injustice. *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management, 20*, 331–369.

Raub, S., & Robert, C. (2013). Empowerment, organizational commitment, and voice behavior in the hospitality industry: Evidence from a multinational sample. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, 54*(2), 136–148.

Rees, C., Alfes, K., & Gatenby, M. (2013). Employee voice and engagement: Connections and consequences. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 24*(14), 2780–2798.

Safko, L., & Brake, D. K. (2009). *The social media bible: Tactics, tools, and strategies for business success* (3rd ed.). John Wiley & Sons. http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-1118269748.html

Shahin, A. L., & Wright, P. L. (2004). Leadership in the context of culture. An Egyptian perspective. *The Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 25*(6), 499–511.

Sharma, A., & Bhatnagar, J. (2016). Enterprise social media at work: Web-based solutions for employee engagement. *Human Resource Management International Digest, 24*(7), 16–19.

Silverman, M., Bakhshalian, E., & Hillman, L. (2013). Social media and employee voice—the current landscape. CIPD. https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/social-media-and-employee-voice_2013-current-landscape-sop_tcm18-10327.pdf

Singh, S., & Vanka, S. (2019). Voice matters: why HR should listen to employee voice? *Strategic HR Review, 18*(6), 268–271.

Soltani, E., Liao, Y. Y., Gholami, A. K., & Iqbal, A. (2018). Saying it without words: a qualitative study of employee voice in the Iranian building sector. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 29*(5), 1015–1055.

Statista. (2021). Retrieved May 8. www.statista.com.

Strauss, G. (2006). Worker participation: Some under-considered issues. *Industrial Relations, 45*(4), 778–803.

Struys, K. (2018). 6 tips for using social media for employee benefits. WTW. https://www.wtwco.com/en-EG/Insights/2018/08/6-tips-for-using-social-media-for-employee-benefits

The Digital Egypt Report. (2022). https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-egypt

Venkataramani, V., Zhou, L., Wang, M., Liao, H., & Shi, J. (2016). Social networks and employee voice: The influence of team members' and team leaders' social network positions on employee voice. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 132*, 37–48.

Walumbwa, F. O., Morrison, E. W., & Christensen, A. L. (2012). Ethical leadership and group in-role performance: the mediating roles of group conscientiousness and group voice. *Leadership Quarterly, 23*(5), 953–964.

Wilkinson, A., & Fay, C. (2011). New times for employee voice? *Human Resource Management, 50*(1), 65–74.

Wilkinson, A., Gollan, P. J., Kaifa, S., & Xu, Y. (2018). Voices unheard: employee voice in the new century. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 29*(5), 711–724.

Zhu, H., Khan, M. K., Nazeer, S., Li, L., Fu, Q., Badulescu, D., & Badulescu, A. (2022). Employee voice: A mechanism to harness employees' potential for sustainable success. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19*(2), 921.

4

Trade Unions and Employee Voice in Kenya

Gladys Muasya and Fred Walumbwa

Introduction

Each country has a regulatory framework to protect its workers' interests. This may include employment law, collective relational law, and social security law (Botero et al., 2004). The collective relational law ensures that there is a system of collective bargaining where the collective agreements are adopted and enforced by both the employer and the employee. In Kenya, labour is regulated by acts of parliament such as the Employment Law 2007, the Kenya Labour Relations Act of 2007, and the 2010 Constitution (International Labour Organisation, 2004; Magare & Sundays, 2022). The 2010 Constitution Article 41 on labour relations, for example, gives each person a right to fair labour practices (e.g., right to fair remuneration, reasonable working conditions, to form or join a trade union, and to strike) (Kituo cha Sheria, 2016). A Trade Union is

G. Muasya (✉)
St. Paul's University, Limuru, Kenya

F. Walumbwa
Florida International University, Miami, FL, USA

defined as "a voluntary organization of workers which aims to protect and promote the socio-economic interest of its members through collective bargaining with employers" (Solaja, 2015, p. 2). Conversely, employee voice is defined as a "promotive behavior that emphasizes the expression of constructive challenge needed to improve rather than merely criticize, voice is making innovative suggestions for change and recommending modifications to standard procedures even when others disagree" (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998, p. 109).

Research suggests that employee voice relates to organisational performance (Morrison, 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2012). It is for this reason that the current human resource literature encourages employee communication or voice in enabling the organisation to be effective and competitive (Boxall et al., 2007; Holland et al., 2016; Wood & Wall, 2007). However, due to competing interests of management workers, owners, and other stakeholders, employee voice remains one of the contentious areas in human resource management. This is because it sometimes can be viewed as questioning managerial prerogatives and social legitimacy (Marchington, 2007). For example, some researchers (e.g., Anyango et al., 2013; Karimi & Nyawira, 2019; Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers, 2022) have opined that employee voice is critical in a space where the traditional platform of airing workers' concerns seems to be declining due to new forms of work arrangements. This chapter attempts to first give a historical account of the growth of the trade union movement in Kenya in general and in specific sectors in Kenya. It then shows how trade unions have sought to position employees' voice to the attention of management and government, and the successes and failures of the trade unions in Kenya. Despite trade unions playing such a critical role, research on trade unions and employee voice is still sparse in Kenya. The studies of trade unions are cross-sectional and carried out within a specific organization e.g., a bank, and rarely within a sector such as the banking sector. (Kabiru, 2018; Karimi & Nyawira, 2019; Otieno, 2017) necessitating this study. This chapter is organised as follows: It first provides an overview of the trade union movement in Kenya from the colonial times to the present.

It then gives an overview of trade unions in the various sectors in Kenya and the future of trade unions in Kenya, and finally it offers some suggestions for practice, theory, and further research.

Methodology

Due to the sparse literature on this subject in Kenya, we carried out desktop research on various secondary sources. These sources include journal papers, books, media reports, and trade unions' websites. The papers and books were those written from colonial times to 2022. In these sources, we only focused on issues of trade unions and employees' voice in Kenya. We avoided unpublished student theses and research carried out in trade unions in Kenya as most of that data are not publicly available. We then used content analysis to analyse the data. In the next section, we cover results and discussion.

Trade Union in Pre-independence Kenya

The history of trade unions in Kenya is intertwined with Kenya's struggle for liberation. Trade unions were springboards that fuelled the nationalist movement towards Kenya's independence (Durrani, 2009; Otieno, 2017; Zeleza, 1993). Even today, trade unions still maintain a presence in Kenya's and Africa's political landscape as witnessed in the 2022 Kenya general elections (Chelegat, 2022; Karreth, 2018; Omulo, 2022). To start with, Kenya was a British colony, and the colonial government used coercion to recruit labour and control it (Zeleza, 1993). In Kenya, the first movement of labour representation was in the form of associations (e.g., Kenya African Civil Servants Association; the Railway African staff associations, etc.). In 1931 in Mombasa, Indian artisans formed a trade union committee and in 1934 formed the "Kenyan Indian Labour Trade Union". Later in 1935, it changed to the labour Trade Union of Kenya to acquire a more racially nuanced presence. Among the achievements of this union, it advocated for an eight-hour job and overtime work to be compensated (Durrani, 2009). Nevertheless, the formation of trade unions did not deter strikes. To illustrate, in the 1914 strike, the Indian

railway and public works department workers opposed the colonial government decision to impose poll taxes, ration food, poor housing, poor wages, and a lack of medical amenities. Indeed, there was a separation in housing and African workers lived in the ghettos of Eastlands with no infrastructure or amenities.

Because the colonial government paid low wages (Singh, 1969), it follows that for Africans, the labour struggle had a liberation angle to it. Some notable nationalists of the day were arrested, including the likes of Harry Thuku, the leader of the East African Association. These earlier freedom fighters opposed the *Kipande* system, an identification card worn at the neck, demanded their farms back from the white settlers, and advocated for better working conditions, higher education, lower taxes, and, finally, more amenities and an African representation in the colonial legislative council. The struggle and strikes increased in the 1930s, and the great depression further worsened these conditions. This led the farm squatters to occupy the white settler farms and demand for the restriction on Africans not to grow crops such as coffee removed. Finally, they also protested the lack of the colonial government refusing to recognise their trade unions and a lack of workman compensation or pension schemes. Of course, it is important to note that some revolts occurred even without trade unions (Durrani, 2009).

In the 1940s, there were food riots and unemployed men, and their families were taken back to the village reserves. The 1950s was dominated by the strikes for better housing, better working conditions, and the repeal of the differential wage system among Africans, Indians, and Europeans. These strikes spread in many parts of Kenya, and key leaders such as Makhan Singh and Fred Kubai, among other trade union leaders and strike organisers, were arrested for radicalising the poor workers (*ahoi*) working in towns to strike. Importantly for the unions, these strikes acted as a catalyst to form the Kenya Federation of Registered Trade Unions (KFRTU) in 1952, a forerunner of the Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL) formed in 1955 which enabled the government to channel labour militancy in an organised way. Interestingly, as the liberation struggle intensified, it curtailed the activities of the labour unions, and in 1952, the colonial government declared a state of emergency and detained several political leaders. In so doing, the colonial government reinstated

the use of detention in the communal reserves, forced communal labour, and military campaigns. However, in the late 1950s, the colonial government allowed the trade unions to revive their activities after it had contained the *MAU MAU* (a guerilla political liberation movement that abode in forests).

The revived trade unions used collective bargaining rather than resorting to strikes. The trade unions of the 1950s and 1960s followed the new industrial relations system, the tripartite system which consisted of capital, state, and trade unions. The Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) was formed at this time. Strikes were carried out when the tripartite system of Kenya Federation of Labour (FKL) and FKE failed. The labour union was now considered weak and slow and the FKL was under threat of being deregistered and played at the whims of FKE. In 1962, Tom Mboya as a Minister for Labour signed the Industrial Relations Charter with the aim of consolidating their previous labour gains of the tripartite system. Despite this development, workers did not support this move and refused to ratify it and still, resulting in more labour strikes that were witnessed in 1962 (Zeleza, 1993). After independence, there was a separation between labour and politics, and the labour unions were discouraged from interfering in the young democracy (Budeli, 2012; Durrani, 2009). In the following sections, different unions are covered in respective sectors beginning with the Central Organization of Trade Union (COTU-K) followed by agriculture, education, transport, manufacturing, health, and informal sector.

Central Organisation of Trade Unions

The Central Organisation of Trade Unions-Kenya (COTU-K) is one of the main umbrella trade unions in Kenya. The COTU-K Union was founded in 1965 after dissolving the Kenya Federation of Labour and African Workers Congress (KFL-AWC). These former two unions were formed in the pre-independence years (Central Organisation of Trade Unions, 2022). COTU-K has been on the front line fighting for employees' labour rights. During President Moi's era (the second president of Kenya, 1978–2002), COTU-K had aligned itself with the Kenya African

National Union (KANU) government. This ruling regime fettered it, and in the 1990s, civil societies began agitating for workers' rights. A case in point was the civil societies' fight for better working conditions for workers in the flower industry and in the Export Processing Zone. In the 1990s, there was an economic crisis leading to retrenchments and multinationals relocating from Kenya resulting in high taxation and poor infrastructure. To address this economic crisis, in 2000, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank backed a massive government retrenchment of 42,000 workers despite resistance from the union. This retrenchment resulted in lower cash flows for the union to run its operations and sustain its staff. It also curtailed the voice and the power of the union to fight for its members. Moreover, because the Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU-K) was aligned with the ruling party KANU, it was being perceived as partisan. In the same year (2000), the American government put pressure on COTU-K to delink itself with the government for Kenya to benefit from the American Financed African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA). This pact would allow the country to export to the US market. While the American government was putting pressure on the Union, the International Labour Organization was threatening to blacklist Kenya if the labour movement was not allowed to operate independently from the government. The pressure somehow succeeded, and COTU-K was able to delink herself from the government, which saw the union change to rally behind the change of Kenya's constitution that ushered in the multiparty system of government (the opposition politics at that time advocated for a multiparty governance system, a wind that swept across sub-Saharan Africa).

It is important to note that the union has faced several challenges. For example, the government has not always honoured the promises it makes to workers (e.g., to create more jobs). In addition, some of the entities that the Central Organisation of Trade Union (COTU-K) worked hard to be created to cater for the welfare of workers (i.e., National Social Security Fund or NSSF; National Hospital Insurance Fund or NHIF) have always been marred with financial scandals, mismanagement, and corruption. Indeed, in 2010, when the government wanted to increase the fee amount workers contribute to NHIF, the union engaged in a legal battle to stop the move. It also threatened to organise a strike as the

increase in fees adversely affect low-income workers. COTU-K also supported the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) 2012's strike which almost paralysed learning in its fight for better pay. Another case was in the agricultural sector. In 2007, the Kenya Plantation and Agricultural Workers Union (KPAWU) with a labour force of 10,000 workers staged a strike. Their employer—the Unilever Tea Kenya Plantations—made a pay increase of 8% and met at least half of their demands. Of course, there were strikes that never made it. For instance, the public transport buses and minibuses organised a 10-day strike demanding a 30% reduction in fuel costs. To summarise, the Central Organisation of Trade Union (COTU-K) has had several significant successes. These include: (1) its lobby to introduce The Industrial Court of Appeal in addition to the Industrial Court; (2) its attempt to extend the benefits of the union to the informal sector; (3) its efforts to develop a unified labour law; (4) its advocacy for worker-friendly labour legislation; and (5) its continued efforts to remove the remaining colonial legacy in the Kenyan labour laws (Central Organisation for Trade Unions, 2022). The next section covers trade unions in the agriculture sector.

Trade Unions in the Agriculture Sector

Although several trade unions exist in the agriculture sector, there are two main unions namely, Kenya Plantation & Agricultural Workers Union (KPAWU) and Kenya Union of Sugar Plantation and allied workers (KUSPAW). Between the two major unions, KPAWU is the most vocal. This union was formed in 1963 through the merging of four agricultural unions namely the Sisal Plantations Workers Union, the Coffee Plantations Workers Union, the Tea Plantations Workers Union, and the General Agricultural Workers Union. This union started in Nairobi and spread to the farms in Rift Valley and Nyanza regions. In one notable case, Kenya Union of Sugarcane Plantation and Allied Workers (KUSPAW), the sugar union, fought to oppose the government from privatising five sugar mills. The workers were agitated due to unpaid wage arrears (Matete, 2022). It is important to note however that in its early years, KPAWU had done little to influence its workers' working

environment. This was because they had leadership wrangles, dispersed populations, and illiterate members that had difficulties accessing the unions (Kraus, 1976).

Today, KPAWU aims to improve working conditions, promote fair labour practices, educate members about their rights, influence government policy regarding workers, and often take legal actions on behalf of members on unfair labour practices (Ogolla, 2015). A recent study by Kabiru (2018) sought to find out the extent to which KPAWU contributes to the welfare of workers in the cut flower sector. The research was a cross-sectional study carried out in three flower-growing regions of Naivasha, Nanyuki, and Thika in Kenya. They found that the level of membership in the cut flower was slightly above 50% (53.4%) and suggested that one of the reasons for low membership was because KPAWU union was less aggressive in sensitising workers. This suggests that many workers are not aware of the joining process or may not be interested in joining the trade union altogether. The study also revealed that the union was less efficient in handling members' concerns. The study also suggested that some workers felt that the union had compromised with the management even when it was clear that some farms threatened their workers with dismissal if they joined the union. In addition, only 63% of the participants acknowledged being visited by union officers on their farms. This is surprising because regular visits could be used as grounds for recruiting and sensitising workers on the roles of KPAWU.

The Kabiru (2018) study also found that a third of the workers could still express themselves freely. When asked about the benefits they would receive from joining the union, only half indicated the union could negotiate on their behalf on collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Another third did not see any benefit from a union as they regarded it as dormant implying that they were yet to feel its impact. Almost two-thirds of the participants believed the union fought for their rights. This was particularly for the seasonal workers or those working on a rotational basis, or in non-unionised farms. Finally, only two-thirds believed the union offered training. Farms in the rural areas had fewer visits due to inadequate finances although unionised farms received training. The number of visits varied depending on where the farm was located. For example, farms in Thika received more training as they are near Nairobi offices. The workers

suggested that the union should seek to improve their welfare, fight for their rights, better working conditions, and fair minimum wages, and sensitise workers on their rights and assist them to join the union. Finally, the study highlighted some challenges/weaknesses, including poor leadership and lack of interpersonal skills from union leaders. The study also pointed out that there is need for the officials to continue sensitising workers, as some workers suggested they only met the officials when there was a trade dispute, a strike, or officials collecting their agency fees. Of course, this does not imply that the Union officials did not make any attempts. In some cases, the flower farms denied the union officials access while some farms intimidated or discouraged their workers from joining unions. This ended up limiting the finances of the union (Kabiru, 2018). In the next section, education sector is covered.

Unions in the Education Sector

Education sector is one area where there is more active union activity. The education sector's unions consist of (1) Union of National Research Institute Staff of Kenya, (2) Kenya Union of Post-Primary Education Teachers, or KUPPET, (3) Kenya Union of Special Needs Education Teachers, (4) Kenya Private Universities Workers Union, (5) Kenya National Union of Teachers, or KNUT, and (6) University Academic Staff Union, or UASU. These unions cut across the education spectrum, with the most notable ones being KNUT, KUPPET, and UASU. Of these three, KNUT is the oldest institution formed in 1957 in the pre-colonial days. The earlier attempts to form a teachers' union in 1934 did materialise. At that time, KNUT had several grievances against its colonial masters, including the disparity in wages along African and white racial lines. Supervisors and inspectors harassed teachers on unfair terms, teachers were discriminated in housing where allocation was carried out along racial lines especially in boarding schools, and there was a lack of medical allowances. These grievances could not be easily resolved because different parties that employed teachers could not come to negotiate together. KNUT organised a series of strikes that later resulted in the formation of Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in 1966 through an

act of parliament (Kenya National Union of Teachers, 2022). To date, KNUT is more than a union. It has branded itself not only as a union but as a body that unites teachers—a professional body and a welfare organisation that seeks to promote educational development.

Despite many challenges since its inception, KNUT has had some significant achievements (Kenya National Union of Teachers, 2022). For example, KNUT has consistently fought for its members for better remuneration and is known for issuing country-wide teacher strikes. In 1997, there was a teachers' strike that lasted for 12 days resulting into a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) between KNUT and TSC that agreed on a 105–200% increment in basic salary and several allowances. This CBA was to be implemented in phases of five years beginning from July 1, 1997. Unfortunately, only the basic salary of the package was implemented, leaving out some other important allowances that were to be implemented 16 years later. In 2015, there was a strike for about three weeks in which the union demanded that their arrears be backdated from 2013, because the teachers' employer—Teachers Service Commission—had failed to honour the arrears of 50–60% increment in the pay rise awarded by the labour court (Kenya National Union of Teachers, 2020).

On July 29, 2020, KNUT issued a press briefing (Kenya National Union of Teachers, 2020) highlighting some of the breaches of the CBA between Teachers Service Commission and KNUT. The union and TSC had entered into a CBA on October 2016 which was to run for four years from July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2021, before a new CBA could be negotiated (TSC-KNUT CBA, 2016). The items in the agreement included basic salary and allowances (i.e., housing, medical benefit, commuter allowance, hardship allowances, etc.). According to the CBA, the employer was to develop a tool for performance evaluation of which all parties were to be consulted. The employer was also required to adhere to part IV of the Teachers Code of Regulations when developing a career development programme to enhance teaching. However, in 2020, the union raised concerns regarding the way teachers were promoted. TSC had devised a new regime of promoting teachers based on career progression guidelines (CPG), and teachers were to undertake continuous professional development (CPD) courses which would form part of their career growth, promotion, and remuneration. This move was challenged

in the labour court and a CBA was signed where teachers were still to be promoted based on the terms under which they were employed—terms of service as captured in section IV of the Code of Regulations for Teachers. A second issue raised by KNUT in the court was that TSC had implemented a differentiated pay structure depending on which the union a teacher was affiliated to (some teachers are members of Kenya Union of Post-Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET)—a rival union). In this instance, the Union noted a case of discrimination and alleged that TSC maintained two payrolls and excluded members of KNUT from the second and third phases of the CBA. The union was against this discrimination because it was a breach of the CBA, which was agreed upon and a certificate deposited in the labour court, thus contravening the Labour Relations Act and TSC Act. Indeed, Kenya parliament had approved and set funds to pay all public teachers. In 2021, the two parties signed a new CBA for 2021–2025 (Kenya National Union of Teachers, 2021).

Overall, because KNUT has consistently fought for better pay and terms of service, its members enjoy several benefits, including maternity, house allowances, hardship allowance, commuter allowance, and free pension scheme, among other things. These notwithstanding, it is important to note that KNUT has also experienced several challenges. These include luck of qualified personnel, inadequate number of teachers in public schools, insufficient funds, and rival unions (e.g., KUPPET), among other challenges. The rival union—KUPPET—was formed in 1985. Just like KNUT that was dominated by primary school teachers, KUPPET also faced challenges from rival unions. It was finally registered in 1993, and since then it has had some significant achievements. For instance, in 2011, it forced the government to hire 18060 interns on a full-time basis and in 2012, it endeavoured for harmonisation of salaries and allowances. In 2013, it fought for allowances—commuter allowances, special schools' allowances, and readers' allowances through an industrial action (Kenya Union of Post-Primary Education Teachers, 2022). Importantly, these achievements were a result of a joint strike with other civil servants. The next section focuses on public universities in Kenya.

University Academic Staff Union: UASU

This union was founded in 1993 after a series of strikes at the universities and it was registered in 2003. It was founded on grounds of social justice, labour democracy, and democratic action (Otieno, 2019; Shume, 2021). It aims to bring unity, empowerment, fairness, dignity, and academic freedom to the workplace. Some of its objectives are to ensure gender equity and other forms of inclusivity during employment, improve relations among members, cooperate with other players regarding matters of university education and education in general, offer strategic representation in necessary platforms in university governance, and ensure fair policies in wages and university management. Other additional goals are to ensure professional development, member training, ensure members conduct their work in an ethical and professional manner, communicate with members, offer welfare services, and represent members in labour disputes, among others (The Universities Academic Staff Union [UASU], 2014). Each public university has its own UASU chapter. To date, UASU has signed several CBA with its respective employers. For example, in October 2019, UASU signed a CBA for the 2017–2021 CBA after months of intense negotiations where they were allocated KES 8.8 billion for salary and pension increments (Otieno, 2019). Unfortunately, by 2021, some of the universities had not implemented the CBA, and UASU has been threatening to strike (Shume, 2021).

Kenyan universities have several challenges complicating the work of UASU. For example, the universities are wallowing in unpaid employee statutory deductions such as National Social Security Fund (NSSF), Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOs) deductions, adjunct lecturers' payments, and revenue taxes, among other dues. This is attributed to reduced government capitation for each student and increased cost of living. Although the university vice chancellors have often requested the government to increase its funding for these institutions to ease their financial woes (Mutua, 2021; Otieno, 2019), the situations have continued to deteriorate. Indeed, in October 2022, there was a move to further reduce government funding to public universities. However, this idea did not settle well with the university dons prompting

UASU to confront the Cabinet Secretary of education to withdraw his remarks. In his earlier remarks, the Cabinet Secretary stated that the government had purported to stop funding public universities and suggested that the universities would now have to innovate and seek alternative funding (Capital News, 2022). Since public schools and colleges are state-sponsored, their financial support comes from the exchequer and it depends on the country's economic performance and the politics of the day.

The Transport Sector

The transport sector is broad with those on the sea, road, rail, and air transport and warehousing. Each sector has its own unique challenges and union. Unions in this sector include Kenya Long Distance Truck Drivers and Allied Workers Union, Transport and Allied Workers Union, Kenya Shipping Clearing & Warehousing Workers Union, Seafarers Workers Union, Dock Workers Union, Railway Workers Union, Kenya Aviation and Allied Workers Union, and Kenya Airline Pilots Association (Otieno, 2019). We explore a few in detail below.

The Long-Distance Truck Drivers and Allied Workers Union

The long-distance trucking industry has its own unique challenges from the other transport sectors (Trademark, 2020). To represent themselves, the truckers have come up with the Long-Distance Truck Drivers and Allied Workers Union (KLDTDAWU). Some of its accomplishments include trucking to insecure neighbouring countries and handling travelling embargos during the COVID-19 period. For instance, KLDTDAWU advised its members not to carry cargo destined for insecure regions. This was the case with Southern Sudan which has experienced political instability for some time (Owino, 2021). Besides insecurity, the union has decried situations where employers hire cheaper foreign drivers at the expense of local drivers and has consistently advocated for salary increases

for its members, including a recent 12% salary increase. Of course, they also face several challenges. These include tax exertion at the weighbridge, border police harassment as they enter neighbouring countries, and the Kenya Federation of Employers targeting to fire drivers that are aligned to the union despite the fact that the Kenyan Constitution provides a space for each worker to enjoy fair work practices (Ochieng, 2022). For example, early this year, the drivers downed their tools due to an unfair COVID-19 test regiment that was required in a neighbouring country. The drivers were subjected to frequent/weekly tests irrespective of whether they had negative tests from other East African countries. They finally resumed work when the conditions for COVID-19 testing were fairly altered (Osere, 2022).

Kenya Airline Pilots Association

Another transport segment with unique challenges is the aviation sector. The Kenyan aviation industry is volatile. The negative macroeconomics such as exchange rates, cut-throat competition, and world pandemics easily push the sector into a flux. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic left a dent in this industry worldwide, although airlines are beginning to pick up their pieces as travel restrictions due to the pandemic are being lifted. Moreover, the continent's aviation industry is highly fragmented. During the COVID-19 pandemic, airlines had to drastically reduce a good number of workers, and others were forced to work on a flexi-time basis (Mbabazi, 2022; Mureithi, 2021). In Kenya, Kenya Airways (KQ), the main Kenyan carrier, has been on a resuscitation table for a long time with the government attempting to keep it alive. It therefore came as no surprise when KQ pilots held strikes in 2022 citing poor working conditions. These conditions necessitated the Kenya Airline Pilots Association (KALPA) to call for a strike, which saw planes grounded for several days. KALPA is an association for Pilots that started in 1978 after the defunct East Africa Community and it has members from all major airlines. It is concerned with good working conditions, flight safety, and a voice for professional pilots in Kenya (The East African, 2022). In the next section, we move to the manufacturing sector.

The Manufacturing Sector

The Kenya manufacturing sector has been faced with a myriad of challenges with the introduction of cheap substitutes and global competition. Most of the machineries are old and companies need to invest in the latest technology (Wangui, 2019). In the manufacturing sector, the unions are organised according to the nature of the manufacturing activity. These include the Amalgamated Union of Kenya Metal Workers, Kenya Petroleum Oil Workers Union, Bakery Confectionery Manufacturing & Allied Workers Union, Kenya Chemical & Allied Workers Union, Kenya Union of Printing Publishing, Paper Manufacturing & Allied Workers, Kenya Shoe & Leather Workers Union, Kenya Engineering Workers Union, Kenya Union of Commercial Foods & Allied Workers, Tailors & Textile Workers, and Kenya Electrical Trades Allied Workers Union, Kenya Union of Hair and Beauty Salon Workers Union (KUHABWO), and Kenya Glass Workers Union (KGWU) (Central Organisation of Trade Unions, 2022). We briefly describe two unions, KPOWU and KUHABWO, below. The Kenya Petroleum Oil Workers Union (KPOWU) is a union for workers in the petroleum oil sector. Some of the concerns it has raised are to do with understaffing in the Kenya Pipeline Company, such as working for long hours and high workloads, which have compromised the quality of work. There is also the issue of unpaid overtime (Ambani, 2022). Several Unions in the manufacturing and mining sector are allied to IndustriALL. This is a global-level trade union that was founded on June 2012 with a presence in 140 countries and 50 million workers. It has a global solidarity that seeks to challenge multinationals and negotiate for their workers using a new economic model based on democracy and social justice. This model places the interest of the people first. As a result, it has brought together the federations of former global unions in metal work, chemical mining, energy general works, textiles, and leather (IndustriALL, 2022).

The Kenyan chapter of IndustriALL has several unions affiliated with it. These include Amalgamated Union of Kenya Metal Workers, Kenya Petroleum Oil Workers Union (KPOWU), Kenya Engineering Workers Union (KEWU), Kenya Shoe & Leather Workers Union, Tailors, and

Textiles Workers Union (TTWU), Kenya Union of Hair and Beauty Workers (KUHABWO), and Kenya Glass Workers Union (KGWU). In 2021, the seven affiliated unions to IndustriALL joined hands to campaign for Style Company—a company that makes synthetic hair. This company was to uphold its agreement with KUHABWO and allow its workers to be unionised. However, the workers of this company were intimidated and victimised, and some had their contracts terminated for joining the union to fight for their rights. This was despite the intervention of the Employment and Industrial Labour Court. The employer company still refused to recognise the union leading to more international reinforcement from IndustriALL (IndustriALL, 2021).

The Health Sector

In this sector, we cover the Kenya National Union of Nurses (KNUN) and The Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union. KNUN is a union for nurses who form a significant proportion of hospital staff. It was founded in 2011 and registered in April 2013 as a trade union according to the provisions of the Labour Relations Act No 14 of the Laws of Kenya. It seeks to be a premier Union of world-class standards that offers a democratic pace for workers and employers to seek solutions through dialogue. As of 2022, it has 29,000 members in 54 branches drawn from the public, private, academic, and research institutions (Kenya National Union of Nurses, 2022). This union has signed several CBA with public hospitals, recognition agreements with county governments, and state corporations, and mission hospitals, among others (Kimuge, 2022).

The second union is the Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists & Dentists Union (KMPDU). Before independence, the colonial doctors were members of the British Medical Association (BMA). After independence, it was renamed Kenya Medical Association KMA (Koon, 2021; Mwenda, 2012). KMA was more of a professional body than a union and it followed a hospital-centric service delivery practised in the urban areas after Europe. This means KMA was inadequate to meet the needs of junior doctors who saw it as primarily meeting the needs of senior

doctors in the private sector (Koon, 2021). As a result, the junior doctors and final-year medical students formed a Facebook page and used the wall as an activist group to lobby for more participation. They decried the poor state of their working conditions and their terms of service. As doctors, the Labour Relations Act 2007 did not allow them to join trade unions. This dream only came true with the new 2010 Kenya Constitution which permitted collective labour organising (Koon, 2021; Mwenda, 2012).

In terms of labour representation, the medical doctors were lumped together with other civil servants. They did not have a specialised commission to address their employment concerns. These doctors were underpaid, worked for long hours without overtime pay, lacked government sponsorship to specialise at the postgraduate level, worked in dilapidated institutions that lacked the necessary adequate equipment, had poor staffing at the hospitals, and had a poor implementation of health-related policies. This saw almost 80% leave the public hospitals after deployment to greener pastures abroad (Mwenda, 2012). Also, because these young doctors are not specialised, they lacked the ability to eke an extra living from working on a part-time basis in other hospitals. As a result, the first group of young doctors organised a series of meetings and protests amidst threats before the union was legally recognised (Koon, 2021; Mwenda, 2012).

Today, KMPDU seeks to unite all cadres of doctors together to cooperate for collective opinion, represent doctors in private and public platforms, protect the medical professional standards and protocols, and resolve disputes among members and members with their employees through collective and constitutional processes. Besides undertaking collective bargaining, it also does several welfare activities. It guides members to form saving and credit cooperatives unions, benevolent funds, and education funds. In addition, it liaises with other organisational bodies that pursue similar interests as them, conduct capacity building for their members on labour issues, and even carry out corporate social responsibility (Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists & Dentists Union, 2022). Some of its achievements include improvements in salary and working conditions, leading to an increase in health care quality, productivity, and engagement (Irimu et al., 2018).

Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals, and Allied Workers

Unlike other unions, the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals, and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA) cuts a spectrum of sectors targeting the support staff. It is an old union founded in 1942 previously as a House Servants Association. As a union, it was registered in 1951 for support staff in the domestic, hotels, educational institutions, hospital, and allied workers. It caters to workers in the domestic sector, hospitals, and learning institutions both public and private. This union seeks to represent its staff and negotiate for better pay and terms of work and advocate for its workers' rights (Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers, 2022).

The KUDHEIHA advocates for both formal and informal workers. This union respects workers' and stakeholders' diversity, transparency and accountability, social dialogue and tripartism, collaboration and teamwork, professionalism and integrity, respect for the rights and privileges of workers, participatory leadership, innovation, and continuous learning. Besides working closely with COTU-K, it also works with other local and international bodies and their affiliates. These include the International Union of Food Agriculture Hotel, Restaurant, Catering Tobacco, and Allied Workers Association (IUF), International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), Oxfam, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, International Labour Organisation (ILO), and solidarity centre, among others. It also advocates for migrant workers as well and has managed to endorse several CBAs (Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers, 2022). In 2019, because of their efforts, hotel workers got their CBA for 2019/2020 awarded after a decade of waiting. This CBA enabled the hoteliers to get an earning boost, paid service charge and a beverage charge to improve performance, medical scheme, leave allowance, travel allowance, gratuity and welfare benefits, and alternative dispute mechanism (Gakii, 2019).

Trade Unions and the Informal Sector

This section focuses on the possibilities of organising trade unions in the informal sector. Most workers in Kenya are employed in the informal sector. In 2016, there were 6,987,090 informal enterprises of which 99.4% were unlicensed and 9 out of 10 worked in informal microenterprises. These employers do not pay (75.7%) social security and pay below the minimum stipulated statutory wage (Kenya Federation of Employers, 2021). Traub-Merz (2020) carried out a study in Kenya, Zambia, and Senegal to explore possibilities of organising informal labour in trade unions. The study revealed very interesting findings. The findings revealed that informal sector can be a source of more members to the union due to the shrinking base in the formal sector. However, members in the informal sector, though many, are in a fragmented sector, and campaigning for these members can be a challenge unlike in the formal sector which hosts a sizeable number of workers in one location. This study further revealed that although the informal groups are willing to join trade unions, a significant number did not understand trade unions or what they do. The study suggested that those willing to be affiliated with unions such as those in religious groups and SACCOs would wish to enjoy the benefits of membership without losing their own sovereignty. They would also like the unions to talk and lobby on their behalf with the government about their working conditions. Interestingly, although they expressed willingness to join, the informal groups would demand discounted memberships or free service something trade unions may not be able to handle.

Taken together, it seems that if trade unions opt to get membership across the divide, they may target groups or individuals. Open membership implies people from diverse sectors which may not directly translate to more revenues as some of the members prefer discounted fees or joining in the hope that the union would facilitate their transition to the formal sector. Groups whose activities are far from what the trade union does may gain very little. Targeting individuals may cause a challenge in

the recruitment drive. However, these challenges may not stop trade unions from recruiting members from the informal sector (Traub-Merz, 2020).

The Future of Trade Unions in Kenya

After focusing on various sectors, this section addresses the future of trade unions in Kenya. Generally, it has been reported in other parts of the world that trade activity is in decline. Some of the causes postulated include a change in technology with few workers working in the traditional assembly lines, new ways of organising production like outsourcing activity, new work relationships where management attempts to make workers more satisfied, another method of voice (e.g., social media), and de-recognition of trade unions especially among the younger generations as compared to prior generations and political influence, among others (Georgellis & Lange, 2010; Holland et al., 2016; Waddington, 2003). Importantly, these trends are directly being experienced and are impacting Kenyan Unions.

In Kenya, there are myriad challenges as well as opportunities for the unions. In some sectors, the unions are relatively strong, and they are looked upon to fight for the right of their workers such as doctors, nurses, and teachers, among others. The COVID-19 pandemic worsened things for most employers due to diminished revenues, making it very hard for these employers to honour some of the CBA earlier agreed upon. Overall, despite the positive benefits that workers get after a successful union strike, it is important to recognise that other stakeholders suffer in the process, which may call for alternative dispute resolution mechanisms besides work boycotts. For instance, during a work boycott, students in schools and colleges go unattended to or patients die in hospitals. To illustrate, in 2017, there were 250 days of strike for both doctors and nurses within a span of 11 months debilitating the healthcare system at the time (Irimu et al., 2018). This led to innocent patients' deaths who perhaps would have been saved as many of them could not afford private medical clinics.

Another challenge facing unions in Kenya is factions/rivalry within a sector. Take for example the rivalry between KMA (Kenya Medical

Association) and Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists & Dentists Union (KMPDU). The KMA opposed KMPDU when it was campaigning for registration. KMA feared being swallowed by the union, whereas KMPDU feared losing its political autonomy to KMA. It then followed that KMA had a lot of colonial legacy that it inherited from its colonial predecessor British Medical Association (BMA). The young doctors used strikes to reconstitute their identity. This enabled the young doctors to position themselves as legitimate participants in policy and planning matters of the profession (Koon, 2021). In education, Kenya Union of Post-Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET) was seen as a rival to Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) which has been in existence since the colonial days (Anyango et al., 2013; Kenya National Union of Teachers Kenya National Union of Teachers, 2021). When an industry is served by several unions, one of them may be a ploy by the employer to weaken the other. This has been the case with KNUT and KUPPET (Anyango et al., 2013).

Across several unions, membership has declined. This leads to a lack of sufficient funds to sustain union mandates (Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers, 2022). For example, KNUT's membership has significantly declined which has affected its service delivery across the country. This is unfortunate because, KNUT besides fighting for employees' rights, it's also concerned with the state of the teaching profession and aims to enhance the standards of learning and teaching (Kenya National Union of Teachers, 2021). There is another challenge that emanates from the contradictory role of the Salary and Remuneration Commission (SRC) (Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers, 2022). The SRC is seen as taking the mandate to set salaries and benefits for public servants and whatever they set could be binding. This is likely to limit what public sector unions could bargain for or the need to go for CBAs. On the other hand, it may also imply that the CBAs may have to negotiate with SRC as the new custodian of the public wage bill (Central Organization of Trade Union, 2017). Also, the government is being accused of taking an anti-union stance. This has been witnessed through government's weak enforcement of trade union policies and constitutional mandates (Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational

Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers, 2022). Additionally, the devolution of government services from the national government to the 47 county governments in Kenya has brought with it new challenges for trade unions. It's a challenge for the unions to sign recognition agreements with all the county governments and CBAs (Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers, 2022), resulting in a challenge for nurses and doctors to lobby with county governments.

Other challenges include the abuse of office through the misuse of union funds. This is a challenge that cut across most unions in Kenya today. This is coupled with the challenge of less qualified personnel in financial management and conflict resolution. Indeed, a look at the virtual space shows many unions are yet to maintain an active web presence using social media and updated websites. Finally, there is the issue of alternative methods of production being adopted by some industries that result in eliminating workers. In the tea sector, for example, there have been tensions and strikes between the workers and the owners of the tea estates over the introduction of tea-plucking machines. These machines are set to increase unemployment in the sector (Kimutai, 2022), thus significantly reducing union members and its financial base.

The Way Forward

With these changes taking place, it's imperative that trade unions think of new ways to carry out their business. Indeed, some trade unions are already devising new strategic plans as in the case of KNUT and KUDHEIHA. KUDHEIHA, for example, has devised new ways of management and has come up with forward-looking initiatives like strategic plans (Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers, 2022). Before, it relied on its constitution, operational guidelines, key policies, legal documents, and members' resolutions in meetings. Some of these were reactive measures that could not adequately address the changing union landscape and they failed to provide a basis for measuring progress and being accountable for the results. The strategic document positions the union as a strong advocate for

workers and covers seven thematic areas, including (1) maintaining financial sustainability, (2) recruiting, retaining, and organising membership, (3) building capacity, (4) collaborating and creating partnerships, (5) publicising, lobbying, and advocating for members, (6) implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and reporting, and (7) developing, and delivering sustainable products and services. Today, some unions (e.g., KNUT, UASU, KNUN, and KMPDU) have also adopted new services for members. These services include professional services, training, guiding the growth in that sector by sitting in various public and social stakeholder platforms, guidance in creating savings and credit unions, welfare services and even undertaking social corporate responsibility (CSR) (Kenya Medical Practitioners, Doctors, and Dentist Union 2022; Kenya National Union of Nurses, 2022; Kenya Union of Teachers, 2022). In addition, some unions are amalgamating to increase their size and voice. For instance, many industries in the manufacturing sectors have affiliated themselves with other regional and international unions to fight for their rights with multinational companies and place workers' interest before profits (IndustriALL, 2021).

Suggestion for Practice and Further Research

For trade union practitioners, it's imperative that they seek more services for their members for them to remain relevant. This is because trade unions are evolving to be more than just being a forum for collective bargaining. We suggest that they offer more programmes, such as running welfare services as well as credit and savings cooperative unions, benevolent funds, and corporate social responsibility to the public, among others. Second, unions should amalgamate and seek international affiliations to address the issues of multinational companies as in the case of manufacturing industries. Third, there is a need for capacity building for the union officials regarding negotiation and conflict resolution, problem-solving, and people skills. Fourth, the union must incorporate new ways of organising and cost-cutting measures. These new ways may include the use of social media platforms and creating a web presence to

appeal to the young generation as a way of overcoming the union's membership aging problem.

From a managerial perspective, since labour is a key stakeholder, there is a need for more collaboration between labour and management. We suggest that management should not fight labour unions but instead provide a space for mutual working and understanding. To achieve this objective, we suggest that the management should train its managers as well as the union representatives/leaders on interpersonal and negotiation skills as this might help to reduce disagreements at the workplace which often leads to unnecessary costly strikes. Fisher et al.'s (2011) principled negotiation which seeks mutual benefit wherever possible for both parties is perhaps a good start. Another important managerial implication is that organisations should provide working environment that improves job satisfaction and employee well-being (Blanchflower & Bryson, 2020). This can be done by providing a good climate where workers can air their concerns and/or suggestions. Involving employees in such a manner is likely to increase their productivity and makes them feel that they are included in every running of the organisation (Lewis & Bell, 2019). From a research perspective, there is a need to search for new ways of organising trade unions. For example, we learned that revolutions can be won via social media as was the case with Arab Spring. We need more research on how trade unions can utilise social media to sensitise their membership, employers, and advocate for change in the workplace in the current society. There is also a need for more research studies on ways trade unions can be enhanced to continue advocating for more positive labour outcomes.

Conclusion

The trade union movement in Kenya has improved many workers' working conditions, tenure, and pay since colonial times. They played a critical role in Kenya's liberation struggle, and they continue to play a significant role in safeguarding the interests of workers to date as they negotiate with respective governments and employers. Thus, despite it facing several challenges of governance and lack of sufficient funding, trade unions still have a great role to play in Kenya's labour sector.

References

Ambani, B. (2022, September 20). Union workers say Kenya Pipeline Company is understaffed. https://nation.africa/kenya/business/union-workers-say-kenya-pipeline-company-is-understaffed-3955376

Anyango, C., Obange, N., Abeka, E., Ondiek, G. O., Odera, O., & Ayugi, M. E. (2013). Factors affecting performance of trade unions in Kenya. *American Journal of Business and Management, 2*(2), 181–185.

Blanchflower, D. G., & Bryson, A. (2020). *Now unions increase job satisfaction and Well-being* (No. w27720). National Bureau of Economic Research.

Botero, J. C., Djankov, S., Porta, R. L., Lopez-de-Silanes, F., & Shleifer, A. (2004). The regulation of labor. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 119*(4), 1339–1382.

Boxall, P. F., Purcell, J., & Wright, P. M. (Eds.). (2007). *The Oxford handbook of human resource management*. Oxford Handbooks.

Budeli, M. (2012). Trade unionism and politics in Africa: the South African experience. *Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa, 45*(3), 454–481.

Capital News. (2022, November 7). UASU blasts Machogu over plan to stop funding public universities. https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/2022/11/uasu-blasts-machogu-over-plan-to-stop-funding-public-universities/

Central Organisation of Trade Unions-Kenya. (2022). History of COTU-K. Retrieved November 11, 2022, from https://cotu-kenya.org/history-of-cotuk/

Central Organisation of Trade Unions—Kenya. (2017, July 7). A caution to Kenyan trades unions on dangers of SRC, by Prof. Lukoye Atwoli. https://cotu-kenya.org/a-caution-to-kenyan-trades-unions-on-dangers-of-src-by-prof-lukoye-atwoli/

Chelegat, M. (2022, November 1). Atwoli makes u-turn, backs Ruto proposal on higher NSSF deductions. https://nation.africa/kenya/news/atwoli-makes-u-turn-backs-ruto-proposal-on-higher-nssf-deductions-4004810

Durrani, S. (2009). Trade union movement leads the way in Kenya. *Information, Society and Justice Journal, 2*(2), 197–204.

Federation of Kenya Employers. (2021, March). The informal economy in Kenya. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/%2D%2D-ed_emp/%2D%2D-emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_820312.pdf

Fisher, R., Ury, W. L., & Patton, B. (2011). *Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in*. Penguin.

Gakii, M. (2019, April 10). Big win for hotel workers as CBA approved after decades wait. https://www.the-star.co.ke/business/kenya/2019-04-10-big-win-for-hotel-workers-as-cba-approved-after-decades-wait/

Georgellis, Y., & Lange, T. (2010, March). A reunion members happy after all? Evidence from Eastern and Western European Labour Markets. MPRA Paper 17020, University Library of Munich, Germany.

Holland, P., Cooper, B. K., & Hecker, R. (2016). Use of social media at work: a new form of employee voice? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 27*(21), 2621–2634.

IndustriALL. (2021, June 10). Kenya unions campaign against workers' rights violation at style industries. https://www.industriall-union.org/kenyan-unions-campaign-against-workers-rights-violations-at-style-industries

IndustriALL. (2022). Industrial global union. Retrieved November 8, 2022, from https://www.industriall-union.org/who-we-are.

International Labour Organisation. (2004). National labour law profile. Kenya. https://www.ilo.org/ifpdial/information-resources/national-labour-law-profiles/WCMS_158910/lang%2D%2Den/index.htm

Irimu, G., Ogero, M., Mbevi, G., Kariuki, C., Gathara, D., Akech, S., Barasa, E., Tsofa, B., & English, M. (2018). Tackling health professionals' strikes: an essential part of health system strengthening in Kenya. *BMJ Global Health, 3*(6), 1–5.

Kabiru, J. A. (2018). Trade unionism in the cut flower industry in Kenya. A case study of Kenya Plantation and Agricultural Workers Union (KPAWU). *European Scientific Journal, 14*(13), 215–227.

Karimi, J. M., & Nyawira, C. (2019). Trade union campaigns and organizations performance in the health sector in Kiambu County. *Journal of Language, Technology & Entrepreneurship in Africa, 10*(1), 139–150.

Karreth, A. K. (2018). Schools of democracy: How trade union membership impacts political participation in Africa's emerging democracies. *Democratization, 25*(1), 158–177.

Kenya Medical Practitioners, Doctors and Dentist Union. (2022). Retrieved November 11, 2022, from http://kmpdu.org/

Kenya National Union of Nurses. (2022). A brief history of KNUN. Retrieved November 9, 2022, from https://knun.or.ke/about/

Kenya National Union of Teachers. (2020, July 20). KNUT press briefing. http://knut.or.ke/sites/default/files/documents/knut%20press%20release%20-july%2029-2020.pdf

Kenya National Union of Teachers. (2021). KNUT circular. http://knut.or.ke/sites/default/files/documents/Knut%20Circular_30July_2021.pdf

Kenya National Union of Teachers. (2022). About us. Retrieved November 3, 2022, from https://www.knut.or.ke/index.php/node/15

Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers. (2022). About us. Retrieved November 10, 2022, from https://www.kudheiha.org/about-us/

Kenya Union of Post Primary education Teachers. (2022). https://kuppetkenya.co.ke/

Kimuge, S. (2022, September 29). Nurses call for talks with governor to curb strikes. https://nation.africa/kenya/news/nurses-call-for-talks-with-governors-to-curb-strikes-3965856

Kimutai, V. (2022, June 30). Multinational tea firms threaten to relocate to Rwanda as row intensifies. https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/kericho/multinational-tea-firms-threaten-to-relocate-to-rwanda-as-row-intensifies-3994306

Kituo Cha Sheria. (2016, April). The Kenyan worker and the law. http://kituochasheria.or.ke/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Kenyan-Worker-and-the-Law-final2.pdf

Koon, A. D. (2021). Organizational sensemaking in pursuit of legitimacy: Toward a social explanation of medical strikes in Kenya. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and law, 46*(4). https://doi.org/10.1215/03616878-8970867

Kraus, J. (1976). African trade unions: Progress or poverty? *African Studies Review, 19*(3), 95–108.

LePine, J. A., & Van Dyne, L. (1998). Predicting voice behavior in work groups. *Journal of applied psychology, 83*(6), 853.

Lewis, P., & Bell, K. (2019). Understanding the UK's productivity problems: new technological solutions or a case for the renewal of old institutions? *Employee Relations, 41*(2), 296–312.

Magare, M., & Sundays, P. N. (2022, July 27). Labour and employment comparative guide. https://www.mondaq.com

Marchington, M. (2007). Employee voice systems. In P. Boxall, J. Purcell, & P. Wright (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of human resource management* (pp. 231–250). Oxford University Press.

Matete, F. (2022, October 13). Pay our dues before privatising sugar millers, workers demand. https://www.the-star.co.ke/counties/nyanza/2022-10-13-pay-our-dues-before-privatising-sugar-millers-workers-demand/

Mbabazi, E. (2022, June 21). Airline industry on road to recovery as IATA publishes positive forecasts for 2022. https://kenyanwallstreet.com/iata-publishes-positive-forecasts-for-2022/

Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Psychology, 1*, 173–197.

Mureithi, C. (2021, November 26). An airline CEO's strategy for making African aviation sustainable. https://qz.com/africa/2094880/kenya-airways-strategy-for-making-african-aviation-sustainable

Mutua, J. (2021, December 1). University crisis deepens as deficit double to shs 27 billion. https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/news/university-crisis-deepens-deficits-doubles-sh27bn-3636862

Mwenda, A. S. (2012). From a dream to a resounding reality: the inception of a doctors union in Kenya. *Pan African Medical Journal, 11*(1), 14.

Ochieng, O. (2022, May 11). 7000 truck drivers have lost jobs, says union. https://www.the-star.co.ke/counties/coast/2022-05-11-7000-truck-drivers-have-lost-jobs-says-union/

Ogolla, W. (2015). *Effects of economic liberalization on trade unions: A case study of the Kenya plantation and agriculture workers union, 1980–1998*. MA thesis. University of Nairobi.

Omulo, C. (2022, September 11). From Saul to Paul, Francis Atwoli eats a humble pie. https://nation.africa/kenya/news/politics/from-saul-to-paul-atwoli-eats-a-humble-pie-3944586

Osere, E. (2022, January 11). Truck drivers end strike after Uganda heeds to demands. https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2022-01-11-truck-drivers-end-strike-after-uganda-heeds-to-demands/

Otieno, A. (2019, October 29). UASU sign shs 8.8b increase deal. https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/business/index.php/education/article/2001347194/uasu-signs-sh88b-pay-increase-deal

Otieno, O. G. (2017). Assessment of the state of trade unions in Kenya. Retrieved September 9, 2022, from https://alrei.org/education/assessment-of-the-state-of-trade-unions-in-kenya-by-owidhi-george-otieno#:~:text=Trade%20unionism%20began%20in%20the,well%20as%20massive%20property%20destruction

Owino, W. (2021). Long-distance truck drivers lament insecurity cases, call for talks with Government. https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/kenya/article/2001408497/long-distance-truck-drivers-lament-insecurity-cases

Shume, L. (2021, November 8). UASU calls for full implementation of CBA. https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2021-11-08-uasu-calls-for-full-implementation-of-cba/

Singh, M. (1969). *History of Kenya's Trade Union Movement, to 1952* (No. 9). East African Publishing House.

Solaja, O. (2015). Labour casualization and trade unionism in Nigeria. *International Journal of Information, Business and Management, 7*(4), 1–21.

The East African. (2022, November 5). Pilots' strike clouds Kenya Airways plan to raise flight frequency. https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/business/kq-pilots-strike-clouds-plans-to-increase-flights-4009070

Trademark. (2020, July 24). Transit truck drivers cite stigma and delay as the main corridor's challenges. https://www.trademarkea.com/news/transit-truck-drivers-cite-stigma-and-delays-as-the-main-corridors-challenges/

Traub-Merz, R. (2020, December). The interest of informal labour in trade unions. https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/17270.pdf

University Academic Staff Union. (2014). The constitution rules and regulations of the universities' academic staff union (UASU). https://uasutuk.or.ke/images/THE-CONSTITUTION-UASU.pdf

Waddington, J. (2003). What do representatives think of the practices of European works councils? Views from six countries. *European Journal of Industrial Relations, 9*(3), 303–332.

Walumbwa, F. O., Morrison, E. W., & Christensen, A. L. (2012). Ethical leadership and group in-role performance: The mediating role of group conscientiousness and group voice. *The Leadership Quarterly, 23*(5), 953–964.

Wangui, M. (2019, July 15). Key challenges holding back the manufacturing sector in Kenya. https://kenyanwallstreet.com/key-challenges-holding-back-the-manufacturing-sector-in-kenya/

Wood, S. J., & Wall, T. D. (2007). Work enrichment and employee voice in human resource management-performance studies. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 18*(7), 1335–1372.

Zeleza, T. (1993). The strike movement in colonial Kenya: The era of the general strikes. *Transafrican Journal of History, 22*, 1–23.

5

The Patterns of Employee Voice in China

Chao Ma, Xue Zhang, and Zhongqiu Li

Introduction

The conceptual of voice and its importance have been well established and have a long-standing history in Chinese culture. Just as the *Confucian Analects* (Lun Yu) says: *when walking together with other people, there must be one who can be my teacher. I shall select their good qualities to learn and find out their bad qualities to avoid them*. Indeed, from ancient times, Chinese people who have long abided by Confucianism have emphasised the importance of voice such that the emperor specifically appointed bureaucrat officials including *Critics* (Yan Guan) and *Remonstrators* (Jian

---

C. Ma (✉)
Australian National University, Canberra, ACT, Australia
e-mail: chao.ma@anu.edu.au

X. Zhang
Shanghai Normal University, Shanghai, China

Z. Li
Northeast Agricultural University, Harbin, China

Guan) to make suggestions (Hucker, 1985). A famous example is that the Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty had a blunt and loyal Minister Wei Zheng, and by recognising Wei Zheng's suggestions and comments, the emperor Taizong once said "*without Wei Zheng, I would lose one of my most precious mirrors*". Similarly, the representative of Legalism in ancient China, Han Fei, stated in his book *Han Feizi: If you don't know, but you speak, you are not wise; if you know, but you don't speak, you are not faithful.*

However, in modern business and management, the study of voice behaviour can often be traced back to Western scholar Hirschman (1970), who views voice as a driver to change "the objectionable state of affairs" (p. 30). Specifically, as a typical type of positive and extra-role behaviour, the content of voice behaviour can be either new ideas or ideas to promote organisational efficiency or hidden worries about the current or future of the organisation (Van Dyne et al., 2003). The modern voice research in China has been significantly influenced by existing conceptualisations and literature in Western contexts. Especially, after the critical historical process of the reform and opening (since 1978), business organisations have developed and grown in a social environment with increasing liberty and tolerance, which also occurred in tandem with China's integration into marketisation and globalisation (Li, 2020). In such a new era, the organisational management in China is intertwined with Western theories and practices, and employee voice behaviour in Chinese organisations has been further highlighted. Many business organisations in China have increased efforts to implement management practices that involve giving employees a chance to express opinions, ideas, concerns and suggestions regarding their jobs (Marchington et al., 2005).

Although China has made remarkable economic and social progress, and business organisations have ushered in a new stage by learning Western modern ideologies and experience in business management, it is impossible to understand the patterns of employee voice in China without considering the unique cultural and historical characteristics. Especially, some scholars have also pointed out the potential influences of traditional Chinese cultural characteristics on voice behaviour. For example, Duan (2011, p. 118) suggests that the concepts of *he* (i.e. harmony) and *zhongyong* (i.e. the Doctrine of the Mean) in Confucian culture will

lead employees to be "euphemistic and gentle" when expressing their different views. Similarly, Chen and colleagues (2013) tend to regard Chinese cultural features such as *renqing* (i.e. the obligation to show empathy and repay favours), *mianzi* (i.e. face), *zhongyong*, power distance and collectivism as the cultural root of voice behaviour deficiency. Therefore, in this chapter, we expect to explicate the particular features of employee voice in China by reviewing the fruitful extant research outcomes and combining multiple factors embedded in Chinese culture.

Employee Voice Research in China

In general, Chinese scholars have derived modern employee voice research from Western research ideology. Meanwhile, various voice studies conducted in China have, in turn, contributed to and enriched the overall literature of employee voice (e.g. Wilkinson et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2015). As depicted in Fig. 5.1, we describe the relationship between modern employee voice research in China and this line of research in
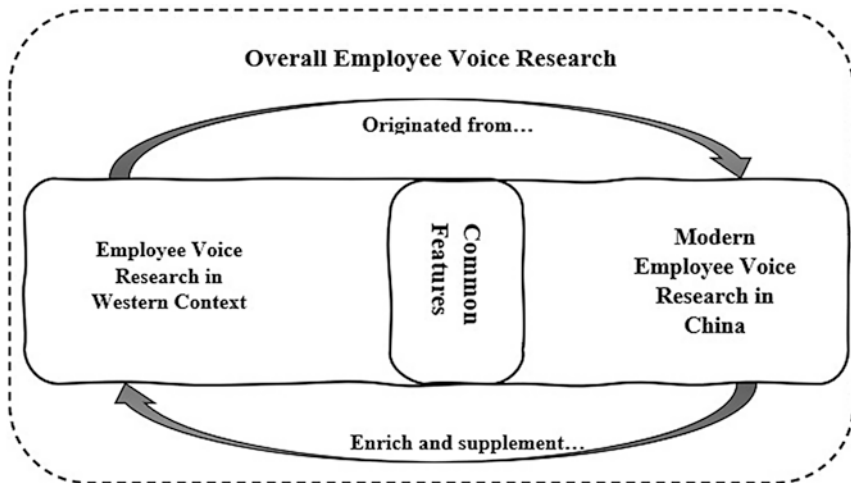

Fig. 5.1 Employee voice research in China and Western contexts

Western contexts. Further, we summarise the extant management literature of employee voice in China and elaborate on the contributions of voice research in China on the holistic literature on employee voice.

Conceptualising Voice Behaviour

Employee voice is a well-established concept in management literature, with most research taking place after Hirschman (1970), who expanded the concept of voice to employee level, conceptualising it as a type of behaviour of employees trying to change the potentially adverse situations in the organisation. The voice research has attracted much attention by Chinese management scholars because China has experienced rapid development of science and technology and dramatic changes in the market. Therefore, organisations increasingly need employees to offer advice and suggestions in order to successfully cope with the endless challenges of the business environment (Duan et al., 2016). In line with Hirschman's (1970) conceptualisation, the research on voice behaviour in China has mainly focused on the level of employees' voice to the organisation and classified it as a type of behaviour beyond employees' job tasks (i.e. extra-role performance).

With the advancement of voice literature, organisational scholars have developed various frameworks to broaden our understanding of employee voice behaviour. In terms of contents of voice, while Western researchers tend to agree that there are multiple types of voice (Gorden, 1988; Van Dyne et al., 2003; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998), many of them failed to provide validated measures of those forms of voice (Maynes & Podsakoff, 2013). Given these issues, voice researchers in China have provided additional insights by developing new voice frameworks, expanding the domain of voice and clarifying what elements need to be considered to consist of voice. For example, while Liang et al. (2012) specified that voice can be either promotional to improve organisational performance or prohibitive to hinder organisational development, Wu et al. (2015) drew from role identity theory to propose that voice behaviours are different depending on if the voice behaviours are directly related to the speaker's job (i.e. self-job-concerned voice and self-job-unconcerned

voice). More recently, by recognising that motivation is the key to distinguish different types of voice, Duan et al. (2021) suggest that not all voices are for organisation's benefit, and thus, employees' self-serving voice is a new type of voice behaviour worth paying attention to.

Further, employee voice research in China has also highlighted the adoption of different perspectives by examining voice behaviour not only from target employees but also from other key players in the organisation. In particular, considering its object sensitivity feature, voice behaviour can be primarily divided into upward voice (i.e. subordinates to their superiors) and the parallel voice (i.e. voice between employees and colleagues). Yang (2002) points out that, in the context of Chinese culture, the relationship between superior and subordinate is the key to the effective operation of an organisation, and in this sense, the voice behaviours among leaders and subordinates tend to be a major stream of voice research. This is in line with extant literature which demonstrates that various factors such as leader trust (Gao et al., 2011), traditional Chinese leadership (Li & Sun, 2015) and leader-member exchange (Wang et al., 2016) tend to influence employee voice in China. In addition, the roles of colleagues or peers in the focal employee's engagement in voice behaviour have also attracted scholars' interests. For example, empirical studies conducted in China suggest that peers' work performance increases focal employee's voice behaviour by fostering trust (Zhang & Chen, 2021), and peers' positive mood is also associated with focal employee's promotive voice via increased psychological safety (Liu et al., 2015).

Antecedents of Voice Behaviour

The factors contributing to employees' engagement in voice behaviour are likely to be similar in Western and Chinese contexts. Specifically, existing studies have indicated that Chinese employees' voice behaviours can be largely influenced by various individual factors such as employee work values (Zhan et al., 2016), psychological capital (Wang et al., 2017), insider identity perception (Li et al., 2017b), perceived voice construction (Cheng, 2020) and perceived excess qualification (Zhou et al., 2020) from different theoretical perspectives such as positive psychological

capital and resource conservation theory. In particular, with the rise of indigenous research in China, many voice scholars have focused on investigating the potential role of values and elements derived from Chinese culture, such as *zhongyong* (Duan & Ling, 2011) and power distance (Chen et al., 2013), which has further enriched the research on employee voice behaviour under the Chinese cultural background. Apart from unique characteristics associated with culture, Chinese scholars have also concentrated on multiple leadership style factors pertaining to Chinese features and their influences on employee voice behaviour. For example, previous research has linked authoritarian leadership (Qiu & Long, 2014), transformational leadership (Duan & Huang, 2014), authentic leadership (Liu & Liao, 2015), humble leader (Zhou & Liao, 2018), self-sacrificial leadership (Yao et al., 2019) and paternalistic leadership (Mao et al., 2020) with Chinese employees' voice behaviour in the workplace.

Outcomes of Voice Behaviour

Compared with the investigations of causes of voice, the research on outcome variables of voice is relatively less. To consider the potential outcomes of voice behaviour, scholars have focused on two core concepts, from which the results of voice behaviour are studied: *voice adoption* (i.e. the acceptance and support of leaders for employees' voice, Zhang et al., 2016) and *voice implementation* (i.e. implement the voice the leader will adopt, He et al., 2020). While previous research on voice adoption mainly focused on the impact of voice content, voice expression, employees and leaders' characteristics on voice adoption, another line of research tends to draw from the theory of planned behaviour to reveal the mechanisms to implement the voice by leaders (He et al., 2020).

Moreover, extant research has also focused on employee performance and interpersonal relationships as the outcomes of voice behaviour in Chinese context. For example, Hu et al. (2019) found that employees' voice behaviour may affect the normal working procedures of the organisation, which causes leaders trouble and thus, results in low performance evaluations on target employees. In contrast, there has been evidence suggesting that voice behaviour can improve leader-member exchange and

improve the relationship between superiors and subordinates (Cheng et al., 2013). Further, while Yao (2020) found that voice behaviour is associated with emotional exhaustion and job involvement of the implementers, Liu et al. (2022) indicated that engaging in voice behaviour will not only affect implementers but also affect acts of the bystanders. In addition to various outcomes at the individual level, voice behaviours are likely to generate outcomes at the collective level, especially including the influences on team performance, team innovation and organisational decision-making (Li et al., 2017). This has been supported by Zhang and Liang (2021), who found that voice behaviour is conducive and can integrate different views within the team to predict team effectiveness. Similarly, advocating voice is also likely to be conducive and thus improve organisational innovation (Liang & Tang, 2009).

Contextualising Voice Behaviour to the Chinese Context

Although previous research has revealed various antecedents and outcomes of employee voice behaviour, it is worth noting that cultural characteristics (at least in part) shape the organisational norms for the different voice channels (Kwon & Farndale, 2020). Thus, it is likely that Chinese cultural characteristics and contextual factors activate different mechanisms with respect to understanding of the patterns of employee voice behaviours in China. Indeed, Kwon and Farndale's (2020) research highlights that national culture affects how people perceive safety and effectiveness during voice, and national cultural factors can either discourage or promote employee voice and signals about the effectiveness consequences of voice. Along the same vein, indigenous research in China also suggests that *zhongyong*, *Guanxi*, *Mianzi*/face and *renqing* are all key Chinese cultural concepts which influence Chinese employees' voice behaviour (Zhan & Su, 2019). Therefore, by integrating with Kwon and Farndale's (2020) framework and extant voice literature focusing on China, we expect to highlight the following aspects to explicate employee voice behaviour in China: power distance, *zhongyong* mindset, *guanxi*,
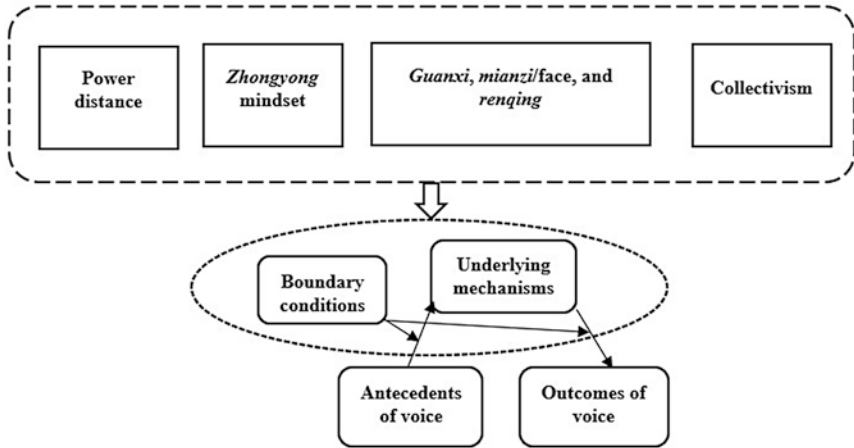
Fig. 5.2   The role of cultural factors in voice research in China

mianzi/face, *renqing* and in-group collectivism. Figure 5.2 depicts how Chinese culture-associated factors may activate underlying mechanisms and boundary conditions of employee voice.

Power Distance

Power distance is the degree to which members of an organisation or society assume and agree that power should be stratified and concentrated at a higher level of organisation and government (House et al., 2004). It can be divided into four levels: national, organisational, team and individual. At the national level, the formation of values is usually closely related to the cultural environment in which they are embedded. In China, the Confucian culture of *respecting inferiority and superiority* and the Legalist culture of *being strict but less gracious* constitute the fundamental cultural values. A high level of power distance has its cultural root embodied in Chinese Confucian culture such as *zun bei you xu* (尊卑有序, ordering relationships by status and observing such order) and *zhong xiao shun cong* (忠孝顺从, loyalty, filial piety and obedience). Considering that the cultural environment can influence employees'

voice behaviour by shaping their power distance tendency (Morrison, 2014), Chinese employees are believed to be more likely to accept centralised leadership and bureaucratic structures and obey orders from leaders. In this sense, they are more sensitive to class hierarchy and less likely to speak up to challenge the status quo. This is supported by Huang et al.'s (2005) research which indicates that Chinese employees tend to have opinion withholding in the workplace because they believe that "silence is golden", avoid undermining the authority of their superiors or are affected by the implicit "hierarchy concept" abide by the power gap and dare not speak up (p. 461).

At the organisational or group level, power distance has been suggested to particularly affect the communication mode, such that organisations with high-power distance tend to have less feedback from lower-level employees. Indeed, seniority is the epitome of high-power distance within an organisation. Advocation of seniority represents clear hierarchical boundaries among employees, significantly influencing the probability of employees raising objections (Fang, 2015). Supporting this view, Du et al. (2017) reveal that an organisational culture of seniority will inhibit voice behaviour of independent directors, and thus, effective measures should be taken to eliminate the seniority culture that hinders voice, such as eliminating hierarchical ideas and reducing information communication links as far as possible.

At the individual level, power distance tends to be conceptualised as individual cognition which represents the expectation of the subordinate to the leaders' behaviour in the leader-subordinate dual relationship (Kirkman et al., 2009). The power distance between leaders and employees is an essential factor affecting employees' voice behaviour such that leaders' power distance determines whether they are willing to accept voice while employees' power distance determines whether they dare to voice. Specifically, from the employees' perspective, power distance orientation will directly affect their choice of communication mode and their role positioning in the whole communication relationship. In this sense, employees with different power distance tendencies are likely to have specific differences in the perception and interpretation of voice behaviour (Hsiung & Tsai, 2017). To explain, employees with high-power distance tendencies have a strong sense of awe and respect for superiors or

authority figures. They are more sensitive to the existing hierarchy and authority between communication subjects. Thus, raising objections means breaking tradition, challenging authority and being contrary to their values with a high-power distance tendency. As a result, employees are more inclined to accept top-down orders and instructions rather than question and challenge their superiors (Botero & Van Dyne, 2009). Along the same vein, Zhu and Ouyang (2019) found that, in Chinese context, employees may prefer to know but not speak whether it is promotive voice behaviour that emphasises improvement or prohibitive voice behaviour that emphasises problems. In addition to the direct influence, power distance has also been found to negatively moderate the relationships between various leaderships (e.g. servant leadership, empowering leadership, authentic leadership, conflict management style) and employee voice (e.g. Tan & Liu, 2017; Yu et al., 2015). In contrast, employees with low-power distance orientation are less likely to care about the power and rank difference with their leaders in the upward communication process and thus are more willing to speak up by engaging in voice behaviour (Zhou & Liao, 2018).

From the perspective of leaders, power distance denotes the degree of expectation to which leaders expect employees to recognise formal power relations and comply with and accept their direct influence. Leaders with different levels of power distance have different views on voice behaviour such that high-power distance leaders tend to regard subordinates' voice behaviour as provocative while low-power distance leaders are likely to see subordinates' voice behaviour as an expression of responsibility or unique contribution (Han & Liu, 2021). Following this notion, Chinese culture which is characterised with high-power distance tends to foster an authoritative style of leadership (Liao et al., 2010). Such leaders tend to be full of confidence in their own strategic decisions, have a strong desire to control subordinates and regard recommendations as a challenge to their power and credibility (Kirkbride et al., 1991). Therefore, they often ignore and do not adopt the suggestions put forward by their subordinates and even use their power to severely punish employees who hold dissenting opinions.

Zhongyong Mindset

A *zhongyong* mindset probably is the most typical cultural characteristic of traditional Chinese culture, denoting an ethical and moral philosophy and a way of thinking (Wu & Lin, 2005). Although considered to be a manifestation of Confucianism, *zhongyong* and its connotations are consistent with the philosophies of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism (Zhou et al., 2019). Especially, being disinclined towards either side is known as *zhong* (中), and admitting no change is called *yong* (庸). Given that *zhongyong* requires one to consider all perspectives, recognise broader conditions and avoid extremes, it has often been viewed in Confucius culture as a noble virtue and even the highest morality. As a practical thinking model of metacognition (Yang, 2009), *zhongyong* shapes the process of thinking about what action strategies to adopt and how to implement them when dealing with specific events in daily life. In problem-solving, a *zhongyong* thinker carefully considers things from various angles and acts appropriately (Wu & Lin, 2005).

In Chinese context, *zhongyong* plays an essential role in affecting individuals through cognitive processes and in shaping business management and organisational practices. Reflecting the Chinese ethical and moral standards, this idea can particularly serve as a guideline for people's actions and decision-making. Linking *zhongyong* with employee voice behaviours in the workplace, scholars tend to propose that *zhongyong* mindset is likely to influence more specific categories of voice rather than employee voice in a general sense (e.g. Chen et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2017). Supporting this view, Duan and Ling (2011) found that, although *zhongyong* is unrelated to holistic voice behaviour, it can positively predict overall-oriented voice and negatively predict self-centred voice by employees. Another example is that *zhongyong* has been approved to be associated positively with promotive voice and negatively with prohibitive voice (Wang & Wang, 2017). The possible explanations are because *zhongyong* thinkers can control their emotions and consider the feelings of others and potential impacts when making suggestions, which allows them to prioritise harmony when interacting with others and modify their voice based on feedback from others. Such regulating role of

zhongyong mindset has also been highlighted in extant literature (e.g. Cai & Geng, 2016). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the relationships between *zhongyong* and voice also vary depending on the degree of control an individual has over the environment. *Zhongyong* as a way of thinking depends on the surrounding context, and thus, changes in context can affect the strength of the relationship between *zhongyong* thinking and subsequent behaviours (Yang & Lin, 2012). According to previous research, while employees' perception of empowerment moderated the relationship between *zhongyong* and voice behaviour (Duan & Ling, 2011), *zhongyong* can also be associated with employees' cognition on the psychology safety to predict voice behaviour (Yang et al., 2017).

Guanxi, Mianzi/Face and Renqing

Guanxi, *mianzi*/face and *renqing* are the critical socio-cultural factors to understand interpersonal interactions and social structure of China (Tsui & Farh, 1997). In China, organisational psychologists suggest that *guanxi*, *mianzi* and *renqing* need to be considered with caution in the process of interpersonal interactions, especially the interactions between leaders, subordinates and colleagues (e.g. Chen et al., 2013). Given that, we expect that those factors are inevitably associated with the patterns of employee voice in China, because too much consideration of such factors tends to inhibit the expression of employees' voice behaviour. First, in Chinese organisations, the mindset of guanxi allows employees to reciprocate the favours they receive in their social lives. Given that leader-subordinate relationships are the most important interpersonal relationships which can directly influence subordinates' behaviour (Liang et al., 2019), *guanxi* is expected to play an essential role in influencing leader—subordinate interactions and associated employee behaviours such as voice. Specifically, unlike the leader-member exchange in Western organisational contexts which are strictly limited to work-related exchanges, the leadership-subordinate relationships in China are strongly "extra-organisational", and this relationship can penetrate the normal organisational work to play a role within the scope of the organisational system (Law et al., 2000, p. 755). In this sense, close relationships between

leaders and subordinates tend to motivate employees to express ideas while poor relationships increase employees' worry about their words and actions. For example, Wang et al. (2010) found that close *guanxi* with senior leaders can promote voice behaviour among subordinate managers, possibly due to a sense of reciprocal obligation for subordinate managers to be seen as in-group members, a higher sense of trust in their leaders and the leaders' tolerance of them, making them relatively less risky to voice. However, under a distant or unfavourable *guanxi* relationship, leaders are inclined to interpret the subordinate's voice behaviour as something beyond the work requirements and to cause trouble, which leads to more rejection and aversion to the subordinate's voice behaviour (Zhou, 2021).

Second, the principle of *mianzi*, meaning taking care of the social reputation of self, colleagues and leaders and constantly maintaining and enhancing this social reputation (Chen et al., 2013), is also expected to influence employee voice behaviour in China, despite that few researchers have incorporated Chinese *mianzi* culture into voice behaviour. After all, in Chinese culture, an individual who is good at "being a decent person (会做人)" can be an essential advantage in social interaction. Even if they have different opinions, they prefer private communications and demonstration of face-saving behaviour. Following this notion, under the unique Chinese culture of face consciousness, employees' voice behaviours, especially those directed at superiors, will be more restrained (Chow et al., 1999). Essentially, employees have been found to be reluctant to voice up because they are afraid of being perceived as questioning the leader's ability or challenging the leader's status, which will make the leader lose face and cause damage to interpersonal relations. In line with this, Xia et al. (2016) found that individuals with a weak concept of the principle of face are less likely to sense that their honest speaking would damage the face of and embarrass others, and Liang et al. (2019) found that employees' face concern mediates the negative relationship between supervisor-subordinate *guanxi* and employee voice.

Third, we also highlight a potential relationship between *renqing* and employee voice behaviour in China. Typically, *renqing* is often associated with the aforementioned *guanxi*. While *guanxi* denotes a system of interpersonal exchange and a system of emotional dependence, *renqing* refers

to a form of social capital that could be considered to balance such interpersonal exchanges of services and favours (Chen et al., 2013). When individuals use their relations or networks (i.e. *guanxi*) to ask a favour, they must repay this favour to restore the balance in relationships (i.e. return *renqing*). In organisational studies, Huo (2004) pointed out that *renqing* would make employees avoid conflicts and attach importance to superficial harmony, eventually hindering employees' prohibitive voice behaviour. Indeed, prohibitive voice behaviour is more challenging and likely to cause dissatisfaction of others, and improper expression is expected to bring the opposite result to the expectation. Therefore, the exchange of *renqing* among employees will discourage target employees to adopt prohibitive voice behaviour.

Collectivism

Chinese culture is characterised with a high level of collectivism, and people in collectivist cultures tend to put the collective goal first, act according to the collective rules and have relatively consistent behaviour (Chen et al., 2013). In particular, collectivists focus on maintaining relationships, making more situational attributions, avoiding publicity and remaining humble (Triandis, 2001). The effect of collectivism on employees' voice behaviour in an organisation is complex. On the one hand, as collectivist employees pay attention to collective interests, they tend to propose suggestions and ideas when the organisation faces developmental difficulties and urgently needs reform (Chen et al., 2017). In line with this, Chow et al. (1999) found that middle managers in Taiwan Province of China tend to express views that may be potentially detrimental to themselves but beneficial to the organisation due to their collective sense of responsibility for organisational members. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2022) suggest that employees high on collectivism see themselves as a part of the organisation and share their fate and honour with the organisation. Thus, they are more willing to make suggestions for the organisation's well-being. On the other hand, considering collective interests and harmony, collectivists may also choose to keep silent or engage in voice behaviour that prevents change in order to maintain harmony. Such view

is consistent with Wei and Zhang's research (2010) which reveals that employees' attention to surface harmony makes them hold negative expectations of the result of voice behaviour, leading to their prohibitive voice behaviour.

Direction for Future Research

As we summarised so far, the voice literature has generated many theoretical and empirical studies investigating employee voice behaviours in China. Based on our aforementioned review, voice studies conducted in Chinese context has enriched the overall voice literature, and there are many questions and areas where we know more than we did several decades ago. However, given the unique characteristics of Chinese culture, we also suggest that several issues should be highlighted for future research to advance our understanding of the patterns of employee voice behaviour in China.

First and foremost, we expect that employee voice scholars may further clarify the conceptualisation and categories of voice behaviour in Chinese context. As we discussed earlier, voice behaviour had been conceptualised as a pro-social and extra-role behaviour which is proactive, change-oriented and improvement-oriented (e.g. Gorden, 1988; Van Dyne et al., 2003; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). With the advancement of voice literature, Liang et al. (2012) have specified more types of voice behaviours including defensive, acquiescent, promotive and prohibitive voice. More recently, based on data from China, Duan et al. (2021) suggest that voice behaviour can be conceptualised at different foci and emphasise employees' voice behaviours on issues that are relevant to their own interests (i.e. self-interested voice). The detailed categorisation of voice behaviour is obviously of help to understand employees' situation-specific psychology and motivation to speak up or not. Therefore, we encourage further research to be conducted to reveal more types of voice behaviours which are essential in Chinese context and can be potentially generalised to other cultural and social settings.

Second, based on our review, we have reconfirmed that context can play an important role in explaining employee voice behaviours.

Especially, national culture and related social structure/system can be indicators of context (Wilkinson et al., 2020). In this chapter, we have discussed the potential associations of Chinese cultural characteristics (i.e. power distance, *zhongyong* mindset, *guanxi*, *mianzi*/face, *renqing* and collectivism) and employee voice behaviour. However, more work needs to be done to clarify the roles of those cultural values in patterns of employee voice behaviour in China. For example, although scholars have highlighted power distance in employee voice research in China (e.g. Brockner et al., 2001; Guo et al., 2020; Song et al., 2019), it can be meaningful to clarify the value congruency between leaders and employees which may be a key proxy for employees' engagement in voice behaviour. Indeed, Li et al. (2020b) suggest that the more congruent between leaders and subordinates in power distance orientation, the stronger in perceived insider status of subordinates. Since employees are more likely to speak freely with insiders, their perceived insider status should directly determine whether they are willing to speak up and what types of voice they would be engaged into (Li et al., 2020a). Therefore, investigating power distance value congruency can provide a new perspective for scholars to understand employee voice.

Moreover, to increase our understanding of the patterns of employee voice behaviour in China, it is important to consider factors that are correlated with yet distinct from power distance. Typically, traditionality is such a concept, referring to an individual's cognitive attitudes and behaviours (being characterised with respecting authority, honouring relatives, and ancestors, keeping one's place, fatalism and male superiority) under the requirements of Chinese traditional culture (Yang et al., 1991). Both power distance and traditionality are rooted in the ethical code of Chinese society. They are essentially interlinked, and power distance tends to be the embodiment of the obeying authority aspect of traditionality in the organisational environment (Chen et al., 2013). However, neither the power distance nor traditionality is conducive to the occurrence of voice in organisations (Chen et al., 2013). Especially, due to its broad conceptualisation, traditionality often does not directly affect voice behaviour (Farh et al., 2007).

Nevertheless, traditionality has been suggested to act as a moderator with an unfavourable effect in voice research. For example, Zhou and

Long (2012) found that when the traditionality of employees is high, the positive influence of organisational psychological ownership on voice behaviour becomes weakened. In contrast, Wu and Liu (2014) discovered that employees high on traditionality are likely to be influenced by the value of forgiveness and are inclined to endure grievances to maintain organisational harmony and alleviate the negative impact of bullying behaviour on employees' prohibitive voice. Therefore, research investigating what role the traditionality can play in motivating or discouraging employee's voice behaviour in China remains an important area for future research. In addition, we also highlight that future research on employee voice in China could benefit from exploring the role of Chinese cultural value of face or known as *mianzi*. Although previous research has found that the desire to gain face and maintain the face of others had a significantly and positively predictive effect on employees' promotive voice behaviour (Chen et al., 2013), it is also possible to posit that maintaining one's own face has a negative effect on voice behaviour, because individuals may have a concern on and the fear of losing face, which predicts a negative correlation between *mianzi* and employees' voice behaviour. Therefore, we suggest that voice behaviour is indeed affected by face, but the conclusion has not been reached. In this sense, future research should examine both positive and negative roles played by *mianzi* in voice research in China and consider the possible mechanisms which may result in variations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, although employee voice literature has been developed for several decades and well established, the research on employee behaviour in China has its own patterns. By reviewing employee voice research under Chinese context, we highlight the importance of contextualising employee voice to the Chinese social structure/system and cultural values, including power distance, *zhongyong* mindset, *guanxi*, *mianzi*/face, *renqing* and collectivism. Future research, therefore, should make efforts to clarify the potential and essential roles played by those unique cultural

and social values in promoting or prohibiting employee voice behaviours in China. Further insight may be gained by combining more of those factors, which should be able to advance our understanding of the complex mechanisms and contingencies of employee voice patterns.

References

Botero, I. C., & Van Dyne, L. (2009). Employee voice behaviour: Interactive effects of LMX and power distance in the United States and Colombia. *Management Communication Quarterly, 23*(1), 84–104.

Brockner, J., Ackerman, G., Greenberg, J., Gelfand, M. J., Francesco, A. M., Chen, Z. X., Leung, K., Bierbrauer, G., Gomez, C., Kirkman, B. L., & Shapiro, D. (2001). Culture and procedural justice: The influence of power distance on reactions to voice. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 37*(4), 300–315.

Cai, X., & Geng, X. (2016). Self-protective implicit voice belief and employee silence: A research in the context of China. *Science of Science and Management of S. & T., 37*(10), 153–163.

Chen, Q., Fan, Y., Zhang, X., & Yu, W. (2017). Effects of leader information sharing and collectivism on employee voice behaviour. *Chinese Journal of Management, 14*(10), 1523–1531.

Chen, W., Duan, J., & Tian, X. (2013). Why do not employee voice: A Chinese culture perspective. *Advances in Psychological Science, 21*(5), 905–913.

Cheng, B. L. (2020). Research on the influence mechanism of personal reputation, perceived voice construction on voice behaviour: The moderating effect of perceived organizational change. *Forecasting, 39*(5), 68–74.

Cheng, J. W., Lu, K. M., Chang, Y. Y., & Johnstone, S. (2013). Voice behaviour and work engagement: The moderating role of supervisor-attributed motives. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources, 51*(1), 81–102.

Chow, C. W., Harrison, G. L., McKinnon, J. L., & Wu, A. (1999). Cultural influences on informal information sharing in Chinese and Anglo-American organizations: An exploratory study. *Accounting, Organizations and Society, 24*(7), 561–582.

Du, X., Yin, J., & Lai, S. (2017). Seniority, CEO tenure, and independent directors' dissenting behaviors. *China Industrial Economics, 12*, 151–169.

Duan, J. (2011). The research of employee voice in Chinese context: Construct, formation mechanism and effect. *Advances in Psychological Science, 19*(2), 185–192.

Duan, J., Chen, Z., & Yue, X. (2016). A meta-analysis of the relationship between demographic characteristics and employee voice behaviour. *Advances in Psychological Science, 24*(10), 1568–1582.

Duan, J., & Huang, C. Y. (2014). The mechanism of individual-focused transformational leadership on employee voice behaviour: A self-determination perspective. *Nankai Business Review, 17*(4), 98–109.

Duan, J., & Ling, B. (2011). A Chinese indigenous study of the construct of employee voice behavior and the influence of zhong yong on it. *Acta Psychologica Sinica, 43*(10), 1185–1197.

Duan, J., Xu, Y., Wang, X. T., Wu, C. H., & Wang, Y. (2021). Voice for oneself: Self-interested voice and its antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 94*(1), 1–28.

Fang, Z. (2015). Can organizational climate influence employee voice behaviour. *Business and Management Journal, 5*, 160–170.

Farh, J. L., Hackett, R. D., & Liang, J. (2007). Individual-level cultural values as moderators of perceived organizational support–employee outcome relationships in China: Comparing the effects of power distance and traditionality. *Academy of Management Journal, 50*(3), 715–729.

Gao, L., Janssen, O., & Shi, K. (2011). Leader trust and employee voice: The moderating role of empowering leader behaviours. *The Leadership Quarterly, 22*(4), 787–798.

Gorden, W. I. (1988). Range of employee voice. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal, 1*, 283–299.

Guo, Y., Zhu, Y., & Zhang, L. (2020). Inclusive leadership, leader identification and employee voice behaviour: The moderating role of power distance. *Current Psychology, 41*, 1–10.

Han, Y., & Liu, G. (2021). Why voice channels are stifled? Dimension and formation mechanism of leader voice rejection construct. *Human Resources Development of China, 38*(4), 111–124.

He, W., Han, Y., Hu, X. F., Liu, W., Yang, B. Y., & Chen, H. Z. (2020). From idea endorsement to idea implementation: A multilevel social network approach toward managerial voice implementation. *Human Relations, 73*(11), 1563–1582.

Hirschman, A. O. (1970). *Exit, voice, and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states*. Harvard University Press.

House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (2004). Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hsiung, H. H., & Tsai, W. C. (2017). The joint moderating effects of activated negative moods and group voice climate on the relationship between power distance orientation and employee voice behaviour. *Applied Psychology, 66*(3), 487–514.

Hu, E. H., Han, M. Y., Shan, H. M., Zhang, L., & Wei, Q. (2019). Does union practice improve employee voice? An analysis from the perspective of planned behaviour theory. *Foreign Economics & Management, 41*(5), 88–100.

Huang, X., Van de Vliert, E., & Van der Vegt, G. (2005). Breaking the silence culture: Stimulation of participation and employee opinion withholding cross-nationally. *Management and Organization Review, 1*(3), 459–482.

Hucker, C. O. (1985). *A dictionary of official imperial titles in China*. Redwood City, CA.

Huo, X. (2004). The Reproduction of Humanity, face, and Power. *Sociological Studies, 5*, 48–57

Kirkbride, P. S., Tang, S. F., & Westwood, R. I. (1991). Chinese conflict preferences and negotiating behaviour: Cultural and psychological influences. *Organization Studies, 12*(3), 365–386.

Kirkman, B. L., Chen, G., Farh, J. L., Chen, Z. X., & Lowe, K. B. (2009). Individual power distance orientation and follower reactions to transformational leaders: A cross-level, cross-cultural examination. *Academy of Management Journal, 52*(4), 744–764.

Kwon, B., & Farndale, E. (2020). Employee voice viewed through a cross-cultural lens. *Human Resource Management Review, 30*(1), 100653.

Law, K. S., Wong, C. S., Wang, D., & Wang, L. (2000). Effect of supervisor–subordinate Guanxi on supervisory decisions in China: An empirical investigation. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 11*(4), 751–765.

Li, A. N., Liao, H., Tangirala, S., & Firth, B. (2017a). The content of the message matters: The differential effects of promotive and prohibitive team voice on team productivity and safety performance gains. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 102*(8), 1259–1270.

Li, C. (2020). Children of the reform and opening-up: China's new generation and new era of development. *The Journal of Chinese Sociology, 7*(1), 1–22.

Li, S., Luo, J. L., & Liang, F. (2020a). Speaking your mind freely to insiders: The influencing path and boundary of ambidextrous leadership on employee voice. *Foreign Economics & Management, 42*(6), 99–110.

Li, S., Luo, J. L., & Liang, F. (2020b). The effect of leader-follower value congruence in power distance and perceived insider status on employee voice under the perspective of leader-follower gender combination. *Chinese Journal of Management, 17*(3), 365–373.

Li, Y., & Sun, J. M. (2015). Traditional Chinese leadership and employee voice behaviour: A cross-level examination. *The Leadership Quarterly, 26*(2), 172–189.

Li, Y. P., Zheng, X. Y., & Liu, Z. H. (2017b). The effect of perceived insider status on employee voice behaviour: A study from the perspective of conservation of resource theory. *Chinese Journal of Management, 14*(2), 196–204.

Liang, J., Farh, C. I., & C, & Farh J.L. (2012). Psychological antecedents of promotive and prohibitive voice: A two-wave examination. *Academy of Management Journal, 55*(1), 71–92.

Liang, J., & Tang, J. (2009). A multi-level study of employee voice: Evidence from a chain of retail stores in China. *Nankai Business Review, 12*(3), 125–134.

Liang, X., Yu, G., & Fu, B. (2019). How does Supervisor-subordinate Guanxi affect voice? Psychological safety and face concern as dual mediators. *Management Review, 31*(4), 128–137.

Liao, J. Q., Zhao, J., & Zhang, Y. J. (2010). The influence of power distance on leadership behaviour in China. *Chinese Journal of Management, 7*(7), 988–992.

Liu, S. M., & Liao, J. Q. (2015). Can authentic leadership really light employee prohibitive voice. *Management Review, 27*(4), 111–121.

Liu, W., Tangirala, S., Lam, W., Chen, Z., Jia, R. T., & Huang, X. (2015). How and when peers' positive mood influences employees' voice. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 100*(3), 976–989.

Liu, X., Zheng, X., Ni, D., & Harms, P. D. (2022). Employee voice and co-worker support: The roles of employee job demands and co-worker voice expectation. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour, 43*(7), 1171–1286.

Mao, C. G., Fan, J. B., & Liu, B. (2020). The three-way interaction effect of paternalistic leadership on employee voice behaviour. *Journal of Capital University of Economics and Business, 22*(3), 102–112.

Marchington, M., Rubery, J., & Cooke, F. L. (2005). Prospects for worker voice across organizational boundaries. In *Fragmenting Work: Blurring Organizational Boundaries and Disordering Hierarchies* (pp. 239–260). Oxford University Press.

Maynes, T. D., & Podsakoff, P. M. (2013). Speaking more broadly: An examination of the nature, antecedents, and consequences of an expanded set of employee voice behaviours. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 99*(1), 87–112.

Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behaviour, 1*(1), 173–197.

Qiu, G., & Long, L. (2014). The relationship between authoritarian leadership and subordinates' voice: A cross-level analysis. *Science Research Management, 35*(10), 86–93.

Song, J., Gu, J., Wu, J., & Xu, S. (2019). Differential promotive voice–prohibitive voice relationships with employee performance: Power distance orientation as a moderator. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management, 36*(4), 1053–1077.

Tan, X., & Liu, B. (2017). Servant leadership, psychological ownership, and voice behaviour in publix sectors: Moderating effect of power distance orientation. *Journal of Shanghai Jiaotong University (Philosophy and Social Sciences), 25*(5), 49–58.

Triandis, H. C. (2001). Individualism-collectivism and personality. *Journal of personality, 69*(6), 907–924.

Tsui, A. S., & Farh, J. L. L. (1997). Where Guanxi matters: Relational demography and Guanxi in the Chinese context. *Work and Occupations, 24*(1), 56–79.

Van Dyne, L., Ang, S., & Botero, I. (2003). Conceptualizing employee silence and employee voice as multidimensional constructs. *Journal of Management Studies, 40*, 1359–1392.

Van Dyne, L., & LePine, J. A. (1998). Helping and voice extra-role behaviours: Evidence of construct and predictive validity. *Academy of Management Journal, 41*(1), 108–119.

Wang, D., Gan, C., & Wu, C. (2016). LMX and employee voice: A moderated mediation model of psychological empowerment and role clarity. *Personnel Review, 45*(3), 605–615.

Wang, X., & Wang, P. (2017). The influences of Zhongyong Mindset and Perceived Organizational Support on Employee Voice Behavior. *Management and Administration,*(9), 50–53.

Wang, L., Huang, J., Chu, X., & Wang, X. (2010). A multilevel study on antecedents of manager voice in Chinese context. *Chinese Management Studies, 4*(3), 212–230

Wei, X., & Zhang, Z. (2010). Why is there a lack of prohibitive voice in organizations. *Journal of Management World,* (10), 99–109.

Wilkinson, A., Sun, J. M., & Mowbray, P. K. (2020). Employee voice in the Asia Pacific. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources, 58*(4), 471–484.

Wu, C. H., & Lin, Y. C. (2005). Development of a Zhong-Yong thinking style scale. *Indigenous Psychological Research in Chinese Societies, 24*, 247–300.

Wu, F., & Liu, Lu. (2014). Workplace bullying and voice behavior: Mechanisms of negative emotion and traditionality. *Human Resources Development of China,* (15), 56–61.

Wu, W., Tang, F., Dong, X., & Liu, C. L. (2015). Different identifications cause different types of voice: A role identity approach to the relations between organizational socialization and voice. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management, 32*(1), 251–287.

Xia, J., Xu, H., & Ke, T. (2016). Investigation of the Relationship Between the Principle of Face and Preventive Voice. *Leadership Science,*(14), 38–41.

Yang, G. S., Yu, A.B., & Ye, M. H. (1991). Individual traditionality and modernity of Chinese people: Concepts and measurements. In *Chinese psychology and behaviour* (Essays). Laurel Books Company.

Yang, M. M. H. (2002). The resilience of guanxi and its new deployments: A critique of some new guanxi scholarship. *The China Quarterly, 170*, 459–476.

Yang, Y., Jia, L., & Liu, D. (2017). The effect of perceived deep-level dissimilarities on employees' voice behaviour—The mechanism of perceived emergent states. *Business and Management Journal, 39*(4), 97–112.

Yang, Z., & Lin, S. (2012). A construct validity study of zhongyong conceptualization. *Sociological Studies, 27*, 167–186.

Yang, Z. F. (2009). A case of attempt to combine the Chinese traditional culture with the Social Science: The social psychological research of "Zhongyong". *Journal of Renmin University of China, 3*(3), 53–60.

Yao, J. (2020). *Speaking up as a mixed blessing: A within-individual examination of personal consequences of voice*. National University of Singapore.

Yao, N., Zhang, Y., & Zhou, F. (2019). Impact of self-sacrificial leadership on employee voice: A moderated mediation model. *Science Research Management, 40*(9), 221–230.

Yu, J., Jiang, S., & Zhao, S. (2015). A study on the relationship between conflict management mode and employee voice behaviour—From the perspective of psychological safety and power distance. *East China Economic Management, 29*(10), 168–174.

Zhan, X., & Su, X. (2019). Research on the impact of personal reputation on voice endorsement: The moderating effect of power distance. *Science of Science and Management of S. & T., 40*(8), 126–140.

Zhan, X. H., Yang, D. T., & Luan, Z. Z. (2016). The relationship between work values and employee voice behaviour: The moderating effect of perceived organizational support. *Chinese Journal of Management, 13*(9), 1330–1338.

Zhang, G., & Chen, S. (2021). Effect of peer work performance on the focal employee's voice taking: The role of trust and self-construal. *Psychological Reports, 124*(2), 771–791.

Zhang, G. L., Shi, W. T., & Liu, X. W. (2016). A review of researches on the voice taking and future prospects. *Human Resources Development of China, 19*, 29–37.

Zhang, J., Zhang, Y., Liu, C., & Li, F. (2022). Research on the mechanisms of climate for autonomy on employees' voice behaviour with distinct cultural values. *Chinese Journal of Management, 19*(1), 36–45.

Zhang, L. M., & Liang, J. (2021). Unpacking the influence of employee voice on team effectiveness—A micro-dynamic perspective. *Quarterly. Journal of Management, 6*(3), 42–60+183–184.

Zhang, Y., Huai, M. Y., & Xie, Y. H. (2015). Paternalistic leadership and employee voice in China: A dual process model. *The leadership quarterly, 26*(1), 25–36.

Zhang, Y., Zhang, J., Zhang, J., & Cui, L. (2017). Relationship Research between humble leadership and employees' prohibitive voice. *Management Review, 29*(5), 110–119.

Zhou, H. (2021). Why do supervisors prefer the voice behaviour of certain subordinates? the effects of guanxi, loyalty, competence, and trust. *Management Review, 33*(9), 187–197.

Zhou, J., & Liao, J. (2018). Study on the influencing mechanism of humble leader behaviours on employee job performance based on social information processing theory. *Chinese Journal of Management, 15*(12), 1789–1798.

Zhou, H., & Long, L. R. (2012). The influence of transformational leadership on voice behavior: Mediating effect of psychological ownership for the organization and moderating effect of traditionality. *Acta Psychologica Sinica, 44*(3), 388–399.

Zhou, Y., Huang, X., & Xie, W. J. (2020). Does perceived overqualification inspire employee voice? Based on the lens of fairness heuristic. *Management Review, 32*(12), 192–203.

Zhou, Z., Hu, L., Sun, C., Li, M., Guo, F., & Zhao, Q. (2019). The effect of Zhongyong thinking on remote association thinking: An EEG study. *Frontiers in Psychology, 10*, 145–153.

Zhu, Y., & Ouyang, C. (2019). Linking leader empowering behaviour and employee creativity: The influence of voice behaviour and power distance. *Industrial Engineering and Management, 24*(2), 116–122.

6

Employee voice in Jordan: Challenges and opportunities

Muntaser J. Melhem and Tamer K. Darwish

Introduction

Research on the operationalisation of employee voice and participation has largely recognised its value for organisations and individuals, including increased prosocial behaviours, loyalty (Burris, 2012), tolerance of difficult working environments (Bakker et al., 2014), increased job satisfaction (Morrison, 2014) and enhanced perceived fairness for employees (Folger, 1977). Employee voice is one of the least researched areas in international HRM (Kwon et al., 2016), and its scholarship has largely focused on voice practices in Western and developed contexts from which it originated (Soltani et al., 2018; Brewster et al., 2007). Western voice practices have been widely assumed to have a universal application

M. J. Melhem
University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan

T. K. Darwish (✉)
University of Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire, UK
e-mail: tdarwish@glos.ac.uk

irrespective of context. However, the growing body of knowledge regarding HRM practices in non-Western contexts has refuted the notion of the universalistic approach to practice diffusion and showed that the geographical locale of such contexts matters the most (see Alanezi et al. 2020; Singh et al., 2019; Wood, 2010). Research on the expression of voice has been largely overlooked in the Middle Eastern context and particularly in the country of Jordan. The emerging body of voice literature in the Middle Eastern region in general has shown that several factors such as religious work ethics (Hameed et al., 2020), workforce composition (Arain et al., 2022), and management and leadership styles (Elsetouhi et al., 2022; Mousa et al., 2021; Soltani et al., 2018) influence the operationalisation of voice. However, there are other factors such as religious values, socio-cultural norms and socio-economic environment that strongly challenge and influence voice expression and silence in the region.

The aforementioned factors are assumed to amplify the management's (as the recipient of voice) power over employees and encourage them to divest in formal voice-promoting methods and mechanisms. On the other hand, it is argued that such factors have an inhibiting and suppressive influence on the voice of low level and non-managerial employees resulting in an atmosphere of upward silence, particularly in non-Western contexts (Hameed et al., 2020; Soltani et al., 2018; Morrison, 2014). The work in this chapter examines the challenges that employees face throughout their attempts of voice expression in the Jordanian private sector. Jordan is an emerging economy located in the Middle East that mainly depends on human capital for development and growth (Alfayad & Arif, 2017). Moreover, unlike other countries in the region, particularly the Gulf states, Jordan is impoverished in valuable natural resources such as oil (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022; Alfayad & Arif, 2017). Crucially, the country remains to be considered a top exporter of human resources to neighbouring countries (Alfayad & Arif, 2017; Nusair et al., 2012). However, in Jordan, the potential of HRM has not yet been realised, and HRM research remains immature in the country and the surrounding region in general (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022). In this chapter, we first present a background of the key economic and cultural factors that are likely to influence the practice of voice in Jordan and the wider Middle Eastern context in general. Afterwards, we review the emerging body of

literature on HRM practice and employee voice in the region with a particular focus on Jordan. We then briefly discuss the research context and the data, present the relevant findings and end with a discussion and future research directions.

Background on Jordan

Jordan is an Arab country that is situated in the Middle East. Contrary to common misconceptions about the region, Jordan lacks abundant natural resources and oil reserves (Alfayad & Arif, 2017; Darwish et al., 2013). Although Jordan has faced many of the problems of emerging markets, including periodic debt crises, it remains rather more stable than many of its Middle Eastern neighbours (Lucas, 2012; Mohammad & Darwish, 2022). Despite having limited natural resources, the nation does have certain competitive advantages owing to its human resources. Notwithstanding the advantageous human resources, the performance of organisations in Jordan remains mediocre, partly due to the underdeveloped skills of the nation's workforce (Aladwan et al., 2014). Crucially, there is a wide gap between HRM theory and practice in the country (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022). The latter is the main reason why additional work is needed to further understand the potential impact of national context and local institutional arrangements on HRM practice and the operationalisation of voice in organisations. We next discuss the major factors that influence HRM practices and employee voice in organisations.

Socio-economic-wise, despite its small size and the challenges that the country is facing, the Jordanian economy is positive (CIA, 2018). The main industries that contribute to the growth of the country's economy are the service sector and travel and tourism. In addition, Jordan possesses a noticeable reserve of potash and phosphate which are primarily processed and exported (Ministry of Industry and Trade in Jordan, 2021). Notwithstanding the previous, there is a huge gap between national income and expenses, a constant budgetary deficit and customary increase in national debt (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022). To offset its deficit, Jordan relies heavily on foreign loans and grants (ibid.). In line with the

World Bank (2021), Jordan experiences slow growth in its GPD and certain structural difficulties that negatively affected the country's financial stability, making it difficult to offer the younger workforce with sufficient job opportunities. Significantly, Jordan experiences high unemployment rate, rising from 19.0 per cent in 2019 to 24.7 per cent by the end of 2020. Out of which, youth unemployment rates rose sharply within this period from 40.6 per cent in 2019 to 50.0 per cent in the last quarter of 2020 (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022). Voice researchers maintain that in high unemployment rate contexts, silence is a dominant choice among employees; they are incapable of easily switching between employers, and hence, they perceive upward voice expression as costly (Kaufman, 2015).

Although Jordan is a low-income country which resulted in different socio-economic environment than other countries in the region (e.g. Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates), Jordan shares the same culture, religion, language and social values with many other Arab countries in the region. Jordan views itself as an Arab country, and it recognises Islam as its official religion—with around 97 per cent of Muslim citizens in 2020 (CIA, 2022). The culture of the Arab countries is predominantly derived from religious teachings, political environment and their long history in the region (Ta'amneh et al., 2017). To this end, the culture of Jordan incorporates a significant part of the Arab origin, tribalism, centralisation, regional and religious customs and traditions, unevolved formal institutions and a heavy reliance on informal networks to get things done (Darwish et al., 2016).

The latter, widely known as *wasta*, comprises one of the powerful social norms that became interwoven with HRM practices (Haak-Saheem & Darwish, 2021; Harbi et al., 2017). *Wasta* is defined as "the use of power, relationships and networking to hire people for high position, resolve conflicts or obtain benefits" (Yahiaoui et al., 2021, p. 774). It embodies interpersonal and tribal relationships which are held in high regard in the country, and they predominantly substitute formal institutions (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022). To the best of our knowledge, there are no studies that explicitly examined the influence of *wasta* on employee voice. However, as *wasta* is the embodiment of interpersonal relationships, we argue that its influence could be conducive to upward voice.

Voice researchers posit that high-quality relationships, inter alia, promote the expression of upward voice; high-quality relationships dismantle psychological barriers to voice expression between employees and supervisors (Morrison, 2014).

Jordan culturally scores high on the collectivistic and power distance dimensions, the organisational climate is autocratic, and the management style is predominantly totalitarian as Jordanian managers expect employees to obey them (Sabri & Rayyan, 2014; Al-Faleh, 1987). Notably, there are well-established trade unions and a labour movement in Jordan; however, the underdeveloped formal institutions make it difficult for such unions to express their true voice (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022). The empirical evidence suggests that silence is more of a norm than the exception in high-power distance countries (see Soltani et al., 2018; Raub & Robert, 2013; Wood, 2010)

The Current State of HRM Practices in Jordan

Although different organisations would employ different set of HR practices, HRM in Jordan mainly focuses on four main activities (e.g. Mohammad et al., 2021; Darwish et al., 2013). First, the appropriate recruitment and selection of new employees is a crucial tactic for organisational success since having the right individuals on board can boost and maintain the organisation's effectiveness. The second activity is training and development that are needed for the continual development of employees' skills and knowledge for task accomplishment (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022). Third, performance appraisals, referring to the interim and annual evaluations of employees' performance, are indirectly linked to the overall performance of the organisation. The effective implementation of this activity makes what is required from employees to achieve and how clearer (Al-Zawahreh & Khasawneh, 2013). Organisations typically use performance appraisals to foster the productivity of employees and boost organisational effectiveness through employee goal setting and frequent performance feedback (Schleicher et al., 2018). Performance appraisal is arguably the most HRM activity that frequently operationalises employee voice since it involves meetings

and communications between subordinates and supervisors as well as grievance procedures. Finally, the development of rewards and incentive schemes for employees is a central component because it is targeted to motivate and sustain high performance levels from employees (Singh et al., 2013) and significantly contribute to better organisational outcomes (Darwish et al., 2016).

HRM research in the Middle East and Jordan has received very limited attention from scholars. Within this body of literature, the majority of HRM studies were conducted in Gulf countries (see Al Bastaki et al., 2020; Wood et al., 2020; Haak-Saheem & Festing, 2020; Afiouni et al., 2014) that are rich with natural resources, and much less research has targeted the remaining countries such as Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Jordan. The empirical studies have, however, highlighted the benefits of taking a more proactive approach to HRM in Jordan for promoting and sustaining future growth (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022; Aladwan et al., 2014). Since there is some sort of embeddedness of voice practices in HRM systems and policies (Soltani et al., 2018), it is crucial to understand the present state of HRM practices and employment relationships in Jordan to understand the potential of voice operationalisation in organisations.

As stated earlier, Jordan faces several economic and socio-cultural challenges that affect the development of human resources within the country. The HRM practices in Jordan are significantly influenced by the country's national cultural values which were shaped by government regulations and bureaucratic procedures (Darwish & Singh, 2013). Several studies have highlighted an emerging role for HRM as a strategic partner for organisations in Jordan, but its role is limited to administrative application and is somewhat overshadowed by persisting informal institutions. Darwish et al. (2016) maintain that the default norms in HRM practices in Jordan are underpinned by local values, affiliation to clans and informal community relationships. Consequently, this has generated some issues for organisations' workforce as their employees are often considered to be under-motivated and below proficient. Neither the public nor the private sectors demonstrate a clear application of

HRM in strategic decisions or developing HR practices for a company to follow (Darwish and Singh, 2013). Despite this, many organisations in Jordan have HR departments; however, their role is limited to administration; they deal with transitioning employees from recruitment to employment (Budhwar & Mellahi, 2016). To this end, HRM's potential in the country remains underutilised despite the existence of HRM teams and departments in Jordanian private and public sector organisations.

Studies have uncovered that recruitment in Jordan does not follow a methodical objective process for selecting potential employees. In Jordan, applying and securing a position are mainly done through informal connections, that is, *wasta*; consequently, qualified people find it difficult to secure jobs, and vacancies are mainly occupied by relatives and friends who hold less impressive qualifications (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022; Haak-Saheem & Darwish, 2021; Ali & Weir, 2020). The literature on training and development in Jordan is very limited, and it is not known whether organisations conduct training activities for employees. Few studies reflect that training and development programmes are traditionally offered within the service sector (Darwish et al., 2016; Abu-Doleh & Weir, 1997) and are perceived by employees as a leisure activity, time away from work, and thus, they are mainly offered to close family and friends (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022). The practice of performance appraisal in Jordan is also heavily influenced by informal connections (Al-Lawama et al., 2021; Abu-Doleh & Weir, 2007). Many Jordanian employees perceive performance appraisal as unfair in their organisations, and HR managers bemoan its ineffectiveness (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022); performance-related reviews are lacking, and organisations do not facilitate employees' fast growth and progress.

This handful of research insights show that local cultural norms, particularly those relating to *wasta* and informal relationships, contaminate HRM practices and hinder its effective diffusion. Therefore, it is plausible that the previously mentioned cultural norms and economic factors will similarly play a significant role in sabotaging the operationalisation of employee voice in organisations.

Employee Voice and Silence in Jordan and the Middle East: A Contradictory Framework

Employee voice is arguably the only mean by which employees share and express their constructive ideas and concerns about work-related issues (Van Dyne et al., 2003). Employee voice consists of two forms: collective and individual voice; the former is an indirect form of voice and is more of a synonym for workers' unions, work councils or committees in organisations. The latter, on the other hand, is more concerned with the day-to-day direct communication by employees in the form of oral or written expression of ideas, concerns and suggestions (Brewster et al., 2007). Much of employee voice research has been conducted within the employee relations field and focused on the collective representation of voice through workers' unions (Kwon et al., 2016). However, HRM practices involve an extensive number of daily communications where voice is central, since employee voice is concerned with favourable organisational outcomes such as low turnover, enhanced fairness perceptions and satisfaction, then it became regarded as a cornerstone in the HRM field (Kwon et al., 2016). In spite of its importance to HRM, voice is one of the least researched elements in the field. In this chapter, we focus on individual voice practices in the Jordanian private sector that involve the upward expression of voice in organisations (i.e. from employees to managers). We define voice as an intentional and proactive expression of opinions, concerns and suggestions with motives ranging from improving the organisation to criticising the situation (Morrison, 2014; Van Dyne et al., 2003; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998).

As highlighted by the definition, the content and motive of upward voice in organisations vary from simple suggestions and ideas targeted at work improvement to speaking up about critical and serious problems. The former is labelled in the employee voice literature as promotive voice, and the latter as prohibitive or problem-focused voice (Morrison, 2014). Liang et al. (2012) define promotive voice as "employees' expression of new ideas or suggestions for improving the overall functioning of their work unit or organization" (p. 74), whereas prohibitive voice is defined as

"employees' expressions of concern about work practices, incidents, or employee behaviour that are harmful to their organisations" (p. 75). Promotive voice is focused on the future, it suggests new ways of doing things. In contrast, prohibitive voice is both past and future-oriented since it brings out problems from the past that could potentially cause future harm to the organisation. To this extent, this chapter focuses on both promotive and prohibitive upward voice in organisations and employee silence.

There are certain cultural norms and Islamic teachings that could provide a platform for promotive and prohibitive voice in Jordan. The literature on voice suggests that a high-quality relationship between employees and managers breaks normative structural authority and allows employees to engage in voice expression, irrespective of the existence of voice practices in organisations (Morrison, 2014). As indicated earlier, *wasta*, referring to favourable treatment to family and close friends, equates to a high-quality relationship which could enable employees to express their promotive and prohibitive voice upward in Jordanian organisations. Moreover, since Jordan recognises Islam as its main religion, the expression of promotive and prohibitive voice is considered virtuous for many of its Muslim citizens. In the Islamic religion, one of the pillars for the ethics of voice expression is mobilising it to command right and forbid wrong (Cook, 2001), similar to voice aimed at improving work (promotive) or preventing harm (prohibitive). Cook (2001, p. 6) quoting from the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), "*The finest form of holy war is speaking out in the presence of an unjust ruler.*" Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) says, "*Let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day, either speak good or keep silent*" (Wilkinson, 2013, p. 432). To this end, exhibiting promotive and prohibitive voice by employees and the ability to receive it by leaders are also believed to be morally and religiously justified. Significantly, there are multiple values in the Jordanian cultural and religious background that provide avenues for voice expression in organisations.

However, as intuitive and important voice seems to be for employees, in reality, silence is more of a norm than the exception. Employees perceive that there is more to gain from withholding voice than express it (Soltani et al., 2018). Morrison (2014, p. 181) states that "a central theme in the literature is that voice is often perceived to be risky". This is

particularly true for non-Western contexts and emerging economies (Soltani et al., 2018; Wood, 2010), including Jordan. Employee silence in the Middle East and Jordan has been severely underrepresented in voice studies, and this is surprising since the intermingling of socio-economic, socio-cultural and religious factors is more likely to also contribute to upward silence in organisations as will be illustrated next. In this regard, we will reflect briefly on how silence could emanate from these factors.

As indicated earlier, there are several economic and cultural factors that would be perceived as risky for employees' voice, and they potentially play a significant role in promoting upward silence in organisations. First, socio-economic factors such as high unemployment rates and financial instability could play an important role in inhibiting employee voice in organisations. Several studies indicated that voice expression could lead to employees losing their jobs or receiving suboptimal performance evaluation outcomes (see Soltani et al., 2018; Kwon et al., 2016; Morrison, 2014). Thus, it could be argued that employees in Jordan are more inclined to remain silent to protect their employment and avoid becoming another statistic in the unemployment sea. Moreover, since Jordan scores high on the power distance cultural dimension and Jordanian managers request obedience, employees might fear exhibiting promotive and prohibitive voices. Prohibitive voice, in particular, and challenging the status quo might infer a rogue behaviour from employees and be met with hostile and aggressive reactions from supervisors.

Alternatively, employee silence could be understood as a form of respect to supervisors and managers. Several studies have reflected on the Jordanian management style as paternalistic. Sabri (2013) and Taleghani et al. (2010) noted that the high-power distance in the Jordanian culture contributes massively to the emergence of paternalistic management practices, leading to centralised authority and closed bureaucratic structure that reflect a culture of power inside the organisation (Sabri, 2015; Hofstede et al., 2010; Sabri & Rayyan, 2014; Sabri, 2004). Yahiaoui et al. (2021) further maintain that in paternalistic management style, the person providing feedback mainly occupies a senior position and must be respected for their expertise and knowledge. The forces in play here are majorly sourced from fused cultural and religious teachings. Significantly,

in relation to parents-children ethics, the Islamic religion professes utmost respect to parents in both Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) teachings and verses from the holy book of Qur'an (Bidin et al., 2019). Thus, likening superiors in organisations with parents will attach similar sense of responsibility that the Islamic religion requires from children to their parents. This treatment is captured in this verse from chapter Al Isra' [17:23] in Qur'an:

> *And your Lord has decreed that you should worship only Him and be good to parents. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], "uff," and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word.*

In order to understand voice practices and operationalisation in developing countries and emerging markets settings, such as Jordan, it is important to assess demographic, socio-cultural and socio-economic concerns. The issues of informal network, unemployment, high-power distance, confused cultural and religious values are prevalent, and the operationalisation of voice and silence in Jordanian organisations will, arguably, be contingent on these limitations.

What the Literature Holds for Voice and Silence in Jordan and the Middle East?

As indicated earlier, Jordan shares the same culture, religion, language and social values with many other Arab countries in the region and presumably non-Arab Islamic countries (e.g. Iran and Pakistan). Therefore, it is useful to review and reflect on the empirical voice studies that targeted the region. This review is not meant to be comprehensive, but it aims to provide an overview for the current situation of voice research in Jordan and the Middle East.

Interestingly, the very recent and emerging scholarship on employee voice in the Middle East has paid unequivocal focus to promotive and prohibitive voice. These studies are predominantly quantitative, and the majority were conducted in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. To start, Arain et al. (2022) examined the relationship between leader-member

exchange (LMX) social comparison and promotive and prohibitive voice in Saudi Arabian private and public organisations operating in multiple sectors by sampling local and migrant workers. The authors hypothesised supervisor-employee relationship and "employees' value" to their supervisors as strong predictors to promotive and prohibitive voice in organisations. Significantly, they found that high-quality LMX for employees, compared to their peers, to be positively related to promotive voice, whereas this relationship was weaker for prohibitive voice. Deeper analysis revealed that both promotive and prohibitive voice practices are only exhibited by local Saudis, and the voice of migrants is limited only to promotive voice.

Elbaz et al. (2022) examined employee voice in grievance styles in Egyptian hotels and travel agencies. The authors found that when employees are able to express their voice, they are more likely to handle grievances and resolve peer-to-peer conflicts in a peaceful and cooperative manner such as compromising and avoiding situations of tension. This in turn elevated employees' job satisfaction and lowered their intentions to leave. Within the same country, Elsetouhi et al. (2022) found a positive relationship between participative leadership and employee voice expression for travel agents' employees in Egypt which in turn had a positive impact on innovative behaviours such as communicating helpful ideas and solutions to their leaders (i.e. promotive voice).

Voice along with job satisfaction was found to mediate the relationship between ethical leadership and employee well-being among employees working in different universities in Pakistan (Ejaz et al., 2022). Karkoulian et al.'s (2021) study, which was conducted in Lebanon, showed that promotive voice mediates the relationship between high LMX and creative performance for banking employees. Ta'Amnha et al. (2021) examined the influence of COVID-19-related organisational support (e.g. access to personal protective equipment, frequent testing and support in case of infection) on employee voice for a sample of pharmacists in Jordan. They found that organisational support positively predicts employee voice as their study showed that with the existence of organisational support, employees are more likely to engage in positive behaviours and voice both their ideas and concerns. Hameed et al. (2020) investigated the influence of Islamic work ethics on constructive forms of promotive and

prohibitive voice among employees and supervisors from various companies in Saudi Arabia. Their study found an indirect relationship that is mediated by employees' moral identity and moderated by perceived voice opportunity. Strong moral identity was found to reduce fear of jeopardising employee-supervisor relationship and thus destruct barriers of voice engagement, and strong perceptions of voice opportunities moderated the engagement of prohibitive voice.

Alfayad and Arif (2017) conducted a more descriptive study that examined the relationship between employee voice and job satisfaction within the Jordanian private sector where voice was found to be positively related to job satisfaction. Finally, Raub and Robert (2013) surveyed frontline employees in a multinational hotel chain in the Middle East (Egypt and United Arab Emirates), Asia and Oceania and found a positive indirect relationship between empowering leadership and voice behaviour. However, the authors stress a weaker relationship in high-power distance countries. The earlier reviewed empirical studies mainly reflect on the existence of voice, albeit some do indirectly, in Jordanian and Middle Eastern organisations. Although they indicate the existence of voice in organisations, the nature of these empirical results does not paint an understandable picture on the operationalisation of voice in these organisations. Only few of these empirical studies differentiate between promotive and prohibitive voices in their empirical analysis and theorising (e.g. Arain et al., 2022; Hameed et al., 2020). The remaining seem only to focus on promotive voice or overlook the distinction between them. The findings of these studies posit that there is a very limited platform for the engagement in prohibitive voice in organisations. Crucially, most of these studies examined voice as a mediator or a moderator variable that explains the relationship between some sort of leadership behaviour (e.g. empowering leadership, ethical leadership, participative leadership and leader-member exchanges) on employees' and organisational outcomes.

As for employee silence, the empirical studies followed a similar path with reversed variables and constructs; for instance, Bani-Melhem et al. (2021) found a negative relationship between empowerment and employee silence among a sample or United Arab Emirates frontline employees working in hotels. Mousa et al. (2021) found a positive

relationship between narcissistic leadership and physician silence. Alternatively, Soltani et al. (2018) examined the operationalisation of vulnerable workers' voice in the Iranian construction industry among a sample of managers and construction workers. Their study is among the few, if not the only one, that enriched the literature with inductive empirical insights. Notably, their findings demonstrated that an atmosphere of silence was prevalent. Having an authoritative, command and control managerial style aided the management to be more focused on obtaining results from employees than investing in voice-promoting mechanisms. Moreover, workers preferred to remain silent of fear of losing their jobs, and therefore, they did not engage in either promotive or prohibitive voice expressions. Table 6.1 presents a summary of empirical work on voice in the Middle East.

Context and Data

Considering the lack of previous empirical research on employee voice in the context of Jordan, we present a sample of qualitative findings which were conducted in medium-sized companies operating in the Jordanian private sector. The data were collected via semi-structured interviews from 20 non-managerial employees from the younger workforce (ages between 24 and 30) with a focus on their interactions with supervisors during the performance appraisal process (PA hereafter). The names of the companies were omitted, and participants names were changed to protect their anonymity. We used thematic analysis to analyse the data and followed the phases that Marshall and Rossman (2014) outlined, including organising the data on an Nvivo 12 database, coding, categorising, generating themes, interpreting and seeking an alternative perspective.

Findings

In this section, we highlight the main challenges that the sample employees face.

Table 6.1 Presents asummary of empirical work on voice in the Middle East

Year	Authored by	Country	Sample	Research settings	Study aim	Voice/silence measure
1 2013	Raub and Robert	Middle East, Asia, and Oceania	640 frontline employees and supervisors	Large multinational hotel chain—16 properties	To examine the influence of empowering leadership on organisational commitment and voice behaviour; mediated by psychological empowerment	Dyne and LePine's (1998), Bettencourt et al.'s (2001), Bettencourt et al.'s (2005)
2 2017	Alfayad and Arif	Jordan	300 non-managerial employees	Large private company	To examine the relationship between employee voice and job satisfaction	Van Dyne and LePine (1998)
3 2018	Soltani et al.	Iran	Interviews with 30 managers and 62 employees	Construction, building material and product manufacturing companies	To examine the extent and nature of precarious workers voice	–

(*continued*)

Table 6.1 (continued)

	Year	Authored by	Country	Sample	Research settings	Study aim	Voice/silence measure
4	2020	Hameed et al.	Saudi Arabia	217 employee-supervisor dyads, including expatriates	Public and private domestic and multinational companies	To examine the relationship between Islamic work ethics and employee promotive and prohibitive voice, mediated by moral identity and moderated by perceived voice opportunity	Liang et al. (2012)
5	2021	Bani-Melhem et al.	United Arab Emirates	285 frontline employees	Five-star hotels	To examine the effects of empowerment, job satisfaction and perceived organisational support on employee silence	Tangirala and Ramanujam (2008), (Xu et al., 2015).
6	2021	Mousa et al.	Egypt	229 physicians	Public hospitals in Egypt	To examine the effect of narcissistic leadership on organisational cynicism, mediated by employee silence	Jain (2015)

	Year	Authors	Country	Sample	Sector	Objective	Reference
7	2021	Ta'Amnha et al.	Jordan	248 community pharmacists	Several pharmacy chains	To examine the relationship between organisational support and employee voice, mediated by job satisfaction and job burnout	Van Dyne and LePine (1998)
8	2021	Karkoulian et al.	Lebanon	301 full-time employees	Banking sector	To examine the relationship between leader-member exchange and creative performance, mediated by voice	Liang et al. (2012)
9	2022	Arain et al.	Saudi Arabia	341 employee-supervisor dyads, including migrant workers	Private and public telecommunication, oil and gas, manufacturing, tourism, and hospitality companies	To examine the relationship between leader-member exchange social comparison on employee promotive and prohibitive voice, mediated by supervisor-based self-esteem and moderated by local-migrant workers.	Liang et al. (2012)

Table 6.1 (continued)

	Year	Authored by	Country	Sample	Research settings	Study aim	Voice/silence measure
10	2022	Elbaz et al.	Egypt	367 frontline employees	Medium-sized hotels and travel agencies	To examine the relationship of voice on grievance handling style and their influence on leave intentions	Elsetouhi et al. (2018) and Van Dyne and Le Pine (1998)
11	2022	Elsetouhi et al.	Egypt	547 frontline employees	Two travel agencies	To examine the influence of participative leadership and employee voice on employee innovative behaviours, moderated by job autonomy	Van Dyne and LepPine (1998)
12	2022	Ejaz et al.	Pakistan	254 employees	Multiple universities	To examine the impact of ethical leadership on employee well-being, mediated by employee voice and job satisfaction	Van Dyne and LepPine (1998)

Socio-cultural Challenges to Voice Suppression and Expression

Although PA in the companies follows the best-practice approach through which voice is at its core, silence was a general theme in our inductive analysis. There was a general agreement among respondents that voice expression and participation in the PA process were discouraged by managers and could lead to severe negative repercussions. Therefore, in general, employees preferred to remain silent even if they received a wrongful treatment.

> *Managers here like to be respected, arguing with the manager will not get you anywhere, on the contrary, it will create more problems for you.* (Saleem, junior level employee)

The Jordanian culture pronounces that respect to hierarchical relationships and loyalty to managers are perceived highly. Speaking up is perceived as challenging to this status quo as employees become labelled negatively as "disrespectful", "bigmouth", and "troublemaker". In the main, any attempt to voice concerns or challenge managerial decisions for the PA would directly damage the employee's image and reputation in the company, and significantly, negative reputation spreads faster than positive one as expressed by Mohammad, a senior-level employee, "*the manager's will digest any attempt to speak up, even if you have the right to, as talking back to them, they do not take that lightly, they will sabotage your reputation and everyone in the company will know before you do*". Significantly as the quote shows, such measure is done, discretely, behind employee's back. Therefore, employees will not be able to take any corrective measure as the damage has taken its course.

Another challenge our inductive analysis uncovered was managerial unpredictable responses. Employees perceived Jordanian managers as moody and emotionally dissonant. This is crucial for speaking up because employees explained that an essential part of calculating the cost-benefit of voice expression is the ability to anticipate managerial responses. In general, our respondents indicated that they are constantly surveying

their manager's mood, but in the majority of cases, managers do not show their emotions which makes it difficult to anticipate their responses. However, even when managers are in a good mood, the chances of being heard are slim as captured in the illustrative quote by Marwan, a senior-level employee, who said:

> *My manager was laughing with another manager and, to seize this opportunity, I went to speak to him about a work-related issue…suddenly, his face and tone changed, and he became more serious…he didn't even allow me to finish and started giving me orders on how to approach the issue. It was unfruitful.*

Finally, employees who speak up to improve work-related process and outcomes during performance feedback are perceived as threatening and disdaining the manager's way of doing things. They are met with highly defensive and aggressive responses.

> *There were two or three times where I suggested some modifications to a particular area in work and I received this exact response from my manager, 'do you think you know more than me*?

The inductive analysis shows that employees do not just face sociocultural challenges that force them to remain silent but also challenges that bound what they are able to majorly express. Employees' voice expression is mainly limited to the widely accepted value of social hypocrisy in Jordan. Social hypocrisy is a form of expression that mainly relies on inflating the manager's ego, and it is majorly dishonest, fabricated and targeted to exaggerate the value of the managers. As Kareem, a senior employee, put it:

> *Managers love to hear compliments about themselves, they like to hear things about themselves even if you do not believe they are true. Therefore, I frequently encounter the manager and I start complementing him, for example, about how he played soccer yesterday or about his newly purchased phone. I do not like this, but this is how things are here.*

Employees believed that this might be the only way to express work-related issues and concerns indirectly to managers. For instance, some respondents explained that they can gain the manager's trust by being socially hypocrite, and therefore, they find it less difficult to speak up about some issues they encounter while they are requesting performance feedback or when they are setting their annual objectives. Few respondents went the extent that such behaviours significantly enhance their chances of gaining favourable PA outcomes.

> *I can gain the manager's trust through socially hypocrite behaviours and will also be on his radar. This increases my chances of having a good evaluation.* (Samer, Junior level employee)

Socio-economic Challenges to Voice Expression

The inductive analysis from the interviews further revealed some socio-economic factors that contribute to low instrumentality of voice expression. Job security and unemployment in the country played a significant role in preventing employees to speak up about their issues and concerns. The respondents highly perceived that speaking up singles an employee from the group and could lead to forced dismissal from work. Saeed, a senior-level employee, observed: "*speaking up will make managers dislike me and the environment will become hostile, it is difficult to find work in this country.*" Marwan further noted: "*you need to compromise and prioritise things. I am married, and I have many responsibilities, it is better to keep my mouth shut.*"

Finally, few respondents highlighted the low compensation they receive as a factor that motivates them to remain silent, particularly, among employees in junior levels. Some of these employees indicated that voicing work-related issues and concerns is futile in comparison to the compensation they receive mainly because they are not compensated fairly in relation to the effort they provide. Therefore, they do not find it feasible to speak up.

Listen, junior positions, not just in our company but in the whole country, do not pay well. I do not expect anything from this company at the moment except gaining experience. (Mohammad, junior level employee).

During the performance feedback meetings, I just listen and avoid talking as much as I can. It is not worth it to speak up when I encounter an issue during work or ask how to do things properly, I do not actually care whether work is done or not. The compensation we receive does not quite cover our living expenses, we actually pay from our own pocket further to commute to and from work. (Malek, junior level employee).

Discussion and Future Direction

Despite the increasing significance of understanding voice in organisations, there is a dearth of the current literature and an immature understanding and analysis in relation to the Jordanian context and the Middle Eastern region in general. Thus far, some studies brought to the fore factors that influence the (dis)engagement of promotive and prohibitive voice in Middle Eastern organisations as well as concentrating on voice as a mediator or a moderator to multiple organisational and employee outcomes as discussed previously in the literature review. Mohammad and Darwish (2022) posit that, more recently, Jordan has experienced significant positive changes that altered organisational mindsets and HRM practices in the country which arguably could enhance the expression of voice in organisations. In this light, additional research is essential to further explore and understand the state of voice practices in the country. In this section, we reflect on some of the key challenges and future avenues for research that may be beneficial to voice researchers and practitioners who are interested in the region.

First of all, the findings that were uncovered in this study mainly reflect on a dominant atmosphere of upward silence in the targeted sample from the Jordanian private sector. Our findings, compactly, demonstrate several multiple cultural and socio-economic factors that contribute to low instrumentality and vulnerability of engaging in promotive voice, let alone prohibitive one. Notably, our findings reflect more complex and

distal antecedents to silence that were primarily overlooked in studies that examined voice in Jordan and the Middle Eastern region in general. Despite the very recent growing empirical evidence of promotive and prohibitive voice in Jordan and the wider region, the practice has been largely decontextualised in the majority of the studies. These studies have mainly reflected on proximal variables to voice engagement such as a variety of leadership styles and leader-member exchanges without taking into consideration the influence of the broader context (e.g. Arain et al., 2022; Elsetouhi et al., 2022; Ejaz et al., 2022; Karkoulian et al., 2021; Mousa et al., 2021; Soltani et al., 2018; Raub & Robert 2013). Notably, authoritative and paternalistic management practices, which are more representative and an overpowering trait of the managerial style in non-Western regions and the Middle East (Darwish et al., 2020; Wood, 2010), were missed in these studies. This is unfortunate as it remains unclear whether voice exists in these organisations or not, or whether these findings are reflective of the realities of voice practices on the ground. In particular, as highlighted in our brief findings and in Soltani et al.'s (2018) study, high-power distance between employees and supervisors played a crucial role in the promotion of silence, rather than voice, among the sample employees. In fact, silence is highly underrepresented in current studies as we illustrated in the literature review despite being an overwhelming characteristic in the voice literature (Morrison, 2014). Future studies should concentrate more on silence, as assumed to be more of a norm in the region.

In addition, extant voice studies in Jordan and the Middle Eastern context were quick to convoy Western scholars' recommendations of voice studies in non-Western contexts, and they predominantly operationalised Western voice models and mechanisms in their investigations. Particularly, the empirical studies we reviewed have mostly relied on Van Dyne and LePine (1998) or Liang et al.'s (2012) quantitative voice measures. However, in non-Western contexts, such as Jordan, Western voice forms and mechanisms are insufficient to cast the same outcomes as those in developed nations; thus, a new approach to voice practices may emerge in the Jordanian and Middle Eastern settings, where there is more flexible, less structured and fluid institutional configurations (Darwish et al., 2022; Wood, 2010). To this end, future work could take into

consideration the broader economic and cultural factors of the Jordanian context and uncover different nuances of non-Western voice practices for the voice literature. Crucially, we need to disregard Western preconceptions about the universal application of voice practices and incorporate more indictive studies to provide a more contextualised theorisation to voice in the region. This would help voice theorists as well as practitioners to better understand voice in the region and make the required modifications to create effective voice mechanisms and practices that are tailored to the local cultural and institutional arrangements.

Moreover, as noted earlier, it appears that the intermingling religious and cultural values could be both challenging and facilitating to voice practices in the region. However, the influence of local cultural norms and religious values was hardly addressed in extant studies. At the individual level, there could be a confusion to which frame of reference employees invoke to prefer voice over silence and vice versa. HRM studies in general have mainly focused on the cultural ways of doing things such as the prevalent authoritative managerial style (Wood, 2010). On the other hand, very few studies, conceptual in nature, have reflected on the reverse diffusion of Islamic values in HRM practices (see Haak-Saheem et al., 2017; Branine & Pollard, 2010). Notably, since the dominant religion in Jordan and the Middle East is Islam, then there will be an unequivocal influence of the religion on actors' actions from the reverse diffusion of religious values into HRM (Branine & Pollard, 2010) including how and when they express their voices. There are several values in Islam, as a frame of reference, that equip employees with a religious morality of promotive and prohibitive voice expression in organisations (see Hameed et al., 2020), and it would be interesting to understand voice engagement from this vantage point.

At the same time, these religious values might be complementary or contradictory with local cultural values (e.g. authoritative management style) or bounded by unfavourable socio-economic factors such as high levels of unemployment or low compensation schemes (Kaufman, 2015). This was briefly demonstrated in our findings as, for example, there was evidence of voice expression among the sample, but it was mainly limited within the scope of social hypocrisy. Whereas true voice was suppressed for reasons related to fear, high psychological effort from calculating

upward voice instrumentality and safety, and those relating to socio-economic factors such as unemployment and low compensation schemes. Future studies could unpack this relationship between the complementary and contradictory hybrid of culture and religion on voice arrangements and mechanisms in Jordan and the Middle Eastern region in general.

It is also important to further explore the concept of *wasta*, or informal networks, on the engagement of promotive and prohibitive voice between supervisors and employees. Again, *wasta* entails an informal exchange among supervisors and subordinates that is highly prevalent in Jordan and the Middle Eastern region (see Haak-Saheem & Darwish, 2021; Harbi et al., 2017). Such informal relationships could be equated to a high-quality leader-member exchanges which could promote upward voice in organisations (Morrison, 2014). Moreover, whether *wasta* could promote voice for some employees and inhibit it for others who are not well connected informally, is equally interesting and important to understand. It is important to examine voice under these challenging cultural, religious and economic factors in order to have a holistic understanding of the complexities and realties of voice in Jordan and the wider Middle Eastern region more generally.

Conclusion

The theoretical and empirical work in this chapter attempts to enhance our understanding of the socio-economic, cultural and religious factors that facilitate or pose obstacles to the manifestation of upward voice in Jordan and the wider Middle Eastern region in general. This chapter stresses the value of paying greater attention to the distal context in order to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that shape voice practices in the region. In general, voice practices are indeed influenced by Western values and approaches, but they are also sensitive to the unique cultural, socio-economic and institutional arrangements of the Jordanian context. While theoretical insights cast cultural and economic values as inhibitors to voice in the region, and empirical findings reflect indirect evidence of voice, we highlighted a different shade for these

factors that could simultaneously be both challenging and facilitating to the expression of upward voice. Overall, notwithstanding the reckless and recent emerging developments for voice in the region and their significance, existing literature focusing on Jordan and the wider region is yet very limited and lacks comprehensive understanding and analysis. Closer examination is needed to further explore and understand the state of voice practices in the region and the potential influence of its unique cultural and institutional arrangements on both promotive and prohibitive voices.

References

Abu-Doleh, J., & Weir, D. (1997). Management training and development needs analysis practices in the Jordanian private sector. *Middle East Business Review, 2*(1), 80–87.

Abu-Doleh, J., & Weir, D. (2007). Dimensions of performance appraisal systems in Jordanian private and public organizations. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 18*(1), 75–84.

Afiouni, F., Ruël, H., & Schuler, R. (2014). HRM in the Middle East: Toward a greater understanding. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 25*(2), 133–143.

Al Bastaki, S., Haak-Saheem, W., & Darwish, T. K. (2020). Perceived training opportunities and knowledge sharing: The case of the United Arab Emirates. *International Journal of Manpower, 42*(1), 113–130.

Aladwan, K., Bhanugopan, R., & Fish, A. (2014). Managing human resources in Jordanian organizations: Challenges and prospects. *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management, 7*(1), 126–138.

Alanezi, A., Darwish, T. K., Singh, S., & Miroux, A. (2020). Substituting expats with locals: TNCs and the indigenization policies of Saudi Arabia. *Transnational Corporations, 27*(1), 63–86.

Al-Faleh, M. (1987). Cultural influences on Arab management development: A case study of Jordan. *Journal of Management Development, 6*(3), 19–33.

Alfayad, Z., & Arif, L. S. M. (2017). Employee voice and job satisfaction: An application of Herzberg two-factor theory. *International Review of Management and Marketing, 7*(1), 150–156.

Al-Lawama, H. I., Omar, K., Saadon, M. S. I., & Aburumman, O. J. (2021). The relationship between strategic human resource management practices and organizational performance by mediating role of employee behavior in Jordanian telecommunication companies. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry, 12*(3), 2892–2902.

Al-Zawahreh, A., & Khasawneh, S. (2013). An analysis of the performance appraisal system in the Jordanian financial sector: An international perspective. *African Journal of Business Management, 7*(16), 1501–1506.

Arain, G. A., Bhatti, Z. A., Crawshaw, J. R., Ali, I., & Papa, A. (2022). Does LMX always promote employee voice? A dark side of migrant working in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Manpower, 43*(1), 148–167.

Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Sanz-Vergel, A. I. (2014). Burnout and work engagement: The JD–R approach. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behaviour, 1*(1), 389–411.

Bani-Melhem, S., Zeffane, R., Abukhait, R., & Shamsudin, F. M. (2021). Empowerment as a pivotal deterrent to employee silence: Evidence from the UAE hotel sector. *Human Performance, 34*(2), 107–125.

Bettencourt, L. A., Brown, S. W., & MacKenzie, S. B. (2005). Customer-oriented boundary-spanning behaviours: Test of a social exchange model of antecedents. *Journal of Retailing, 81*(2), 141–157.

Bettencourt, L. A., Gwinner, K. P., & Meuter, M. L. (2001). A comparison of attitude, personality, and knowledge predictors of service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviours. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(1), 29–41.

Bidin, A., Harun, N., Salleh, K., & Hamid, N. (2019). Prevention of elder abuse in domestic setting: Islamic approach. *International Journal, 4*(15), 91–100.

Branine, M., & Pollard, D. (2010). Human resource management with Islamic management principles: A dialectic for a reverse diffusion in management. *Personnel Review, 39*(6), 712–727.

Brewster, C., Croucher, R., Wood, G., & Brookes, M. (2007). Collective and individual voice: Convergence in Europe? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 18*(7), 1246–1262.

Budhwar, P. S., & Mellahi, K. (Eds.). (2016). *Handbook of human resource management in the Middle East*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Burris, E. R. (2012). The risks and rewards of speaking up: Managerial responses to employee voice. *Academy of Management Journal, 55*(4), 851–875.

Central Intelligence Agency. (2018). *The World Factbook*. [online]. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html.

Central Intelligence Agency. (2022). *The World Factbook*. [online]. https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/jordan/.

Cook, M. (2001). *Commanding right and forbidding wrong in Islamic thought*. Cambridge University Press.

Darwish, T., Al Waqfi, M., Alanezi, A., Haak-Saheem, A., & Brewster, C. (2022). Bringing it all back home: The HRM role in workforce localisation in MNEs in Saudi Arabia. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2022.2148551.

Darwish, T. K., & Singh, S. (2013). Does strategic human resource involvement and devolvement enhance organisational performance? evidence from Jordan. *International Journal of Manpower, 34*(6), 674–692.

Darwish, T. K., Singh, S., & Mohamed, A. F. (2013). The role of strategic HR practices in organisational effectiveness: An empirical investigation in the country of Jordan. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 24*(17), 3343–3362.

Darwish, T. K., Singh, S., & Wood, G. (2016). The impact of human resource practices on actual and perceived organizational performance in a Middle Eastern emerging market. *Human Resource Management, 55*(2), 261–281.

Darwish, T. K., Wood, G., Singh, S., & Singh, R. (2020). Human resource management in India: Performance and complementarity. *European Management Review, 17*(2), 373–389.

Dyne, L. V., Ang, S., & Botero, I. C. (2003). Conceptualizing employee silence and employee voice as multidimensional constructs. *Journal of Management Studies, 40*(6), 1359–1392.

Ejaz, T., Anjum, Z. U. Z., Rasheed, M., Waqas, M., & Hameed, A. A. (2022). Impact of ethical leadership on employee well-being: The mediating role of job satisfaction and employee voice. *Middle East Journal of Management, 9*(3), 310–331.

Elbaz, A. M., Salem, I. E., Onjewu, A., & Shaaban, M. N. (2022). Hearing employee voice and handling grievance: Views from frontline hotel and travel agency employees. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 107*, 11.

Elsetouhi, A. M., Hammad, A. A., Nagm, A. A., & Elbaz, A. M. (2018). Perceived leader behavioral integrity and employee voice in SMEs travel agents: The mediating role of empowering leader behaviours. *Tourism Management, 65*, 100–115.

Elsetouhi, A. M., Mohamed Elbaz, A., & Soliman, M. (2022). Participative leadership and its impact on employee innovative behaviour through employee voice in tourism SMEs: The moderating role of job autonomy. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*. https://doi.org/10.1177/14673584221119371

Folger, R. (1977). Distributive and procedural justice: Combined impact of voice and improvement on experienced inequity. *Journal of Personality and Social psychology, 35*(2), 108.

Haak-Saheem, W., & Darwish, T. K. (2021). Human resource management in the middle east. In E. Parry, M. J. Morley, & C. Brewster (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of contextual approaches to human resource management* (1st ed., pp. 327–344). Oxford University Press.

Haak-Saheem, W., Darwish, T. K., & Al-Nasser, A. D. (2017). HRM and knowledge-transfer: A micro analysis in a Middle Eastern emerging market. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28*(19), 2762–2791.

Haak-Saheem, W., & Festing, M. (2020). Human resource management–a national business system perspective. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 31*(14), 1863–1890.

Hameed, I., Bhatti, Z. A., Khan, M. A., & Syed, S. (2020). How and when Islamic work ethic (IWE) leads to employee promotive and prohibitive voice? The interplay of employee moral identity and perceived voice opportunity. *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management, 13*(4), 593–612.

Harbi, S. A., Thursfield, D., & Bright, D. (2017). Culture, *Wasta* and perceptions of performance appraisal in Saudi Arabia. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28*(19), 2792–2810.

Hofstede, G., & Minkov, M. (2010). Long-versus short-term orientation: new perspectives. *Asia Pacific business review, 16*(4), 493–504

Jain, A. K. (2015). An interpersonal perspective to study silence in Indian organizations: Investigation of dimensionality and development of measures. *Personnel Review, 44*(6), 1010–1036.

Karkoulian, S., Kertechian, K. S., Balozian, P., & Nahed, M. B. (2021). Employee voice as a mediator between leader-member exchange and creative performance: Empirical evidence from the Middle East. *International Journal of Process Management and Benchmarking, 1*, 1–18.

Kaufman, B. E. (2015). Theorising determinants of employee voice: An integrative model across disciplines and levels of analysis. *Human Resource Management Journal, 25*(1), 19–40.

Kwon, B., Farndale, E., & Park, J. G. (2016). Employee voice and work engagement: Macro, meso, and micro-level drivers of convergence? *Human Resource Management Review, 26*(4), 327–337.

Liang, J., Farh, C. I., & Farh, J. (2012). Psychological antecedents of promotive and prohibitive voice: A two-wave examination. *Academy of Management journal, 55*(1), 71–92.

Lucas, R. E. (2012). *Institutions and the politics of survival in Jordan: Domestic responses to external challenges, 1988–2001*. SUNY Press.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2014). *Designing qualitative research* (6th ed.). Sage.

Minister of Industry and Trade. (2021). *General Information*. [online]. http://www.mit.gov.jo.

Mohammad, T., & Darwish, T. K. (2022). Human resource management in Jordan: Challenges and future prospects. In T. A. Adisa & C. Mordi (Eds.), *HRM in the global south* (pp. 155–187). Springer.

Mohammad, T., Darwish, T. K., Singh, S., & Khassawneh, O. (2021). Human resource management and organisational performance: The mediating role of social exchange. *European Management Review, 18*(1), 125–136.

Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behaviour, 1*(1), 173–197.

Mousa, M., Abdelgaffar, H. A., Aboramadan, M., & Chaouali, W. (2021). Narcissistic leadership, employee silence, and organizational cynicism: A study of physicians in Egyptian public hospitals. *International Journal of Public Administration, 44*(15), 1309–1318.

Nusair, N., Ababneh, R., & Bae, Y. K. (2012). The impact of transformational leadership style on innovation as perceived by public employees in Jordan. *International Journal of Commerce and Management, 22*(3), 182–201.

Raub, S., & Robert, C. (2013). Empowerment, organizational commitment, and voice behaviour in the hospitality industry: Evidence from a multinational sample. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, 54*(2), 136–148.

Sabri, H. (2015). Designing the Structure in similar Cultures: A comparative study between Japan and Jordan. *International Journal of Business and Management, III, 4*, 122–142.

Sabri, H., & Rayyan, M. (2014). Managing human capital in Arab countries' the leadership and cultural challenges. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management, 2*(12), 1–9.

Sabri, H. A. (2013). Existing and preferred organizational cultures in Arab and American organizations. *International Journal of Business and Management, 1*(1), 64–84.

Sabri, H. M. (2004). Socio-cultural values and organizational culture. *Journal of Transnational Management Development, 9*(2–3), 123–145.

Schleicher, D. J., Baumann, H. M., Sullivan, D. W., Levy, P. E., Hargrove, D. C., & Barros-Rivera, B. A. (2018). Putting the system into performance management systems: A review and agenda for performance management research. *Journal of Management, 44*(6), 2209–2245.

Singh, S., Mohamed, A. F., & Darwish, T. (2013). A comparative study of performance appraisals, incentives and rewards practices in domestic and multinational enterprises in the country of Brunei Darussalam. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 24*(19), 3577–3598.

Singh, S., Wood, G., Darwish, T., Fleming, J., & Mohammed, A. F. (2019). Human resource management in multinational and domestic enterprises: A comparative institutional analysis in Southeast Asia. *Thunderbird International Business Review, 61*(2), 229–241.

Soltani, E., Liao, Y. Y., Gholami, A. K., & Iqbal, A. (2018). Saying it without words: A qualitative study of employee voice in the Iranian building sector. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 29*(5), 1015–1055.

Ta'Amnha, M., Athamneh, S., & Nsairat, B. A. (2017). The effect of administrators' work-related ethics on practicing human resource management functions at Jordanian universities. *International Journal of Public Sector Performance Management, 3*(3), 337–354.

Ta'Amnha, M., Samawi, G. A., Bwaliez, O. M., & Magableh, I. K. (2021). COVID-19 organizational support and employee voice: Insights of pharmaceutical stakeholders in Jordan. *Corporate Ownership Control, 18*(3), 367–378.

Taleghani, G., Salmani, D., & Taatian, A. (2010). Survey of leadership styles in different cultures. *Iranian Journal of Management Studies, 3*(3), 91–111.

Tangirala, S., & Ramanujam, R. (2008). Employee silence on critical work issues: The cross-level effects of procedural justice climate. *Personnel Psychology, 61*(1), 37–68.

Van Dyne, L., & LePine, J. A. (1998). Helping and voice extra-role behaviours: Evidence of construct and predictive validity. *Academy of Management journal, 41*(1), 108–119.

Weir, D. (2020). *Wasta*: Advancing a holistic model to bridge the micro-macro divide. *Management and Organization Review, 16*(3), 657–685.

Wilkinson, M. L. (2013). Introducing Islamic critical realism: A philosophy for under labouring contemporary Islam. *Journal of Critical Realism, 12*(4), 419–442.

Wood, G. (2010). Employee participation in developing and emerging countries. In A. Wilkinson, P. J. Gollan, M. Marchington, & D. Lewin (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of participation in organizations* (pp. 552–569). Oxford University Press, New.

Wood, G., Darwish, T. K., Alanezi, A. N., & Singh, S. (2020). Indigenization of staffing in MNEs: The case of Saudi Arabia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management, 37*(3), 879–898.

World Bank. (2021). *Jordan economic monitor*, Spring 2021: Uncertain and Long Trail Ahead. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/35849,   License: CC BY 3.0 IGO

Xu, A. J., Loi, R., & Lam, L. W. (2015). The bad boss takes it all: How abusive supervision and leader–member exchange interact to influence employee silence. *The Leadership Quarterly, 26*(5), 763–774.

Yahiaoui, D., Nakhle, S. F., & Farndale, E. (2021). Culture and performance appraisal in multinational enterprises: Implementing French headquarters' practices in Middle East and North Africa subsidiaries. *Human Resource Management, 60*(5), 771–785.

7

The Unheard Voices Behind the Closed Doors: An Investigation of Live-in Migrant Domestic Workers in Malaysia

Wee Chan Au

Introduction

Studies on employee voice have gained increasing research attention in the field of employment relations, human resource management and organizational behaviour, primarily focusing on white-collar workers (Holland et al., 2019). However, much less attention has been paid to vulnerable employees, such as migrant workers in blue-collar sectors. The purpose of this chapter is to add to the understanding of the unheard voices of migrant domestic workers in Malaysia from a developing world context. The essence of employees' voices is that it is important to recognize that workers have interests independent of their employers (Holland et al., 2019). Employees working in the formal sector and organizations, especially those with unions, would have their (collective) voices in the form of representation as the minimum (Freeman & Medoff, 1984).

W. C. Au (✉)
Newcastle University Business School, Newcastle University,
Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK
e-mail: wee-chan.au@newcastle.ac.uk

Furthermore, the concept of employee voices has been more widely studied in advanced market economies, specifically from Anglo-American and European perspectives (Holland et al., 2019). Establishing viewpoints from less advanced market economies and non-Western contexts is therefore vital in order to understand how to enhance and uncover inhibiting voices. The motivation for this chapter was to offer voices to a unique group of workers, that is, live-in domestic workers employed by private households in Malaysia.

In this chapter, we first cover the literature on the voices of vulnerable workers and provide some background information on migrant domestic workers in Malaysia. Through this, we can clearly articulate the motivation of this study. Next, we bring in the study's theoretical framework, the Capabilities Approach, to explain how and why it is essential to uncover migrant domestic workers' unheard voices. This was accomplished by relating and analysing their capabilities set at the individual, societal and institutional level. We subsequently offer detailed accounts of the research design, explaining the steps and justification for adopting a mixed methods approach by combining in-depth interviews conducted with migrant domestic workers with document reviews. Next, we present the findings as the outcome of a thematic analysis. Finally, we discuss the findings, their implications and offer some thought about future research.

Voices of Vulnerable Worker Groups

Migrant domestic workers are a subset of vulnerable workers whose voices are deprived, owing to the nature of their work and the relationships with their employers. According to Palenga-Möllenbeck (2013), migrant domestic workers tend not to be perceived as "*another person*" with the same needs to respect and well-being. Migrant workers are rather "*commodified*", being seen as tradeable, and their psychological needs to be with family are completely ignored. In comparison, they offer their service to enable many families to have a better work-life balance (Palenga-Möllenbeck, 2013). The absence of relationships with anyone outside of the households and their co-workers makes the nature of migrant live-in domestic workers' work highly isolated, diminishing their psychological

well-being. Furthermore, the state of health of female migrant domestic workers has been consistently reported as being of ongoing mental, psycho-social and reproductive health-related concern (Bernadas, 2015). For example, sexual and physical abuse are regularly reported among female migrant workers (Varia, 2005; Wilcke, 2011). In addition, chronic diseases, depression and fatigue are common due to a lack of sleep and loneliness (Bernadas, 2015; Holroyd et al., 2001). The subordination of domestic work and domestic workers is mainly rooted in the traditional patriarchal conceptualization of household and care duties to be performed by women, which is unpaid. The live-in domestic workers' work standards and commitments generally depend on the goodwill of their employers (Ramirez-Machado, 2003). In many ways, migrant workers are heavily dependent on their employer. For example, they depend on their employer not only financially, that is, to pay wages on time, but also for food and shelter. Given the highly unequal power inherent in the relationship between employers and live-in domestic workers, these relationships can be exploitative (Salami & Meherali, 2018). Their time-off is poorly defined, and they work in isolation in private spheres, making it difficult for them to turn down their employer's work requests at any time.

Live-in domestic workers work and live in their employers' household premises, which often allows employers to violate their privacy and interfere with their personal lives (Bernardo et al., 2018). The subordination of these workers often results in submerged voices in terms of well-being. The insecure nature of their jobs and the high level of control that employers have over live-in migrant domestic workers make them subject to abuse (Bernardo et al., 2018). Overall, their needs for a better work-life balance and well-being are treated as inferior or even invisible. The "*intersection of gender (women), class (low-skill wok and low paid labour class) and temporary migrant status has put the migrant domestic workers at an exceptionally disadvantaged position in terms of work-life balance*" (Au et al., 2019, p. 579). Moreover, they have left their family and children in their home countries. However, the literature has rarely discussed the emotional cost of caring for the employers' family members while leaving their family members, especially young children, to be cared for by others. In summary, live-in domestic work meets the description of precarious work put forth by Syed (2016). This is characterized by low wages,

uncertainty, work which lacks security, threats to one's health or well-being and a lack of formal membership or association with unions. A greater understanding of women migrant domestic workers' experiences in relation to their work conditions and living arrangements is necessary (Bernadas, 2015). Researchers have also called for increasing research attention to women's experiences in the gendered processes of international migration and their agency in the processes (Gaetano & Yeoh, 2010). To do this, we try to understand and relate the micro-level of individual women migrant domestic workers' experiences to the macro-level of structural forces. We thereby hope to give a voice to the migrant domestic workers and analyse how they experience their work and working life.

Migrant Domestic Workers in Malaysia

Malaysia is a large employer for domestic workers, involving approximately 300,000–400,000 migrant domestic workers, among whom only around 250,000 are legally registered and documented (ILO, 2018; Shah, 2017). With limited national- and organizational-level practices that support working parents' work-life balance, many Malaysian middle-class households depend on domestic workers for household chores and childcare support (Au, 2021). Most migrant workers come from neighbouring countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, Cambodia, Myanmar and other South Asian countries such as Sri Lanka and India (Ibrahim & Iskandar, 2022). In Malaysia, migrant domestic workers are not protected under the national labour legislation. They are not entitled to basic labour rights, for example, maternity or termination benefits, annual or sick leave, days off or holidays (ILO, 2016). They are not covered by the Malaysia Employment Act 1955, since the Malaysian labour migration system does not regard domestic work as "real" work. In other words, migrant domestic workers are not legally recognized as "workers" in Malaysia. Instead, they are classified as "domestic servants" or "maids" by the Employment Act of 1955 (Malaysian Digest, 2018; Mok, 2018). Despite the 2022 amendment that replaces the term "domestic servants" with "domestic employees", domestic workers continue to be excluded

from the basic employee benefits such as rest days and maternity protection (Oon, 2022). Such weak legal protection contributes to the vulnerable and exploitative working conditions that migrant domestic workers in Malaysia face.

More than two-thirds of domestic workers are not covered by even one social security benefit in the Asian and Pacific regions (ILO, 2022). Domestic workers in Malaysia have only been entitled to employment injury protection since 2021 (ILO, 2022). Before this, they were excluded from the scope of labour and social security protection. In summary, Malaysia, a migrant-labour-dependent economic development country with state authoritarianism, has sought to limit migrants' access and claims to rights (Elias, 2010), making it urgent to capture the voices of female migrant domestic workers.

Understanding Employees' Voices Through the Capabilities Approach

The Capabilities Approach provides the scope to identify factors that may systematically constrain individuals' opportunities to experience well-being, such as poverty, stigma, prejudice and discrimination (Sen, 1999). Accordingly, the Capabilities Approach provides a framework for endorsing processes that enable one to be free to do things that he or she may value doing or being (Sen, 2004). As a framework for human development, the Capabilities Approach emphasizes the promotion of well-being through enabling people to realize their capabilities and engage in behaviours they subjectively value (White et al., 2016). Unlike the utilitarian view where development focuses primarily on economic growth, the Capability Approach focuses on well-being as the fundamental human entitlement (Loh & Estrellado, 2016). "Freedom" and "functioning" form the essence of the Capabilities Approach, where freedom refers to both agency (i.e. the ability to act on what matters at the individual level) and capability (i.e. the potential to achieve valuable functioning from various good opportunities) (Hobson, 2011; White et al., 2016). Miles (2014) stressed that capabilities relate to the real rather than formal

freedoms and opportunities one possesses in order to achieve her/his chosen functioning. Meanwhile, functioning refers to forms of valuable being and doing, to achieve well-being and quality of life in the way that s/he regards as important, such as a healthy body, being safe, being educated and having a good job (Hobson, 2011; White et al., 2016). Most importantly, agency and choices are constrained due to inequalities in resources, outcomes and preferences, as well as inequalities in capabilities to realize chosen functioning (Hobson, 2011; Lewis & Giullari, 2005). It is therefore necessary to dig deeper to understand what influences the generation of individual capabilities.

As per the Capabilities Approach, the extent towards which individuals can generate capabilities from resources is influenced by various factors (Hobson, 2011; Sen, 1999). This multi-level framework (Hobson, 2011) highlights the importance of assessing (1) individual factors such as gender, ethnicity, age and human capital; (2) societal factors including social norms, legal norms and public policies (gender and ethnic stereotyping); and (3) institutional factors, which include laws and policies, as well as aspects of firms and labour markets. Access to social, educational, economic and political support that helps individuals to flourish forms the essence of the Capabilities Approach (White et al., 2016). In this study, the Framework of Capability Set (Hobson, 2011) extended from Sen (1999)'s Capabilities Approach was used as the guide to explore and understand the voices of migrant live-in domestic workers in Malaysia.

Research Design

A mixed methods approach was adopted, using in-depth personal interviews and document reviews to understand the unheard voices of migrant domestic workers in Malaysia. Participants were approached at places where migrant domestic workers gather, such as outside churches and embassies and in residential areas. All potential participants were screened based on two main criteria: (1) being from Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India, Vietnam or Laos (approved nationalities to work in Malaysia as domestic helpers); (2) being employed as a live-in domestic worker. Unfortunately, many potential participants

declined the invitation to be interviewed. This may be due to the large pool of unregulated migrant workers in Malaysia who fear being identified. However, 13 women migrant domestic workers provided informed consent to be interviewed. The interviews covered a broad scope to understand the lived experiences of live-in migrant domestic workers. Participants were asked to describe their motives, ways of managing work and nonwork spheres, challenges and their typical day as live-in domestic workers in detail. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim for further analysis.

Based on the interviews, we acknowledge that some important information might have been missed, since the experiences of non-responder might vary significantly from those who participated in the study (Patel et al., 2003). The participants who provided informed consent to be interviewed tend to be the "fortunate" ones who were more likely to share positive voices. Furthermore, it is not possible to understand migrant live-in domestic workers' experiences wholly and comprehensively without relating them to the macro-level factors that shape their experiences. The document review was conducted to overcome the challenges of not being able to access those who were "less fortunate", but still capture their voices, especially those who were ill-treated or abused. To gain a fuller and more comprehensive understanding of the unheard voices, media articles, policy papers, articles and reports from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and related institutions were reviewed. The selected documents typically included regulations and policies on migrant domestic workers, reviews of the domestic workers' market and press articles on reported abuse cases. These documents were analysed using the Framework of Capabilities Approach, inspired by Hobson (2011)'s capability set based on Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach (Sen, 1999). Utilization of the Capabilities Approach to guide the data analysis can help identify sources of impediment and structural factors that limit live-in migrant domestic workers' freedom, agency and opportunities to realize their capabilities. The common prescriptions for thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) were followed in order to analyse both the interview transcripts and selected documents. The author followed the iterative process of initial coding and then searched, reviewed and defined themes, before presenting the results.

Results

Theme 1: Individual Factors Shape Migrant Domestic Workers' Capabilities

Most of the migrant domestic workers were from humble backgrounds. They had limited employment opportunities in their home countries, where unemployment rates are high, and wages are low.

> *Working away from my home country, I can have higher pay. In Indonesia, the wage is enough for life, but it's insufficient to build a bright future.* (P9)

> *I hope to improve my living standard. We want to get out of poverty. Also, I want my child to study and receive higher education.* (P12)

The considerable discrepancy in the wage and work opportunities between the migrant domestic workers' home and host countries drives them to stay in jobs despite their unsettling working conditions. Most of them perceived their working conditions in the host country as "*a lesser evil*" compared to the working conditions in their home country (Tayah, 2016). Hence, they are likely to tolerate unacceptable and abusive behaviours from employers. A victim whose teeth were pulled out, tortured and sexually assaulted shared (Jayamanogaran, 2014):

> *I was in Jakarta when news of a (migrant domestic helper) abuse case (in Malaysia) was widely highlighted. I never thought I would go through a similar predicament. It came to a point where I just could not take it anymore.*

Young age may also be an individual factor that contributes to the suppressed voices of migrant domestic workers. According to the Malaysian Foreign Employment Act, women migrant workers must be at least 21 years old. However, it was not uncommon for girls who were younger than 21 years old to migrate and work as domestic workers in Malaysia. A returnee domestic worker from Malaysia shared (Napier-Moore, 2017):

I was 16 and told to say I was 22 if the employer asked. The age on my document said 22 and used another name.

Most of the rescued migrant domestic workers were under 21 years old, all claimed that they were overworked, not given days off and had their passports confiscated by employers (Malaysian Digest, 2018; Ng, 2011). Young age, plus limited education and language barriers meant that they had a limited ability to understand the contractual terms when signing the employment contract. It is also highly likely that some irresponsible employment agencies replaced the contract with poorer terms, thereby taking advantage of the girls' limited knowledge (Tayah, 2016). Most migrant domestic workers face language barriers to access information on the legislation (Gallotti, 2015). For those with limited education, they also struggle to comprehend the law and understand their rights. According to Tayah (2016), language barriers and the limited penetration of awareness prevented migrant domestic workers from gaining full knowledge of their rights and how to assert them. Language barriers may also prevent migrant domestic workers from engaging and negotiating with their employers, hence increase their vulnerability to abusive treatment, discrimination and unfair working conditions (ILO, 2013).

The evidence from interview data and document review also suggested that migrant domestic workers had a shallow sense of entitlement towards basic employment rights. Instead of relating it to their legitimate rights, many of them associated their working conditions with "luck". For example, an abused migrant domestic helper who arrived at the shelter of her home country's embassy with bruises underneath both her eyes and her chin said that her employers took away all her belongings. She could not even find the number to call for help. "*I have very bad luck*", she said (Pak & Mullins, 2011). The expectation of these workers is low: "… *at least I'm not being abused. At least I received my salary…*" (Oon, 2022). With weak legal protection, the welfare and well-being of migrant domestic workers primarily rely on their employers' discretion. The interviewees linked their overall satisfaction with the fortune of having a "good employer". The characteristics the interviewees used to describe their 'good employers' included "kind-hearted", "unselfishness", and "willingness to forgive", which should be the essential qualities of any human. In

addition, the gesture of paying a salary on time (which is basic duty of any employer) and taking them to the bank to send money to their family was regarded as a "good employer" by the migrant domestic workers.

I feel satisfied as the family of the employer is good. So, I have the motivation to work. They give me food and things which are precious to me. (P6)

They are good. They pay my wage on time. Some employers refuse to pay and even cut wages when domestic workers do something wrong. (P12)

Another comment shared by a participant highlighted the low expectation of being treated kindly and fairly by employers:

I told her [a relative who has worked as a migrant domestic helper for a long time] that I wanted to work in another country. She said: "No, if they still want your service, you should continue because they treat you as a person". Some employers are not good and treat you like an animal. Why do you want to go to another country? Your next employer might treat you as an animal. (P1)

Theme 2: Societal Factors Limit Migrant Domestic Workers' Capabilities

Gendered perceptions that domestic workers are members of the household who do not require formal legal protection are deeply engrained within Malaysian society (ILO, 2016). Domestic work remains undervalued, since it is perceived as "unproductive" work and regarded as "typically female" (ILO, 2013). When asked to describe their job scope, most respondents stated that they need to do everything that needs to be done in the household. No specific job scope is given; this includes cooking, cleaning or tidying up the house, washing the car, doing laundry, washing dishes and taking care of the elderly and children of their employers. Some migrant workers even need to take care of plants and pets for their employers. Also, there is no fixed schedule, as they always need to be attentive:

I'm taking care of the old granny, so there is no definite time that I wake up. Whenever she's awake, I should be awake too. (P2)

Long working hours (sometimes even without off day) is common among migrant domestic workers in Malaysia. In all cases, the participants must wake up earlier than their employers, mostly around 6 a.m. Some even need to wake up at 4 a.m. or 5 a.m. Through the interviews, all participants reported that they needed to work for more than 12 hours daily, with most working 15 hours daily. This leaves them with minimal time for rest and leisure. Live-in arrangements are the main contributor to long work hours: since no distinction is made between working hours and non-working hours, the notion of overtime does not exist. Most employers assume that the domestic worker should be available whenever their services are needed (ILO, 2013). Unlike their live-out counterparts who have a clearer separation between working hours and non-working hours, live-in domestic workers have very little control over their working time arrangements. Working these long hours is itself a form of abuse (Lin, 2017). Many respondents expressed their disappointment over the day-off policy, which is not well executed:

Actually, we should be given day-off as requested by the embassy, once a month. The embassy requested to have one day off every month, with paid. However, this is only empty talks. A lot of employers do not exercise this. (P8)

A low sense of respect for the legal rights of migrant domestic workers has resulted in some employers being "strategic" and fully utilizing their employees' time. It is not uncommon to "share" migrant domestic workers among multiple households (so that monthly wages are split) and to demand the migrant domestic workers to "assist" in the employer's business (with or without additional payment). In other words, some of these workers work double shifts or more without adequate compensation (in most cases).

At 7:30 am, I will change my job to work in the factory. After that, I will come back at 4 pm [to continue the domestic work]. Sometimes, I will take it [factory work] back and do it at home. I get extra pay for that. (P9)

Our participant is considered the "lucky" one as she received extra pay for her time participating in factory work. Following is a case of an abused domestic helper whose situation was reported by a medical officer (Lin, 2017).

> *Apart from cleaning their house, washing their three cars, and taking care of their disabled son, they also had me working in their curtain-making factory. One day I wrongly sewed a very expensive fabric. Madam was so angry that when we went home, she forced me to clean the whole house alone and didn't let me eat. Then she beat me with the hose but because I hadn't eaten all day, I fainted.*

The classification of domestic workers as "domestic servants" or "maids" in the Employment Act encouraged the mindset of a "master-servant relationship" (instead of employer-employee relationship) among some employers (Mok, 2018). It is disheartening to learn that some employers mistreat their domestic helpers and have the grave misconception that it is within their rights to treat their domestic workers in such a way. According to a commissioner for the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia, "*Most of them (the employers) think that just because they are paying their salary, they are allowed to treat their (domestic) workers in whatever fashion they like*" (Malaysian Digest, 2018). Similarly, the attitudes of some employers towards their domestic workers were described as "… *not seen as assets to the family. Instead, they are treated as objects that they can mistreat*" (Pak & Mullins, 2011).

Theme 3: Institutional Factors Contribute to the Weak Capabilities of Migrant Domestic Workers

According to ILO (2016, 2018), Malaysia's labour migration policies are heavily oriented towards controlling immigration and maintaining public safety. Much less attention has been given to the broader impact of labour migration on national economic and social development or protecting workers' rights. In 2017, the ILO and the Ministry of Human Resources published a guidelines for the employers of migrant domestic

workers, advising employers to treat their domestic workers better (Borneo Post Online, 2017). Unfortunately, the guide is more of a suggestion and is not legally binding. Furthermore, Malaysia has yet to ratify the ILO's Domestic Workers Convention 2011, which protects the rights of domestic workers, although the country has employed a large number of domestic workers for the past decade. The weak laws and regulations in Malaysia towards safeguarding migrant domestic workers are also reflected by the fact that domestic workers are excluded from the minimum wage law (Ragu, 2022). The lack of agency among migrant domestic workers in safeguarding their well-being and having their voices heard is due primarily to the laxness of laws and regulations on domestic work in Malaysia. As mentioned previously, domestic work is not legally recognized as work under the Employment Act of Malaysia. Furthermore, they are unlike their immigrant counterparts who work in agriculture and manufacturing, which are subject to more regular inspection, indirectly protecting the employees from being abused. Migrant live-in domestic workers are not subject to labour inspection, since their employment falls within a private premises (ILO, 2016; Malaysian Digest, 2018). Coupled with the "live-in" arrangement, these domestic workers are isolated from others with no co-workers, making it exceptionally difficult to meet with others to exchange experiences and information or discuss alternatives. These factors leave them highly vulnerable and susceptible to abuse.

Also, the migrant domestic helper's work visa is tied to a specific employer (ILO, 2016). Their right to stay in Malaysia and work is immediately terminated if they leave the employment relationship. This further restrains the migrant domestic workers from being the "free agent" of their own bodies, time and well-being. Unlike many other employed individuals, migrant domestic workers are not allowed to freely decide to opt out of the relationship with their current employer, nor opt out of the occupation as domestic workers by moving into other types of employment. Such strict work visa ties increase their vulnerability to abuse, limit their freedom to leave an unhealthy employment relationship, as well as their capacity to report abuse, owing to a fear of deportation (Gallotti, 2015; ILO, 2016; Napier-Moore, 2017). In summary, female migrant workers in Malaysia lack not only a voice but also an "exit" option.

Limited freedom of movement is common among migrant live-in domestic workers in Malaysia. Although it is illegal for anyone to be in possession of another person's passport in Malaysia, it is common practice for irresponsible employers to keep their migrant domestic workers' legal documents such as passport and work permit, thus placing the migrant workers under their power and control (Hakim, 2018). In most cases, the migrant domestic workers were asked to sign a paper waiving their right to hold the passport for "safekeeping" by the employee (Lumayag, 2017). Live-in domestic workers may be subjected to restrictions on their freedom of movement even outside of working hours and off-days, which is a human rights concern (ILO, 2013). This is especially the case among domestic workers with care responsibilities (Tayah, 2016). The attitude of employers of not "liking" their migrant domestic workers socializing outside of the employed household also further restrains and discourages them from having personal social networks.

> *I don't have [friends]. I don't like it. I am not interested in calling friends. I don't get any happiness, but it will bring trouble. I have been here for quite a long time, and I never go outside on my own. I don't like it.* (P10)

> *We meet with each other [other migrant domestic workers] near this neighbourhood… I can go out with them on Sunday with the approval of my employer.* (P9)

To make the situation worst, the regulations and visa conditions promote "ideal" migrant domestic workers as unencumbered workers where their sexual or partnership behaviours are limited (prohibited to be precise) during the course of their employment. In Malaysia, only women can legally work as migrant domestic workers where their work permit is subject to a negative pregnancy test, which is also required upon work permits renewal (ILO, 2013; Napier-Moore, 2017; UN Women, 2013). Female migrant domestic workers are liable to deportation if they fall pregnant, since this violates the conditions of their work permit (Immigration Department of Malaysia, 2020). In other words, these women are deprived of sexual and reproductive rights, as well as the right to a family life. According to Dyer et al. (2011), it is a "dehumanized" act to construct migrant workers only as workers, having no families or

family needs. Holding a mobile phone and speaking to family members is a luxury for some migrant domestic workers. Most of them rely on their employers to reach their families in their home country. Only some of them are allowed to hold their own mobile phone. Even so, this does not mean that they can speak with their family members whenever they want. They must complete their duties and seek their employers' permission before calling their families. Some are restricted by the amount of money loaded on the phone. In most cases, their availability and frequency of being in touch with their own family depend on the employers' graces:

> *I chat with my family through the phone and computer. My employer let me contact them once a month through Skype.* (P3)

> *If I wanted to call my parents, I must notify my employers first. I need to get their permission before making the phone calls.* (P13)

Even when asked to describe their hobbies and things they do for leisure, it is sad to learn that most of the "leisure" activities are still within the employers' household and for the benefit of the employers.

> *After everything is done, I will massage the granny while watching TV.* (P6)

> *My hobby is cooking… My employer supports it. Every day, I was told to learn to cook [new dishes] (laughing).* (P8)

> *When I have free time, I will do gardening. Plant some vegetables or chillies… When my granny is taking her rest, I will plant chillies, vegetables, and tomatoes (laughs).* (P13)

With weak legal protection, many live-in migrant domestic workers run away from their employers to escape the abusive situations. Not being paid on time, not being provided proper meals, not being allowed to speak to their families and not being given enough rest time are some of the common factors that trigger migrant domestic workers to run away (Tang, 2017). Unfortunately, running away makes them become undocumented because their employers are holding on to their passport.

Discussion

The Capabilities Approach in migration research stresses that extra caution needs to be taken to safeguard the migrant's welfare, since individuals' rights and economic development may be in conflict (e.g. Bonfanti, 2014; Freeman et al., 2021; Preibisch et al., 2016). Our findings are in keeping with this research and shed light on the particular vulnerabilities of migrant live-in domestic workers. Applying the Capabilities Approach (Hobson, 2011; Sen, 1999), the capabilities set of these women can be summarized as follows. Individual factors such as gender (female), migrant status (being away from their home country, with language barriers and socio-cultural barriers), humble background (desperate for employment), young age, with limited experience and knowledge on employment rights, as well as a shallow sense of entitlement, all contribute to an overall weak agency of these workers. As a result, these migrant domestic workers have minimal ability to pursue fair employment, which enables them to earn sufficient for their families back in their home countries while staying safe and healthy. Societal factors typically include social and legal norms. In our case, the gendered perceptions that domestic workers are members of the household who do not require formal legal protection set the tone of domestic workers being undervalued at the societal level. Also, the master-servant relationship remains the dominant mindset among many employers. These factors further shape fellow employers' irresponsible and abusive behaviours towards migrant live-in domestic workers. Furthermore, some employers turn a blind eye to the employment rights of their workers. For example, most employers take full advantage of the presence of domestic workers with the live-in arrangement by not having a clear distinction between working and non-working hours. This contributes to the long hours and limited rest time of the workers. These factors constrain the real possibilities (capabilities) of these migrant domestic workers to be "functioning" workers. Soon enough, many of them would be unfit (both physically and emotionally) to continue to work as domestic workers under such a constraining environment. Hence, stronger societal norms against irresponsible and abusive behaviours desperately need to be embraced at the societal level.

Finally, institutional factors, including the laws and policies pertaining to migrant domestic workers in Malaysia, further weaken the capabilities of these workers. As per Hobson et al. (2018, p. 386), institutional contexts mattered a lot for the "*access to entitlements and capabilities for alternative choices*". Weak laws and regulations in Malaysia are clearly reflected in its failure to, for example, ratify the ILO's Domestic Workers Convention 2011 and not legally recognizing domestic work as work under the Employment Act. The visa requirement to tie the worker to a specific employer also eliminates the workers' options to "opt out" of an unhealthy employment relationship. The weak legislation, coupled with the "master-servant relationship" mindset among employers, has further exerted unequal power and promoted unreasonable and abusive behaviours of employers towards their domestic workers. These complications include limited freedom of movement, prohibited sexual or partnership behaviours and restricted contact with loved ones back in their home country, among others. Taken together, the capability sets of migrant domestic workers put them at a low level of "functioning" where their well-being is tremendously detrimental, to a point where "running away" from the abusive employer was the last resort to survive. In summary, these findings demonstrated that the capabilities set expounded earlier systematically constrains migrant domestic workers' voices from being heard and prevents them from experiencing wellbeing as they wish.

Conclusion

A caring and supportive society should have mechanisms to protect migrant live-in domestic workers. The contribution of migrant domestic workers in shouldering most household chores and care responsibilities, hence allowing more qualified women to be active in employment, should be acknowledged. It is unacceptable to promote the financial stability of the family and economic development of the country at the expense of the well-being of the migrant domestic workers. More active and urgent steps should be taken to prevent abuse and protect migrant live-in domestic helpers. Following are some suggestions that the various

stakeholders within the migrant domestic workers ecosystem should consider adopting:

Pre-departure training should extend beyond the technical knowledge, for example, how to operate a washing machine or handle an iron. Instead, programmes should also cover workers' rights and entitlements as part of their training. Also, domestic helpers should access some tools and techniques for self-help, safeguarding and well-being. Most importantly, these workers should not be kept isolated from one another. Instead, informal support groups among themselves should be encouraged and supported. These support groups can facilitate information exchange and experience sharing. These groups could also be an important source of emotional support, given that these workers are physically distant from their closest relatives and friends.

At the employer's end, the pre-engagement briefing should include materials about human rights, safeguarding and domestic helpers' rights. In addition, it must be made clear and explicit that the act of passport retention, contract violations, restricted movement, wage fraud and imposition of significant debts indicate forced labour, which should be avoided entirely. The requirement to have a reference from previous employers (i.e. for the domestic workers to secure their next job) should also apply to the employers seeking to engage domestic workers. In other words, all domestic helpers should also be given the opportunity to "assess" the fit of their employer in engaging the next domestic helper upon the completion or termination of their employment contract. Employers who have mistreated their domestic workers previously or committed any abusive behaviours should be refrained from engaging a live-in domestic helper. There was also call from Malaysian Trade Union Congress (MTUC) to make it mandatory for potential employers to pass the initial screen by a professional psychologist to establish that they are mentally sound and well enough to recruit a live-in domestic helper (Malay Mail, 2018). The bottom line is that some mechanisms should be in place to hold the employers to be accountable for their irresponsible act.

At the institutional level, policy-makers should move more forcefully to have stricter rules and regulations in place to safeguard and protect migrant domestic workers. For example, legislation should be in place to

penalize employers who engage in abusive behaviours towards their domestic workers. In addition, the public should be encouraged to be active by-standers in reporting all suspect cases of abuse or mistreatment of domestic helpers, even if it is behind closed doors. One of the main barriers to effective protection and abuse prevention is the lack of knowledge about rights and the voice to uphold them (Gallotti, 2015). Accordingly, NGOs, social enterprises and legal bodies should consider organizing regular public campaigns to advocate and increase awareness and information about the human and employment rights of migrant workers. To establish and sustain a fair and healthy migrant domestic worker ecosystem where individual workers can have their voices heard, future research should consider gathering perspectives and insights from multiple stakeholders within the ecosystem. This includes policy-makers, recruiting agencies, returnee domestic workers, social enterprises and NGOs working on migrant workers' rights and employers. The academic community should also play an active role in disseminating research findings and information, as well as advocating to listen to the voices of migrant workers to a broader non-academic audience.

References

Au, W. C. (2021). The implicit and explicit influence on work-life balance in Malaysia. In T. A. Adisa & G. Gbadamosi (Eds.), *Work-life interface* (pp. 313–342). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66648-4_11

Au, W. C., Chatrakul Na Ayudhya, U., Tan, Y. S., & Ahmed, P. K. (2019). The work-life experiences of an invisible workforce: The case of live-in women migrant domestic workers in Malaysia. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal, 39*(5), 567–583. https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-02-2019-0059

Bernadas, J. M. A. C. (2015). Exploring the meanings and experiences of health among Filipino female household service workers in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care, 11*(2), 95–107. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMHSC-05-2014-0019

Bernardo, A. B. I., Daganzo, M. A. A., & Ocampo, A. C. G. (2018). Abusive supervision and well-being of Filipino migrant workers in Macau:

Consequences for self-esteem and heritage culture detachment. *Social Indicators Research, 139*(1), 277–292. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-016-1446-7

Bonfanti, S. (2014). Towards a migrant-centred perspective on international migration: The contribution of Amartya Sen's capability approach. *Social Work & Society, 12*(2), Article 2. https://ejournals.bib.uni-wuppertal.de/index.php/sws/article/view/411

Borneo Post Online. (2017, May 26). *Guidelines and tips for employers of foreign domestic helpers launched*. https://www.theborneopost.com/2017/05/26/guidelines-and-tips-for-employers-of-foreign-domestic-helpers-launched/

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Dyer, S., McDowell, L., & Batnitzky, A. (2011). Migrant work, precarious work–life balance: What the experiences of migrant workers in the service sector in Greater London tell us about the adult worker model. *Gender, Place & Culture, 18*(5), 685–700. https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2011.601808

Elias, J. (2010). Transnational migration, gender, and rights: Advocacy and activism in the Malaysian context. *International Migration, 48*(6), 44–71. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2010.00619.x

Freeman, R., & Medoff, J. (1984). *What do unions do?* Basic Books.

Freeman, T., Miles, L., Ying, K., Mat Yasin, S., & Lai, W. T. (2021). At the limits of "capability": The sexual and reproductive health of women migrant workers in Malaysia. *Sociology of Health & Illness.* https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.13323

Gaetano, A. M., & Yeoh, B. S. A. (2010). Introduction to the special issue on women and migration in globalizing Asia: Gendered experiences, agency, and activism. *International Migration, 48*(6), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2010.00648.x

Gallotti, M. (2015). *Domestic work policy brief no. 9: Making decent work a reality for migrant domestic workers*. International Labour Organisation, ILO. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/%2D%2D-ed_protect/%2D%2D-protrav/%2D%2D-travail/documents/publication/wcms_436974.pdf

Hakim, B. (2018, February 14). Another maid died from abuse in Malaysia, and she probably won't be the last. Here's why. *Cilisos*. https://cilisos.my/foreign-maids-keep-getting-abused-in-malaysia-but-is-anything-being-done-about-it/

Hobson, B. (2011). The agency gap in work-life balance: Applying Sen's capabilities framework within European contexts. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society, 18*(2), 147–167.

Hobson, B., Hellgren, Z., & Serrano, I. (2018). Migrants, markets and domestic work: Do institutional contexts matter in the personal household service sector? *Journal of European Social Policy, 28*(4), 386–401. https://doi.org/10.1177/0958928717753578

Holland, P., Teicher, J., & Donaghey, J. (Eds.). (2019). *Employee voice at work*. Springer. https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-981-13-2820-6

Holroyd, E. A., Molassiotis, A., & Taylor-Pilliae, R. E. (2001). Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong: Health related behaviors, health locus of control and social support. *Women & Health, 33*(1–2), 181–205. https://doi.org/10.1300/J013v33n01_11

Ibrahim, J., & Iskandar, I. M. (2022, June 24). Still a hurdle for maids. *The Star*. https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2022/06/24/still-a-hurdle-for-maids

ILO. (2013). *Domestic workers across the world: Global and regional statistics and the extent of legal protection*. International Labour Office. https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_173363/lang%2D%2Den/index.htm

ILO. (2016). *Review of labour migration policy in Malaysia*. International Labour Office. https://labordoc.ilo.org/discovery/fulldisplay/alma994899963402676/41ILO_INST:41ILO_V1

ILO. (2018). *TRIANGLE in ASEAN quarterly briefing note: Malaysia*. ILO. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/%2D%2D-asia/%2D%2D-ro-bangkok/documents/genericdocument/wcms_614381.pdf

ILO. (2022). Making the right to social security a reality for domestic workers: A global review of policy trends, statistics and extension strategies. International Labour Office. https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_848280/lang--en/index.htm

Immigration Department of Malaysia. (2020). *Enforcement*. https://www.imi.gov.my/portal2017/index.php/en/enforcement.html

Jayamanogaran, T. (2014, December 24). Abused maid recounts eight months in torture 'chamber'. *Malay Mail*. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2014/12/24/abused-maid-recounts-eight-months-in-torture-chamber/807499

Lewis, J., & Giullari, S. (2005). The adult worker model family, gender equality and care: The search for new policy principles and the possibilities and prob-

lems of a capabilities approach. *Economy and Society, 34*(1), 76–104. https://doi.org/10.1080/0308514042000329342

Lin, M. M. (2017, March 16). Behind closed doors: A tale of ongoing domestic servitude in Malaysia. *Asian Correspondent*. https://asiancorrespondent.com/2017/03/behind-closed-doors-tale-ongoing-domestic-servitude-malaysia/#y2yRKU2xGduDmdj5.97

Loh, J., & Estrellado, A. F. (2016). Filipino domestic workers and their capacity development. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022167816654357

Lumayag, L. (2017, June 28). They are domestic workers—Not maids or helpers. *Aliran*. https://aliran.com/thinking-allowed-online/2017-ta-online/domestic-workers-not-maids-helpers/

Malay Mail. (2018, February 14). *Life without maids will be difficult, MTUC reminds Malaysians*. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2018/02/14/mtuc-reminds-malaysians-life-without-maids-will-be-difficult/1577505

Malaysian Digest. (2018, February 19). *Malaysia can do more to protect foreign maids*. http://malaysiandigest.com/frontpage/282-main-tile/723621-malaysia-can-do-more-to-protect-foreign-maids.html

Miles, L. (2014). The capabilities approach and worker wellbeing. *The Journal of Development Studies, 50*(8), 1043–1054. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2013.866220

Mok, O. (2018, February 12). After maid's death, group demands law to protect migrant workers. *Malay Mail*. https://www.malaymail.com/s/1575621/after-maids-death-group-demands-law-to-protect-migrant-workers

Napier-Moore, R. (2017). *Protected or put in harm's way? Bans and restrictions on women's labour migration in ASEAN countries*. International Labour Organization and UN Women.

Ng, E. (2011, August 12). Cambodia urged to stop sending maids to Malaysia. *San Diego Union-Tribune*. https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/sdut-cambodia-urged-to-stop-sending-maids-to-malaysia-2011aug11-story.html

Oon, A. (2022, November 28). For Indonesian domestic workers in Malaysia, Facebook becomes a tool for empowerment. *Southeast Asia Globe*. https://southeastasiaglobe.com/for-indonesian-domestic-workers-in-malaysia-facebook-becomes-a-tool-for-empowerment/

Pak, J., & Mullins, L. (2011). *Malaysia's maid shortage rooted in abuse*. The World. https://theworld.org/stories/2011-02-17/malaysias-maid-shortage-rooted-abuse

Palenga-Möllenbeck, E. (2013). New maids—new butlers? Polish domestic workers in Germany and commodification of social reproductive work. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal, 32*(6), 557–574. https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-10-2012-0086

Patel, M. X., Doku, V., & Tennakoon, L. (2003). Challenges in recruitment of research participants. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment, 9*(3), 229–238. https://doi.org/10.1192/apt.9.3.229

Preibisch, K., Dodd, W., & Su, Y. (2016). Pursuing the capabilities approach within the migration–development nexus. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 42*(13), 2111–2127.

Ragu, D. (2022, May 10). Govt under fire for excluding maids in minimum wage law. *Free Malaysia Today*. https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2022/05/10/govt-under-fire-for-excluding-maids-in-minimum-wage-law/

Ramirez-Machado, J. M. (2003). *Domestic work, conditions of work and employment: A legal perspective* [ILO Working Paper]. International Labour Organization. https://econpapers.repec.org/paper/iloilowps/993647813402676.htm

Salami, B., & Meherali, S. (2018). One of the family? Familial and professional relationships between migrant live-in caregivers and their employers. *International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care, 14*(2), 174–185. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMHSC-09-2016-0034

Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford University Press.

Sen, A. (2004). *Rationality and freedom*. Belknap Press.

Shah, S. A. (2017, November 30). Malaysia turns to Cambodia for domestic helpers. *The Malaysian Reserve*. https://themalaysianreserve.com/2017/11/30/malaysia-turns-cambodia-domestic-helpers/

Syed, I. U. (2016). Labor exploitation and health inequities among market migrants: A political economy perspective. *Journal of International Migration and Integration, 17*(2), 449–465. http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.lib.monash.edu.au/10.1007/s12134-015-0427-z

Tang, A. (2017, May 2). One in 20 maids going missing. *The Star*. https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2017/05/02/one-in-20-maids-going-missing-treat-domestic-helpers-as-family-and-they-stay-abuse-them-and-they-go

Tayah, M. (2016). *Decent work for migrant domestic workers: Moving the agenda forward*. International Labour Organisation, ILO.

UN Women. (2013). *Managing labour migration in ASEAN: Concerns for women migrant workers*. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/

digital-library/publications/2013/1/managing-labour-migration-in-asean-concerns-for-women-migrant-workers

Varia, N. (2005). Maid to order: Ending abuses against migrant domestic workers in Singapore. *Human Rights Watch*. https://www.hrw.org/report/2005/12/06/maid-order/ending-abuses-against-migrant-domestic-workers-singapore

White, R. G., Imperiale, M. G., & Perera, E. (2016). The capabilities approach: Fostering contexts for enhancing mental health and wellbeing across the globe. *Globalization and Health, 12*(1), 16. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-016-0150-3

Wilcke, C. (2011). Domestic plight: How Jordanian laws, officials, employers, and recruiters fail abused migrant domestic workers. *Human Rights Watch*. https://www.hrw.org/report/2011/09/27/domestic-plight/how-jordanian-laws-officials-employers-and-recruiters-fail-abused

<div align="center">

8

</div>

Employee Voice: Insights from Pakistan

<div align="center">

**Muhammad Mehmood Aslam
and Muhammad Akhtar**

</div>

Introduction

Giving employees a voice at work is one of the most significant ways for individuals to influence their employment ensure a good quality of working life—CIPD (2019, p. 4)

Organizations have shown increasing interest in understanding the important contribution of employees in terms of raising their voice on important organizational issues. This is because employee voice has brought many changes in the workplace, such as anticipating innovation, gaining a competitive advantage over others, and so on. (Bain et al., 2021). Employee voice not only benefits organizations in many ways, but

---

M. M. Aslam
National Defence University, Islamabad, Pakistan
e-mail: mehmoodaslam@ndu.edu.pk

M. Akhtar (✉)
University of East London, London, UK
e-mail: m.akhtar@uel.ac.uk

more importantly, it can have a positive impact on employee well-being (Mowbray et al., 2019). As such, it has led scholars to think about voice in all new and different ways. Given its importance, a large body of research on the voice has typically focused on the Western context. However, the research on employee voice is largely at the minimum level in less developed nations, especially Pakistan, which is altogether a unique context to be considered for the organizations as well as the employees (e.g., Rani et al., 2021).

To elaborate it further, for example, Soltani et al. (2018) have pointed out that employees in the non-Western countries are mainly concerned with fulfillment of their phycological needs compared to psychological aspirations. On the other side, de Azevedo et al. (2020) hold that even organizations that are not very technologically sound are eager to embrace employee voice contributions that can modify their work processes to make them more innovative. Considering all that, the present research is aimed at integrating the past evidence on how employee voice behavior has been understood taking different theoretical perspectives and identifying gray areas that will unveil new avenues for future research specifically in the interesting but unique employment context of Pakistan. Right from the beginning, many scholars have used interchangeable terms with employee voice in changing work conditions such as empowerment, participation, and work engagement (Wilkinson & Fay, 2011), while some have coupled the concept with innovation and creativity found at multiple levels in the organization (Bashshur & Oc, 2015).

Similarly, several authors have continuously built a stockpile of research indicating the usefulness of this concept. For example, according to Rasheed et al. (2021), employee voice emerged as the primary mechanism between the transformational style of leadership identified in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) of Pakistan and different forms of innovation in these organizations. In the same way, Prouska et al. (2022) have assessed if employee voice can be enacted as HR core practice especially in the state of economic downturns. They bring interesting insights into the proposed relationship between communication and "horizontal solidarity" through employee voice behavior. Focusing on SMEs, they add that HR practices such as voice depend on the quality of the relationship between manager and employee and how well various informal

transactions between these two stakeholders occur. Likewise, McKearney et al. (2022) have also emphasized the need for further research in SMEs sector.

By accumulating evidence through interviews from multiple countries including the United Kingdom, Nigeria, and Thailand, the authors have found impact of national culture (as one of the key determinants in the domain of macro-level factors) and its various dimensions on voice norms developed in organizational settings. The same holds for the recent contribution by Shin et al. (2022) toward an ongoing debate on voice research. The authors talk about introducing effective "voice practices" as integral part of work systems. These practices enable organizations to embrace innovation, creativity, and sometimes even taking change initiatives. Authors further added that employees feel motivated in presenting the emerging ideas if they think organizations welcome their timely inputs. However, taking diversion from current stream of research on voice, Burris et al. (2022) argued that not all the employee's ideas attract attention of the managers.

Managers recognize and value the contribution of voice only when the intent of voice is primarily focused on a future vision for improving organizational affairs. Otherwise, managers will hardly support voice that causes conflict in the organization. Burris et al. (2022) have further added that managers appreciate and endorse a kind of voice that is aligned with their own "regulatory foci." Similarly, to receive acknowledgment, voice should also be based on logic rather than emotional inducement. However, Zhang et al. (2019) have shifted the focus of research on voice and linked up high commitment work system (HCWS) with employee voice behavior in the Chinese work context. They assert that a coherent and inclusive approach may encourage and create tendency of employees thinking out of the box. Further according to Zhang et al. (2019), adequate organizational support and psychological safety should be considered as the enabling factors to reach this end. That may increase the likelihood that organization takes quality decision while taking insights from the employees.

For this to happen, organizational formal and informal voice mechanisms can effectively streamline the way for voice to emerge as a behavior. Taking all this together, it can be summarized that contemporary work

organizations recognize the viability of employee voice behavior, and a well-designed voice strategy draws a clear line of sight, which not only benefits the organization but also the employees. Analyzing voice research in such detail, we specifically designed this chapter based on an overall overview of existing research on voice behavior. The structure we follow in this chapter will first include a brief account of historical developments representing evolution of the concept, followed by taking in-depth insights from the past research on voice behavior, integrating analysis of empirical evidence from different theoretical perspectives from the West and Pakistan. We will finally propose areas that will benefit researchers in their future endeavors.

Conceptual Evolution of Employee Voice

The term "voice" was first brought to light by Hirschman (1970). At that time, Hirschman attributed the concept as an alternative to the exit behavior (Kaufman, 2020, p. 27). In other words, Hirschman considered the concept of voice to be related to a kind of transformation rather than reflecting an escape from an inevitable situation (Wilkinson & Fay, 2011). Since then, phenomenon of voice kept evolving in terms of conceptual clarification and reaches the point where it stands today. Barry and Wilkinson (2022) have further clarified on this. The authors argue that though there can be found much research on employee voice behavior in the three different domains, that is, Human Resource Management (HRM), Organizational Behavior (OB), and Industry Relation (IR), the research on employee voice still exists in silos.

Every single domain has examined employee voice from own perspective and consequently, with some commonalities, there lies many differences with respect to the meaning assigned to the phenomenon of voice behavior. From this, it can be said that there is a need to integrate the three streams together so a bigger picture of voice can be emerged. For a better understanding with the phenomenon of employee voice, Akhtar et al. (2016) emphasized that voice is one of the important dimensions related to EVLN typology offered by Hirschman (widely known as exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect framework). These behaviors are defined as

responses to dissatisfaction that employees experience in a normal or unusual manner. Explaining this further, Townsend et al. (2022) highlighted that either the employee finds it more appropriate to end their employment journey (referred as an exit strategy) or they are more interested in changing the situation through their voice inputs. While on occasion, employees believe in their loyalty to the employer and look forward to a prosperous time in near future or else as a last option, they disengage themselves from the situation. In other words, employees may begin to ignore the situation altogether. Taking the literature to the next level, eminent authors have described several meanings of the concept of employee voice behavior. For example, Morrison et al. (2011) have viewed the voice as a key employee behavior that contains various kinds of concerns, suggestions as well as relevant opinions, which contributes in a way to organization performance. In particular, Van Dyne and LePine (1998) reckon voice behavior as an integral part of employee self-initiated behavior, that is, organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs). Likewise, de Azevedo et al. (2020) say that voice leads employees to go an extra mile and channelize them to take on "extra-role behavior." However, all these authors have viewed voice as risk-taking behavior as employee often face many challenges in disrupting status quo prevailing in the organization, such as raising voice might be unfavorable for overall performance evaluation of the employee (Burris, 2012).

Contrarily, other authors have laid relatively more emphasis on the conceptual overlapping of the construct with other concepts. Take, for instance, Ng and Feldman (2012) where authors have marked voice as different concept to "civic virtue" as well as "taking charge" in certain conditions and Chaudhry et al. (2021) in which authors have linked voice mainly to the organizational unions enabling employees providing inputs and benefiting the process of decision-making. Another meaningful effort can also be witnessed by Elbaz et al. (2022). The authors have taken interesting insights from the hospitality industry to examine if employee voice can predict important proximal and distant outcomes. In doing so, they have explored that employee voice comes out as the antecedent for grievance handling styles and whether these styles enact the intervening role between job satisfaction and outcomes like intention to leave. They further elaborate on that if employees' grievances are well

handled, they would be less thinking about leaving their positions. More recently, taking a different line, Kao et al. (2021) have uncovered the role of psychological needs creating an indirect impact on employee voice behavior. The authors highlighted the significance of psychological needs in terms of job autonomy and whether this leads employees to higher motivational level at work. Since employees get fully engaged with their work, they will finally contribute back to the organization through their voice inputs.

Employee Voice from Different Perspectives

Authors have conveyed continuously new insights to familiarize us with the phenomenon of voice behavior taking various perspectives. Morrison (2014), for instance, views voice as a behavior that enables employees to make suggestions (called promotive voice) and thus identify workplace issues (called prohibitive voice). Along with this, in a recent meta-analysis of past findings, Chamberlin et al. (2017) further elaborate on these two types of voice behaviors. Chamberline and coauthors have emphasized that although the prohibitive voice is equally important, and even a strong predictor of organizational innovation (Shin et al. 2022), the promotive voice as compared to the prohibitive voice is recognized more favorably by others. Advancing the literature further, Song et al. (2021) have considered this behavior as the approach that reflects the level of employee engagement within the organization. Rather more recently, Ng et al. (2021) have theorized voice behavior based on social-relational context. Given that raising a constructive voice can bring undesirable conditions for the voicer, it will surely attract more respect from others such as the voice recipients. However, to achieve this level, leaders are the ones who can provide sufficient support to their employees through the process of voice endorsement (Liao et al., 2021). However, it has been noted by Sax and Torp (2015) in their study findings that a safe voice culture is the precondition for the leadership such as participative leadership.

Just like constructive voice behavior, scholars have also identified the other types of employee voice behavior. Take, for instance, Joseph and Shetty (2022), where the authors outline three types of voice behavior,

that is, acquiescent, defensive, and prosocial employee voice. Firstly, acquiescent voice though not very active in nature relies on how employee perceives the situation. In the second place, defensive voice as the name implies is more relevant to save oneself when confronting the odd situations. Whereas prosocial voice unlike the defensive voice originates to benefit others. In employee's opinion, they should share their thoughts or ideas and collaborate with others to induce improvements to the work processes. In other words, it becomes clear that employee voice behavior evolves depending on the situation and environmental cues that employee often receives. If the employees identify situations in their favor, they will think it is novel to transmit their suggestions, ideas, or opinions. In short, employee voice should be perceived as a well-conceived strategy that can make meaningful contributions and add value addition to the work processes. Similarly, extending the literature further, Soltani et al. (2018) capture the two most integral characteristics of voice behavior. The first pertains to the participative management, whereas the second is pertinent to managing employees' grievances.

Zhu et al. (2022) citing past research emphasized that employees are sometimes unwilling to express their views in front of others. This might be due to the reason that voicing might be felt as a risk-taking activity (Liu et al., 2022). Undoubtedly, it is much evident that although the concept of voice has been viewed as a risk-taking behavior, yet it can produce desirable and enticing outcomes. This might be possible only if leaders as well as the managers play their decisive role in creating voice mechanisms at different levels in the organization. Otherwise, employees will feel less privileged and never think over to push their boundaries. However, it must be well understood that employee voice is a multifaceted phenomenon, and the past research also reveals that every scholar has conceptualized this behavior in certain conditions. Thus, it is viable at this point to also discuss the level of organization at which the voice can emerge more often. Recently, Townsend et al. (2022) made this effort. The authors have aligned their focus on employee voice pathways. In doing so, they have revealed that voice exists at multiple level inside and outside the organization. Citing the past research, Townsend et al. (2022) have highlighted that voice operates at different levels such as societal, departmental, and individual level in the organization. When

broadly speaking, these levels can also be termed as macro, meso, and individual level. Referring to the voice mechanism, authors also discuss about the informal and formal nature of voice behavior making it more a complex phenomenon. They say that employees who really care about the organization might use informal voice mechanism rather than getting more formal in their approach. Getting this altogether and keeping in view the significance of various types of voice behaviors, the voice mechanisms, and external influences, the authors put emphasis on future research explaining the impact of IT and how it might predict "employee voice pathways" (p. 299). In the same way, taking a departure from past research, Duan et al. (2022) convey that constructive voice behavior characterized by its proactive nature can benefit the organization in the presence of the leaders' consultation and engagement shown at work.

Carnevale et al. (2017) also touched upon the usefulness of voice behavior in their meta-analysis. They have provided enough support to draw a relationship between leader-member exchange and voice behavior together with other meaningful outcomes such as creativity and innovation. There is also found paucity of research on voice from social media perspective. For example, according to Holland et al. (2016), employee voice should be catered using social media. The authors argue that social media presents a better platform for the employees in the absence of unions. In their view, this will not only assist employees to express themselves but also help them in getting them more engaged with their job tasks. In line of this argument, authors have emphasized on the use of social media as a medium to foster employee voice. By taking help from the voice channel, employees are not only able to cope with different situations but also find many opportunities in the environment. Thus, we may infer from the discussion that the use of various modern channels like social media platforms benefits employees and the organization alike in many ways. Apart from that, it is also worth considering highlighting the absence of voice behavior, which is viewed more as a silent behavior. According to Morrison (2011), silence can be understood as the suppression of essential communication or useful suggestions from others, deemed feasible to resolve many work-related issues. However, it is noted that research on silence seems compromised (Nechanska et al., 2020). Therefore, to bridge that gap in extant literature, Sherf et al. (2021) have

differentiated voice and silence behavior. In their perspective, the unsettled discussion makes it understandable that voice and silence are distinct from each other and may bring different contributions to the organizational outcomes. However, linking voice and silence to plausible antecedents and intended effects should be examined through the behavioral activation system (BAS) and behavioral inhibition system (BIS). BAS configures voice while BIS is related to silence (Sherf et al., 2021).

Continuing the discussion up to this point, it is also important to address the effectiveness of voice behavior. Various scholars have been constantly arguing in the relevance of the effectiveness of voice behavior but could hardly identify what it means by effectiveness. This can be figured out on the basis that a large stream of research has consolidated its finding on the quantity not the quality basis of the voice behavior. Only a few attempts can be seen in this regard. For example, Whiting et al. (2012) have explained this situation in the organizational setting. They argue that the voice if fails to provide feasible solutions will be considered ineffective and least desired by the managers. Taking this to a further extent, Brykman and Raver (2021) have made a remarkable attempt to increase our knowledge of the phenomenon of voice quality. Their arguments are based on the premise that not the voice, rather quality voice can make a difference that organizations can benefit from. According to the authors, quality can ideally be assessed if it has rationality, feasibility, novelty, and mainly the organizational focus with it. After reviewing voice research from the multiple contexts, the following section will provide more insights specifically on how voice research has emerged in Pakistan.

Insights from Pakistan

With all debates on voice where many decades have now gone, there still exist many voids in terms of theoretical and empirical explanations to understand what we should exactly mean by employee voice and what are the various mechanisms related to it (Park & Nawakitphaitoon, 2018). This will allow us to figure out the current state of knowledge on employee voice with acute emphasis on employment context of Pakistan and

directing key areas for future research. It will be interesting to observe that phenomenon in underdeveloped countries like Pakistan where empowered employees use different channels depending upon the intended purpose that urge them in choosing this change-oriented behavior. However, it can be difficult to assume that every employee finds equal opportunity to raising the voice, which might, otherwise, benefit the organization. To account for all that, organizations strive to implement various policies, such as whistleblowing, complaint management, grievances redressal, and so on, to protect the rights of employees (e.g., Barry & Wilkinson, 2016). Even in the presence of these mechanisms, employees are unable to solve organizational problems for several reasons that should be explored further. Scholars have conceptualized voice through an entirely different perspective specifically in the context of Pakistan. In this view, we will holistically review novel theoretical contributions to voice research specifically from the employment context of Pakistan.

Sensemaking Perspective

Akhtar et al. (2016), making a key contribution to the mainstream research on voice, have viewed voice behavior from a sensemaking perspective. Akhtar and coauthors tested the stated hypotheses through questionnaires administered to nonmanagerial employees of major banking corporations in Pakistan. The study findings support and confirm that frequent changes happening to the organization and impact of changes have indirect relationship with employee voice. Interestingly, the evidence suggests that impact of change unlike frequency of change has caused direct variance in employee voice behavior in the presence of successful change in the past. Adding further to this, the authors have talked about prohibitive and promotive voices, which can be duly influenced by the fulfillment of psychological contract viewed from the social exchange viewpoint. They also invite keen attention of scholars to make a fine-tuned analysis of employee perception when major organizational changes are to be implemented. Researchers in future might ideally align their interest to identify other potential antecedents of change such as

"organizational change determinants" that can possibly provide alternative explanation with respect to employees-related outcomes (Akhtar et al., 2016, p. 555).

Multiple Theoretical Lens to Capture Voice in Pakistan

Taking insights about employee voice behavior from Pakistani work context, another contribution we found is made by Rubbab et al. (2022). The authors have highlighted usefulness of voice behavior in the teaching profession. Based on the explanation provided by proactive behavior theory, they argue that leadership-level factors make it convenient for employees to speak. Importantly, the study identified interactional effects of voice climate that encourages teachers to provide their valuable contribution. Simply, authors have explained how teachers' voice behavior get changed due to various reasons such as supervisory delegation, which appeared as a major antecedent to the employee extra-role behavior (i.e., voice). On the other side, Hasan and Kashif (2021) have chosen the frontline employees in various banks of Pakistan. While embedding the arguments within two theories simultaneously, that is, theory of planned behavior (TBP) and theory of reasoned actions (TRA), the evidence supports that psychological mechanisms such as psychological empowerment and psychological safety can make employees converge to psychological well-being. The relationships should be viewed in the presence of intervening role of promotive voice behavior. However, results have not been found favorable in case of psychological empowerment. Moving ahead, another novel contribution in Pakistan context can be attributed to Ilyas et al. (2021). In the time-lagged study, the authors present their argument on the theory of transformational leadership and support that the transformational style of leadership encourages employees to take themselves to a level where they can speak freely and more comfortably. However, this can never happen if employees are not satisfied with their jobs and feel less empowered.

Although the authors found a partially mediating role in job satisfaction and psychological empowerment, this study advances the literature on employee voice in the South Asian employment context. Whereas Shah et al. (2022) assert that if the employee's voice is not heard, especially in the example of the healthcare sector in Pakistan, the employees may less participate in tasks that require commitment and high involvement. The situation may even force employees to think of quitting the job under stiff conditions. Therefore, to avoid these circumstances, an inclusive leadership style is more desirable, which creates a sense of psychological safety in the environment, and employees consider themselves as an integral part of the organization. On the other hand, Zhu et al. (2022) provide a fresh insight into the emerging role of ethical leadership in motivating employees to voice their concerns. However, this cannot be done without high-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) relationships and a strong sense of psychological safety in the work environment.

A large part of research in Pakistan has the focus centered on voice behavior. Given its importance, scholars have continued exploring several antecedents of voice behavior with emphasis on the kind of leadership style in the organization and quality of relationship between leader and member exchange based on LMX theory. There is a complete absence of studies that have purely focused on employee silence behavior. However, recently, Zaman et al. (2021) have captured the phenomenon of team members' silence in the construction industry of Pakistan. It has been discussed how silence should be seen from the perspective of project management. Employees that make voice contributions provide value addition to the work process; however, those remaining silent find their interest to pursue certain tasks that only match their abilities. Citing the past research, authors provide a detailed account on employee silence behavior. They outline number of factors that appear to be the cause of employees' silence behavior such as employees perceive less opportunities available to them sharing their ideas or any thoughts; employees find it more suitable to maintain their status of respect—otherwise, they would face embarrassment in that way; or some employees are rather not fully equipped to handle political situations. Under these circumstances, employees feel more comfortable with keeping constant silence.

The empirical evidence has provided novel findings on the relationship between employees in project teams keeping silence and complex nature of success in the projects. Specifically, authors have found negative association between silence and project success. Alongside, the study has estimated a meaningful meditating role of team member silence behavior between the leadership role in the complex projects and the mega-project success in the construction industry of Pakistan. In the same way, Bari et al. (2020) have drawn insight on employee silence from the software development industry of Pakistan. The evidence has supported the hypotheses that knowledge-hiding behavior might predict employee silence behavior. Authors have further elaborated on key dimensions of employee voice behavior such as "defensive, relational, and ineffectual silence." Based on possible explanation from social exchange theory (SET) and conservation of resource theory (COR), the findings revealed that psychological contract breach with few exceptions explains the indirect relationship of knowledge-hiding behavior toward the employee silence behavior. Notably, the authors anticipate reverse causation between the two constructs in future research. They find it suitable to include contextual variables to explain the given relationship such as one of these variables might be "task interdependence."

In another study, Nazir et al. (2020) have found empirical support that voice goes to an increased level if leaders extend their favorable support. Using time-lagged study design, the authors have gathered the data from multiple industries of Pakistan including healthcare, pharmaceutical, information technology, manufacturing, and companies from the financial services. Interestingly, based on the explanation offered by social exchange theory (SET) and LMX theory, the findings indicate that benevolence and moral leadership turn out as essentially important leadership styles (both referred as paternalistic leadership styles) that promote employees to provide with significant inputs, which in turn streamline ways for innovation at work. However, under certain circumstances, employee voice focused on benefiting the organization may provide a positive signal to the leadership role that organizational change is more desirable as a way forward. Unveiling opportunities for future research, authors urge to explore kinds of leadership roles and exploring ways it may impact voice as well as innovative work behavior. The other study by

Rani et al. (2021) has explored two important voice behaviors such as promotive voice and prohibitive voice behavior by taking fresh insights from affective event theory. Specifically, collecting the information from micro-finance banking corporations of Pakistan, authors have reached the conclusion that paranoid arousal (e.g., discrete emotions) has been found as the underlying mechanism between leadership style and employee voice behavior. Employees with minimum opportunities to speak might converge to destructive voice behavior as well. According to the authors, this becomes more evident in situations where leadership role does not consider the enormous benefits attached to the employee voice behavior. Indicating future research areas, authors invite the attention of scholars to explore whether voice could also emerge in other SMEs-based organizations. Another line of inquiry could also be the exploration of voice behavior using a different theoretical lens such as "emotional regulation theory" as proposed by Gross (1998).

Another research by Memon and Ghani (2020) digs out explanation on how psychological contract might influence employee voice behavior with the lens of social exchange theory unlike social identity theory used in the past. Importantly, the study findings confirm that the two dimensions of psychological contract, that is, fulfillment and violation have predicted both the positive and negative sides of employee voice behavior. In order to explain the given relationships, the study has also found support for job satisfaction mediating the relationships between psychological contract and voice behavior. Speaking about the future research implications, authors seek attention from scholars to concentrate on coworkers' perception about different personality traits of employees assisting them in many situations. Making voices heard through new channels has also attracted immense attention of the scholars in Pakistan. While integrating past literature review on voice channels, Ghani and Malik (2022) have found social media (such as Twitter, Facebook, etc.) as an effective medium for employees to roll out voice initiatives within the organization. With that, the authors have also highlighted the fallouts of using digital channels in the process of employee voice. Intriguingly, Ellmer and Reichel (2021), though not taking instances from Pakistan,

have taken a different approach to looking at voice channels. The unique attributes of the digital channel, visibility of the employee, how the employee voice is perceived in the eyes of the beholder (the manager), and even more importantly, the voice climate embedded in the organizational context might affect the propensity of one to raise voice for good.

Thus, it can be inferred that research on voice is still at the infancy stage when it comes to the Asian work context, and Pakistan is not an exception. Considered as change-oriented behavior, there is less available evidence that might have identified different dimensions of voice behavior. Take, for instance, constructive voice (Kim et al., 2022). With an integrated review of the past research, we have observed that significant portion of evidence has largely come from quantitative studies embedded in various theoretical perspectives. Recognizing that employee voice is a dynamic phenomenon and when the present research also holds that in-depth and fine-grained analysis may capture voice in organizational setting, we could not find any cutting-edge qualitative research to serve this purpose. Authors have not responded yet to these emerging calls for future research when there exists ample opportunity to explore voice behavior, voice mechanisms, and its endorsement within South Asian context, especially Pakistan.

Discussion and Managerial Implications of Voice in Pakistan

Taking the holistic understanding and analysis of the previous research evidence, we are all set to provide a detailed account of voice behavior, especially in the presence of contextual meaning attributed to Pakistan's working climate. Past research has confirmed that voice is a risky behavior to get involved in (Ng & Feldman, 2012). Employees often show courage and make conscious choice of voicing out in the form of open discussions and opinions using various conventional and emerging mediums/channels. Otherwise, those envisaging voice only as "taken-for-granted" might feel more comfortable keeping continuous silence (e.g.,

Knoll et al., 2021). Even so, employees in Pakistan find fewer opportunities to make valuable contribution through voice proposals. This happens because Pakistan is a complex work context. However, the work climate varies from one organization to the other. Leading organizations in Pakistan have now started to bring about change in the work process by acknowledging employees' voices. Rather paying attention to how frequently someone is voicing out which seldom gets attraction from others, it will be more important if employees raise quality voice that can fully benefit the organization (see Brykman & Raver, 2021).

Since there are limited studies available on voice behavior in developing countries like Pakistan, the scholars should respond to various emerging calls for future research that can ease the conditions for employees to speak up. Take, for instance, Wilkinson et al. (2020) in which the authors have classified the notion of voice from different lenses used in the domains of organizational behavior (OB)/industrial relation (IR) considering the assumptions these domains hold. Keeping in view the difference in ways to see voice as a behavior, the authors stress upon the need to bring the fields together that will surely enable employees that they can give their valuable inputs. However, it will be worth considering to know that this cannot be made out in silos. We have also noted that employees often come across difficulties on their way to transmit their voice. Therefore, apart from the trickle-down effects on voice behavior (e.g., Zhang et al., 2019), it will be high time to assess how employees thrive in their work by identifying trickle-up and trickle-around (see, Wo et al., 2019).

In line of this argument, challenging the widely held assumptions related to voice and inertia can make it almost difficult for employees to embrace this behavior. The reason might be so that it might get their public image at stake (Lee et al., 2021). To avoid this situation, the decisive role of leaders and managers can enable connecting various dots together. As the past research has also indicated, sometimes a safe voice culture can bring the difference. This will happen if employees perceive psychological safety in the work climate, which will then induce participative style of leadership at the workplace. A manager should acknowledge the concerns of the employee (either through the indirect mechanism

of labor unions, e.g., Della Torre et al., 2021) in order to develop the organization in the current disruptive era. Similarly, there exists also another potential opportunity to reach this end. That, the supervisors should make every possible effort to guide the employees and provide enough and fair support to resolve their family issues, which will eventually help organizational functioning streamlined (Yin et al., 2021). Keeping all that in consideration, employers should make actionable plans to safeguard major interests of the employees. That will certainly give a boost to the employees in dealing with the odd situations in their work setting. As a result, employees will feel at ease to bring new insights to their line managers with the intentions to improve work processes.

Apart from this, practitioners should continuously seek opportunities to provide ongoing and timely feedback for every single initiative proposed by the employees. In the same way, Deng (2022) also calls for research to examine whether the link between communication visibility and employee voice can be developed considering various work contexts. As a matter of fact, it is the sole responsibility of the employer to protect the self-interest of the employees that may be sound more applicable and considered as a way forward. Following this, emphasis should be placed on the collective efforts of the stakeholders enabling a conducive work environment. This will allow employees to bring novel approaches through their voice contribution helping organization to achieve innovative and competitive goals. Certainly, in other words, it will benefit organizations incurring no extra costs, which are usually spent while introducing new work systems. With this, a well-integrated focus on welcoming employee suggestions helps organization grow much faster. Knowing numerous benefits of employee voice within the organizations, it might be a point of concern for practitioners that voice should serve the intended benefits. This can only happen if employees stay relevant and present their ideas, suggestions, and thoughts in most effective and unified way. This is also visible through empirical evidence that managers are favorable to promotive voice in comparison to prohibitive voice behavior because of its futuristic approach. Even in the case of voice endorsement, it has been assessed that only those voices are recognized that are not only

aligned with manager foci but also avoid any kind of emotional inducement. We may also go back to the idea presented by Brykman and Raver (2021) in their seminal work on voice quality.

In conducting multiple studies simultaneously, authors assert that employee voice should reflect concrete evidence having emphasis on unique organizational focus and novelty to make an idea workable for everyone in the organization. Although it can be illustrated from the research that voice behavior seems crucial for the organization, we should also stay ready to acknowledge the absence of voice behavior. Scholars realize that employee silence can be detrimental if efforts are not channelized to curb it. Like voice behavior, employee silence can take many forms depending on the intentions. Empirical evidence suggests that silence can be eliminated if organization offers safe environment to the employees. Apart from the managerial support in this regard, the role of leadership becomes critically important creating an enabling climate for all to freely share their thoughts, attractive ideas, and valuable suggestions.

Conclusion

Employee voice is a multidimensional construct, and a large body of research goes a long way to provide a fine-grained analysis of employee behavior based on this change-oriented behavior. However, less research has been available in the context of developing countries, and particularly in Pakistan, which presents a unique employment context for organizations. We have noticed not many studies that have changed people's perception about employee voice. This can be envisioned as an emerging line of inquiry in the Pakistani work context as well. By integrating the previous research from different theoretical perspectives, we hope that this research will help future researchers to examine key dimensions of employee voice behavior and investigate what could be the various antecedents and consequences of employee voice. It will be interesting to see under what conditions voice as a strategy can benefit organizational efforts to achieve success.

References

Akhtar, M. N., Bal, M., & Long, L. (2016). Exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect reactions to frequency of change, and impact of change: A sensemaking perspective through the lens of psychological contract. *Employee Relations, 38*(4), 536–562.

Bain, K., Kreps, T. A., Meikle, N. L., & Tenney, E. R. (2021). Amplifying voice in organizations. *Academy of Management Journal, 64*(4), 1288–1312.

Bari, M. W., Ghaffar, M., & Ahmad, B. (2020). Knowledge-hiding behaviors and employees' silence: Mediating role of psychological contract breach. *Journal of Knowledge Management, 24*(9), 2171–2194.

Barry, M., & Wilkinson, A. (2016). Pro-social or pro-management? A critique of the conception of employee voice as a pro-social behaviour within organizational behaviour. *British Journal of Industrial Relations, 54*(2), 261–284.

Barry, M., & Wilkinson, A. (2022). Employee voice, psychologisation and human resource management (HRM). *Human Resource Management Journal, 32*(3), 631–646.

Bashshur, M. R., & Oc, B. (2015). When voice matters: A multilevel review of the impact of voice in organizations. *Journal of Management, 41*(5), 1530–1554.

Brykman, K. M., & Raver, J. L. (2021). To speak up effectively or often? The effects of voice quality and voice frequency on peers' and managers' evaluations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 42*(4), 504–526.

Burris, E. R. (2012). The risks and rewards of speaking up: Managerial responses to employee voice. *Academy of Management Journal, 55*(4), 851–875.

Burris, E. R., Martins, L. D., & Kimmons, Y. (2022). Mixed messages: Why managers (do not) endorse employee voice. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 172*, 104185.

Carnevale, J. B., Huang, L., Crede, M., Harms, P., & Uhl-Bien, M. (2017). Leading to stimulate employees' ideas: A quantitative review of leader–member exchange, employee voice, creativity, and innovative behaviour. *Applied Psychology, 66*(4), 517–552.

Chamberlin, M., Newton, D. W., & Lepine, J. A. (2017). A meta-analysis of voice and its promotive and prohibitive forms: Identification of key associations, distinctions, and future research directions. *Personnel Psychology, 70*(1), 11–71.

Chaudhry, N. I., Roomi, M. A., Eugien, M., & Chaudhry, J. I. (2021). Treating top management team conflicts through employee voice for reducing

intentions to quit: Moderating role of union instrumentality. *International Journal of Conflict Management, 33*(2), 203–222.

CIPD (2019). Taking about voice: employees' experiences. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, CIPD.

de Azevedo, M. C., Schlosser, F., & McPhee, D. (2020). Building organizational innovation through HRM, employee voice and engagement. *Personnel Review, 50*(2), 751–769.

Della Torre, E., Gritti, A., & Salimi, M. (2021). Direct and indirect employee voice and firm innovation in small and medium firms. *British Journal of Management, 32*(3), 760–778.

Deng, M. (2022). Communication visibility and employee voice: Mediating role of feedback-seeking. *Internet Research*. Ahead-of-print.

Duan, J., Xia, Y., Xu, Y., & Wu, C. H. (2022). The curvilinear effect of perceived overqualification on constructive voice: The moderating role of leader consultation and the mediating role of work engagement. *Human Resource Management, 61*, 489–510.

Elbaz, A. M., Salem, I. E., Onjewu, A. K., & Shaaban, M. N. (2022). Hearing employee voice and handling grievance: Views from frontline hotel and travel agency employees. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 107*, 103311.

Ellmer, M., & Reichel, A. (2021). Mind the channel! An affordance perspective on how digital voice channels encourage or discourage employee voice. *Human Resource Management Journal, 31*(1), 259–276.

Ghani, B., & Malik, M. A. R. (2022). Social media and employee voice: A comprehensive literature review. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2022.2126329

Gross, J. J. (1998). The emerging field of emotion regulation: An integrative review. *Review of General Psychology, 2*(3), 271–299.

Hasan, F., & Kashif, M. (2021). Psychological safety, meaningfulness, and empowerment as predictors of employee well-being: A mediating role of promotive voice. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration, 13*(1), 40–59.

Hirschman, A. O. (1970). Exit, voice, and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states (Vol. 25). Harvard University Press.

Holland, P., Cooper, B. K., & Hecker, R. (2016). Use of social media at work: A new form of employee voice? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 27*(21), 2621–2634.

Ilyas, S., Abid, G., Ashfaq, F., Ali, M., & Ali, W. (2021). Status quos are made to be broken: The roles of transformational leadership, job satisfaction, psychological empowerment, and voice behavior. *Sage Open, 11*(2), 1–14.

Joseph, S., & Shetty, N. (2022). An empirical study on the impact of employee voice and silence on destructive leadership and organizational culture. *Asian Journal of Business Ethics, 1–25*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13520-022-00155-0

Kao, K. Y., Hsu, H. H., Thomas, C. L., Cheng, Y. C., Lin, M. T., & Li, H. F. (2021). Motivating employees to speak up: Linking job autonomy, PO fit, and employee voice behaviors through work engagement. *Current Psychology*, 1–15.

Kaufman, B. E. (2020). Employee voice before Hirschman: Its early history, conceptualization, and practice. In Handbook of research on employee voice. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Kim, Y. J., Fu Lam, C., Oh, J., & Sohn, W. (2022). Employee constructive voice: An integrative review and a dyadic approach. *Journal of Management, 49*(1), 430–473.

Knoll, M., Neves, P., Schyns, B., & Meyer, B. (2021). A multi-level approach to direct and indirect relationships between organizational voice climate, team manager openness, implicit voice theories, and silence. *Applied Psychology, 70*(2), 606–642.

Lee, J., Loretta Kim, S., & Yun, S. (2021). Encouraging employee voice: Coworker knowledge sharing, psychological safety, and promotion focus. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 1–26*. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2021.2018014

Liao, C., Liden, R. C., Liu, Y., & Wu, J. (2021). Blessing or curse: The moderating role of political skill in the relationship between servant leadership, voice, and voice endorsement. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 42*(8), 987–1004.

Liu, X., Zheng, X., Ni, D., & Harms, P. D. (2022). Employee voice and coworker support: The roles of employee job demands and coworker voice expectation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 43* (7), 1271–1286.

McKearney, A., Prouska, R., Tungtakanpoung, M., & Opute, J. (2022). The influence of national culture on employee voice in small and medium enterprises: A cross-cultural perspective. *Employee Relations: The International Journal* (ahead-of-print). https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-04-2022-0187.

Memon, K. R., & Ghani, B. (2020). The relationship between psychological contract and voice behavior—a social exchange perspective. *Asian Journal of Business Ethics, 9*(2), 257–274.

Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 1*(1), 173–197.

Morrison, E. W., Wheeler-Smith, S. L., & Kamdar, D. (2011). Speaking up in groups: A cross-level study of group voice climate and voice. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 96*(1), 183.

Mowbray, P. K., Wilkinson, A., & Tse, H. (2019). Evolution, separation and convergence of employee voice concept. In *Employee voice at work* (pp. 3–21). Springer.

Nazir, S., Shafi, A., Asadullah, M. A., Qun, W., & Khadim, S. (2020). Linking paternalistic leadership to follower's innovative work behavior: The influence of leader–member exchange and employee voice. *European Journal of Innovation Management, 24*(4), 1354–1378.

Nechanska, E., Hughes, E., & Dundon, T. (2020). Towards an integration of employee voice and silence. *Human Resource Management Review, 30*(1). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2018.11.002

Ng, T. W., & Feldman, D. C. (2012). Employee voice behavior: A meta-analytic test of the conservation of resources framework. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 33*(2), 216–234.

Ng, T. W., Hsu, D. Y., & Parker, S. K. (2021). Received respect and constructive voice: The roles of proactive motivation and perspective taking. *Journal of Management, 47*(2), 399–429.

Park, J. Y., & Nawakitphaitoon, K. (2018). The cross-cultural study of LMX and individual employee voice: The moderating role of conflict avoidance. *Human Resource Management Journal, 28*(1), 14–30.

Prouska, R., Nyfoudi, M., Psychogios, A., Szamosi, L. T., & Wilkinson, A. (2022). Solidarity in action at a time of crisis: The role of employee voice in relation to communication and horizontal solidarity behaviour. *British Journal of Management, 00*, 1–20.

Rani, H., Shah, S. M. M., Umrani, W. A., Syed, J., & Afshan, G. (2021). Employee state paranoia: Linking abusive supervision with employee voice behavior. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 42*(7), 1053–1070.

Rasheed, M. A., Shahzad, K., & Nadeem, S. (2021). Transformational leadership and employee voice for product and process innovation in SMEs. *Innovation & Management Review, 18*(1), 69–89. https://doi.org/10.1108/INMR-01-2020-0007

Rubbab, U. E., Naqvi, S. M. M. R., Irshad, M., & Zakariya, R. (2022). Impact of supervisory delegation on employee voice behavior: Role of felt obligation for constructive change and voice climate. *European Journal of Training and Development*, (ahead-of-print). https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-01-2022-0006

Sax, J., & Torp, S. S. (2015). Speak up! Enhancing risk performance with enterprise risk management, leadership style and employee voice. *Management Decision, 53*(7), 1452–1468.

Shah, H. J., Ou, J. P., Attiq, S., Umer, M., & Wong, W. K. (2022). Does inclusive leadership improve the sustainability of employee relations? Test of justice theory and employee perceived insider status. *Sustainability, 14*(21), 14257.

Sherf, E. N., Parke, M. R., & Isaakyan, S. (2021). Distinguishing voice and silence at work: Unique relationships with perceived impact, psychological safety, and burnout. *Academy of Management Journal, 64*(1), 1–70.

Shin, D., Woodwark, M. J., Konrad, A. M., & Jung, Y. (2022). Innovation strategy, voice practices, employee voice participation, and organizational innovation. *Journal of Business Research, 147*, 392–402.

Soltani, E., Liao, Y. Y., Gholami, A. K., & Iqbal, A. (2018). Saying it without words: A qualitative study of employee voice in the Iranian building sector. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 29*(5), 1015–1055.

Song, Y., Tian, Q. T., & Kwan, H. K. (2021). Servant leadership and employee voice: A moderated mediation. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 37*(1), 1–14.

Townsend, K., Wilkinson, A., Dundon, T., & Mowbray, P. K. (2022). Tracking employee voice: Developing the concept of voice pathways. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources, 60*(2), 283–304.

Van Dyne, L., & LePine, J. A. (1998). Helping and voice extra-role behaviors: Evidence of construct and predictive validity. *Academy of Management Journal, 41*(1), 108–119.

Whiting, S. W., Maynes, T. D., Podsakoff, N. P., & Podsakoff, P. M. (2012). Effects of message, source, and context on evaluations of employee voice behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 97*(1), 159–182.

Wilkinson, A., Barry, M., & Morrison, E. (2020). Toward an integration of research on employee voice. *Human Resource Management Review, 30*(1), 100677.

Wilkinson, A., & Fay, C. (2011). New times for employee voice? *Human Resource Management, 50*(1), 65–74.

Wo, D. X., Schminke, M., & Ambrose, M. L. (2019). Trickle-down, trickle-out, trickle-up, trickle-in, and trickle-around effects: An integrative perspective on indirect social influence phenomena. *Journal of Management, 45*(6), 2263–2292.

Yin, W., Liao, S., Ouyang, X., Akhtar, M. N., & Zhou, X. (2021). I speak when boss Back up my family: Testing the moderated mediation model of family supportive supervisor behavior and employee voice. *Current Psychology*, 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-02215-3

Zaman, U., Florez-Perez, L., Khwaja, M. G., Abbasi, S., & Qureshi, M. G. (2021). Exploring the critical nexus between authoritarian leadership,

project team member's silence and multi-dimensional success in a state-owned mega construction project. *International Journal of Project Management, 39*(8), 873–886.

Zhang, J., Akhtar, M. N., Zhang, Y., & Rofcanin, Y. (2019). High-commitment work systems and employee voice: A multilevel and serial mediation approach inside the black box. *Employee Relations: The International Journal, 41*(4), 811–827.

Zhu, H., Khan, M. K., Nazeer, S., Li, L., Fu, Q., Badulescu, D., & Badulescu, A. (2022). Employee voice: A mechanism to harness employees' potential for sustainable success. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19*(2), 921.

9

Employee Voice in the United Arab Emirates

Osama Khassawneh

Introduction

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a rapidly developing country with a diverse and rapidly expanding workforce. As such, the importance of employee voice in the UAE cannot be overstated. Employee voice refers to the ability of employees to express their opinions, concerns, and ideas in the workplace. This chapter will explore the significance of employee voice in the UAE and the ways in which it can benefit both employees and employers (Soomro et al., 2020). One of the key benefits of employee voice in the UAE is that it allows for improved communication between management and employees (Duthler & Dhanesh, 2018). When employees feel that their voices are heard, they are more likely to be engaged, committed, and motivated. This can lead to improved working conditions and increased productivity. In the UAE, where the workforce is

O. Khassawneh (✉)
The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management,
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
e-mail: osama.khassawneh@eahm.ae

diverse and rapidly expanding, effective communication is essential for ensuring a positive and productive work environment (O'Neill et al., 2015).

Another significant benefit of employee voice in the UAE is that it can lead to increased innovation and problem-solving. When employees feel empowered to share their ideas and suggestions, they are more likely to come up with creative solutions to challenges and problems. This can lead to increased efficiency and effectiveness in the workplace, which is essential for the continued growth and development of the UAE (Jamil & Kumar, 2021). In addition to these benefits, employee voice can also lead to increased job satisfaction. When employees feel that their voices are heard, they feel more valued and respected. This can lead to a more positive and engaged workforce, which is essential for the long-term success of any organization in the UAE. However, it is not always easy for employees to voice their opinions and concerns in the UAE, where cultural and language barriers can often make communication difficult. Employers in the UAE must therefore make a concerted effort to create an environment in which employees feel comfortable and safe speaking up (Zeffane & Melhem, 2017). This can include providing translation services for non-native speakers, providing training on effective communication, and encouraging open and honest dialogue between management and employees (Ababneh, 2020).

About the United Arab Emirates

The UAE is a federation of seven emirates located in the southeast of the Arabian Peninsula. It is bordered by Saudi Arabia to the west and Oman to the east. The UAE has a diverse and rapidly growing population, with a significant expat community from all over the world. The UAE has a mixed economy, with a strong emphasis on oil and gas exports, as well as tourism and financial services (Matsumoto, 2019). The country is also investing heavily in renewable energy and technology. The UAE is one of the most business-friendly countries in the Middle East and has a relatively low corporate tax rate. The UAE has a federal government, with each emirate having its own government as well (Cherian et al., 2021).

The president of the UAE is the head of state and government, and the country has a constitutional monarchy system of government. The legal system is based on Islamic law, and the country has a relatively high level of political stability (Ayber & Hojeij, 2021). The UAE is known for its luxury shopping, modern architecture, and vibrant nightlife. It is home to some of the world's most famous landmarks such as Burj Khalifa and Burj Al Arab and known for its entertainment and cultural events like Abu Dhabi Formula 1 and Dubai Shopping Festival. The country has a diverse population and culture, with a mix of Arabic, Asian, and Western influences. The official language is Arabic, but English is widely spoken. The UAE has a strong emphasis on traditional values such as respect for elders and family, but also promotes a progressive and modern way of living (Alhashmi & Moussa-Inaty, 2021).

The Importance of Employee Voice

"Employee voice" refers to the right of employees to express their opinions on matters that are important to them at work. Having a system in place that encourages and facilitates employee input on organizational strategy and operational improvements is crucial for building a happy and productive workplace (Sifatu et al., 2020). One of the key benefits of employee voice is that it gives workers a say in matters that directly impact their jobs. When workers have a voice in decision-making, they are more likely to feel invested in the company's success and be more engaged and motivated (Wilkinson et al., 2020). Moreover, when workers believe that their ideas are being heard and considered, they are more likely to be enthusiastic about the company and their jobs. Employee voice also benefits businesses by providing honest input from workers. Employees' opinions can highlight the organization's strengths and weaknesses and help identify areas for improvement (Kim & Lim, 2020). This is particularly useful for businesses undergoing transitions or change, as input from staff can increase the chances that changes will be accepted and implemented effectively (Barry & Wilkinson, 2022). One of the most effective ways to promote an environment of candor and trust in the workplace is to listen to employees. When workers feel safe to voice their

thoughts and concerns without fear of repercussions, they are more likely to speak up when issues arise. Facilitating early detection and resolution of problems is essential for building a culture of trust and mutual respect (Jolly & Lee, 2021). Providing a forum for employees to share their perspectives also promotes more participation and engagement in the workplace. When workers are emotionally invested in the success of the business, they are more likely to work toward common goals and to remain with the company for a longer period of time (Ellmer & Reichel, 2021). On the other hand, "employee involvement" refers to the level of active participation of workers in the organization's decision-making and problem-solving processes. Giving employees opportunities to shape the direction of the company increases their investment and engagement in its success (Jha et al., 2019). A productive and happy work environment cannot be created without the input of employees (Afsar et al., 2019). Giving workers a voice in the decisions that affect them, and their jobs promotes honesty and openness in the workplace. Additionally, it encourages enthusiastic and active participation from staff, which is essential for the long-term success of a company (Gao & Jiang, 2019). Employers should encourage employee participation and create an atmosphere that allows for open and honest communication between management and staff (Townsend et al., 2022).

The Role of the UAE Government in Supporting the Practice of Employee Voice

The UAE government endorses the concept of employee voice in the workplace. The UAE Labor Law protects the right of employees to express their concerns and views without fear of reprisal and prohibits discrimination against employees who file grievances or complaints. The government has also launched several programs to encourage employee involvement and participation in the workplace (Mohamed & Rosman, 2021). The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization, for example, has introduced the "Employee Happiness Survey" to measure employee satisfaction and identify areas for improvement. Additionally,

the government has developed the "UAE National Discussion" project, which aims to promote open and honest dialogue between government officials and citizens through frequent public meetings and online forums (Duthler & Dhanesh, 2018). However, it should be noted that while the government generally supports the concept of employee input, its implementation can vary among different enterprises and industries (Karim, 2020). Cultural and linguistic barriers can make it difficult for employees to voice their ideas and concerns, and there may be limited opportunities for employees to participate in decision-making processes, particularly in the private sector (Benuyenah & Pandya, 2020) Overall, the UAE government encourages employee voice and has implemented programs to increase employee involvement and participation in the workplace, but the extent to which it is practiced may differ among industries and organizations (Cherian et al., 2021).

The Impact of Culture on Employee Voice in the UAE

The culture of the UAE can have a significant bearing on the degree to which employees participate in workplace activities. Because traditional cultures place a significant amount of emphasis on deferring to those in positions of power and maintaining hierarchies, it can be difficult for employees to express their thoughts and concerns to management (Cerimagic, 2010). Complaining or airing grievances is not something that is encouraged in traditional Arab culture since it is seen as a show of disrespect to one's superiors and there is a great emphasis placed on dedication and obedience to authority figures (AlShamsi et al., 2022). This might contribute to an atmosphere where employees feel uncomfortable expressing their concerns, even if those worries are warranted. In addition, employees may have difficulty articulating their opinions and concerns due to language barriers (Parakandi & Behery, 2016). Arabic, which is the country's official language, is likely to be challenging for many foreigners to learn. Because of this, it may be challenging for them to connect productively with their coworkers and bosses, and it may also

discourage them from speaking their minds (AlMazrouei & Pech, 2015). Nevertheless, it should be underlined that the UAE is a country that is rapidly developing and that a greater awareness of the significance of employee voice in the workplace is gaining ground. There is a growing realization that there must be honest and open communication between management and employees, and the government has implemented a number of programs to encourage employee engagement and participation in the workplace. In addition, there is a growing awareness of the necessity of such communication (Jabeen & Isakovic, 2018).

Examples of Leaders and Organizations that Support the Practice of Employee Voice in the UAE

In the UAE, there are several examples of leaders and organizations that support the practice of employee voice in the workplace. Some of these include:

- Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, has been a strong advocate for employee voice and engagement. He is known for his commitment to open and transparent communication and encourages government officials to engage with citizens and listen to their concerns (Anadol & Behery, 2020).
- Emirates Group: The Emirates Group, one of the largest employers in the UAE, has a strong emphasis on employee engagement and participation. The company regularly conducts employee surveys to gather feedback and identify areas for improvement. Furthermore, the company has an employee engagement program that encourages employees to share their ideas and suggestions and rewards them for doing so (Suliman & Hayat, 2011).
- Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC): ADNOC is the state-owned oil company of the UAE. The company has a strong culture of employee engagement and participation and encourages employees to

share their ideas and suggestions for improving operations. ADNOC has implemented many initiatives to gather employee feedback and improve working conditions, such as employee satisfaction surveys and employee focus groups (Ameen et al., 2018).

- Abu Dhabi Media: Abu Dhabi Media is a media company owned by the government of Abu Dhabi, and it has a strong commitment to employee voice and engagement. The company has many initiatives in place to encourage employee participation, such as regular employee surveys and town hall meetings where employees can voice their opinions and concerns (Slak Valek, 2018).
- Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA): DEWA is the state-owned utility company of Dubai. The company places a strong emphasis on employee engagement and participation and has implemented many initiatives to gather employee feedback and improve working conditions. The company conducts regular employee satisfaction surveys and has an employee suggestion program that encourages employees to share their ideas for improving operations (Al Nuseirat et al., 2019).

These are just a few examples of leaders and organizations in the UAE that support the practice of employee voice in the workplace. There are many more organizations that value employee voice in the UAE and support the practice of employee engagement and participation in their workplace.

Hofstede's Study and Employee Voice in the UAE

Hofstede's study of cultural dimensions is a widely recognized framework that can be used to understand the cultural influences on employee voice in the UAE. According to Hofstede's study, the UAE scores relatively high on the dimension of power distance, which refers to the extent to which people in a society accept that power is distributed unequally (Botero & Van Dyne, 2009). This dimension can have a significant

impact on employee voice in the UAE, as employees may be less likely to speak up or challenge authority figures, due to a traditional expectation of respect for hierarchy and authority (Park & Nawakitphaitoon, 2018)

In high power distance societies, there is a strong tradition of obedience and loyalty to superiors, and people are not encouraged to question or challenge those in power. This can create a culture where employees may be hesitant to express their opinions, even when they have legitimate concerns, as they may fear retaliation or be seen as disrespectful (Rubbab et al., 2022). Moreover, the UAE scores relatively high on the dimension of collectivism, which refers to the extent to which people in a society prioritize the needs and goals of their group over their own individual needs (Zhu et al., 2022). This dimension can also impact employee voice in the UAE, as employees may be less likely to speak up or share their opinions if they feel that it may conflict with the goals or interests of their group. In collectivist cultures, the emphasis is on maintaining harmony and preserving the reputation of the group, and people may avoid raising controversial issues or expressing dissenting opinions (Al Hosani et al., 2021). The UAE also scores relatively low on the dimension of masculinity, which refers to the extent to which people in a society emphasize assertiveness and competition (Tlaiss, 2014). This dimension can make it difficult for employees to speak up and share their opinions, as they may be less likely to want to be seen as confrontational or competitive. In masculine cultures, there is a strong emphasis on winning and achieving success, which can make it challenging for employees to express their opinions in a constructive way, without being seen as a threat. Despite these cultural influences, it is important to note that the UAE is a rapidly developing country, and there is a growing recognition of the importance of employee voice in the workplace (Bose & Emirates, 2018). The government has implemented various initiatives to promote employee engagement and participation in the workplace, and there is a growing awareness of the need for open and honest dialogue between management and employees. In order to support employee voice in the UAE, employers should strive to create an environment that encourages open and honest dialogue and actively support employee participation. This

can include providing translation services for non-native speakers, providing training on effective communication, and encouraging open and honest dialogue between management and employees (Maqbool et al., 2023). Also, implementing an employee suggestion program and conducting regular employee satisfaction surveys can help gather employee feedback and identify areas for improvement (Rao et al., 2021). Overall, Hofstede's study of cultural dimensions provides valuable insights into the cultural influences on employee voice in the UAE. The country's high scores on power distance, collectivism, and low score on masculinity can make it challenging for employees to speak up and share their opinions. However, employers in the UAE must strive to create an environment that encourages open and honest dialogue and actively support employee participation, regardless of the cultural influences (Bani-Melhem et al., 2023).

The Relationship Between Institutionalism and Employee Voice in the UAE

Institutionalism is a term that describes the degree to which the rules and procedures of an organization are in accordance with the norms and values of the society in which the organization functions (Schotter et al., 2021). Institutionalism in the UAE can have a considerable influence on the amount of employee input that is heard in the workplace (Khassawneh & Mohammad, 2022). The influence of traditional cultural values on organizational policies and procedures is one of the primary ways that institutionalism can affect employee voice in the UAE (Khassawneh et al., 2023). This is one of the fundamental ways that institutionalism can affect employee voice in the UAE (Mohamed et al., 2019). As was mentioned earlier, the United Arab Emirates has a traditional culture that places a strong emphasis on respect for authority and hierarchy (Almarashda et al., 2021). As a result, it can be difficult for employees to express their opinions and concerns to management due to the strong

emphasis placed on respecting authority (Bani-Melhem et al., 2020b). This can be represented in organizational policies and processes that discourage or even ban employees from speaking up or opposing authority people (Al Amiri & Abu Shawali, 2021). These policies and procedures might be seen as a reflection of this phenomenon. Additionally, the influence of legal and regulatory frameworks on organizational policies and procedures can affect employee voice in the UAE (Mohammad et al., 2021). This is another way in which institutionalism can have an impact on employee voice in the UAE (Jabeen & Al Dari, 2020) The United Arab Emirates Labor Law contains provisions that protect the rights of employees to express their opinions and concerns without fear of retaliation; however, the degree to which these laws are actually enforced can vary widely depending on the type of organization and the sector in which it operates (Qasim, 2020). It is possible that employers don't always comply with the laws and regulations, which can make it challenging for employees to voice issues or complaints about their working conditions (Khassawneh & Abaker, 2022). Furthermore, institutionalism can affect employee voice by the way that organizational culture influences the policies and procedures that are implemented (Quratulain & Bani-Melhem, 2020). It is possible that certain companies have a culture that places a strong emphasis on obedience and allegiance to superiors, and as a result, employees are discouraged from speaking up or sharing their ideas. Because of this, it may be difficult for employees to voice their ideas and concerns, even when they have valid complaints (Benuyenah & Pandya, 2020). On the other hand, it is essential to keep in mind that institutionalism is not a fixed concept but rather one that can develop with time. There is a rising understanding of the necessity for open and honest interaction between management and employees in the UAE, and the government of the UAE has developed a variety of programs and policies to encourage the involvement and participation of workers in the workplace (Alansaari et al., 2019). These initiatives have the potential to encourage employee voice and assist align company policies and procedures with the norms and values of the society in which they operate (Khoja & Thomas, 2021).

The Influence of Leadership Style on Employee Voice in the UAE

The leadership style of a manager or a supervisor can have a significant impact on employee voice in the UAE. Good leaders can create an environment that encourages open and honest communication between management and employees, while bad leaders can create an environment that discourages employee voice (Al Khayyal et al., 2020). Good leaders are those who actively listen to employee's opinions and concerns and take them into account when making decisions. They provide clear channels for employees to raise complaints and grievances and take appropriate action to address them (ElKaleh, 2019). Good leaders also promote employee engagement and participation in the workplace, encouraging employees to share their ideas and suggestions and rewarding them for doing so. They foster an open-door policy and actively encourage employees to share their opinions, ideas, and concerns (Bodolica et al., 2020; Bani-Melhem et al., 2021) They also actively encourage and support employee participation in decision-making processes (Khassawneh et al., 2022). They create a culture of trust and mutual respect, where employees feel safe and comfortable sharing their opinions and concerns (Al-Obthani & Ameen, 2019). Good leaders in the UAE also recognize the importance of cultural influences on employee voice. They are aware of the traditional cultural values that place a strong emphasis on respect for authority and hierarchy, and work to create an environment that encourages open and honest communication, regardless of the cultural influences (Cherian et al., 2020). They understand that employees may be hesitant to speak up or share their opinions, and they take steps to overcome these cultural barriers. For example, they may provide translation services for non-native speakers, or provide training on effective communication (Sandybayev, 2019).

On the other hand, bad leaders can create an environment that discourages employee voice. They may not listen to employee opinions and concerns or may not take them seriously. They may also have a lack of transparency in decision-making process and may not provide clear channels for employees to raise complaints or grievances (Alkheyi et al., 2020).

Moreover, bad leaders may not promote employee engagement and participation in the workplace and may discourage employees from sharing their ideas and suggestions. They may not foster an open-door policy and actively discourage employees from sharing their opinions, ideas, and concerns (Khassawneh & Elrehail, 2022). They may also discourage employee participation in decision-making processes and create a culture of fear and mistrust. In the UAE, the leadership style of a manager can also be influenced by legal and regulatory frameworks (Alshehhi et al., 2019). The UAE Labor Law includes provisions that protect the rights of employees to express their opinions and concerns without fear of retaliation, but enforcement of these laws can vary among organizations and industries. Good leaders in the UAE will ensure that their organizations are compliant with the laws and regulations and actively support employee voice and engagement (Jawabri, 2020). On the other hand, bad leaders may not comply with the laws and regulations and may actively discourage employee voice and engagement. In conclusion, good leaders can create an environment that encourages employee voice in the UAE, by actively listening to employee opinions and concerns, promoting employee engagement and participation, fostering an open-door policy, and understanding the cultural influences on employee voice (Alnuaimi & Yaakub, 2020). On the other hand, bad leaders can create an environment that discourages employee voice, by not listening to employee opinions and concerns, not promoting employee engagement and participation, not fostering an open communication (Al Samkari & David, 2019).

Strategies for Promoting Employee Voice in the UAE

Promoting employee voice in the UAE involves creating an environment in which employees feel comfortable and empowered to share their ideas, opinions, and concerns with management. This can be achieved through a variety of strategies, including:

1. Encouraging open communication: Employers should create an open and transparent communication channel for employees to share their thoughts and ideas. This can be achieved through regular meetings, employee surveys, and suggestion boxes (Ibrahim & Al Falasi, 2014).

2. Creating a culture of trust: Employers should foster a culture of trust and mutual respect between management and employees. This can be achieved by being open and transparent with employees, treating them with respect, and valuing their contributions (Malaeb et al., 2022).

3. Providing opportunities for employee involvement: Employers should provide opportunities for employees to get involved in decision-making processes, such as through employee committees or focus groups. This can help to create a sense of ownership and engagement among employees (Al Mehrzi & Singh, 2016).

4. Recognizing and rewarding employee contributions: Employers should recognize and reward employees for their contributions to the organization. This can be done through performance-based incentives, such as bonuses or promotions, or through more informal means, such as public recognition (Nuaimi, 2020; Al-Hawari et al., 2021).

5. Providing training and development opportunities: Employers should provide employees with training and development opportunities to help them acquire the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in their roles. This can help to create a more engaged and motivated workforce (Askary et al., 2014).

6. Providing support and resources: Employers should provide employees with the support and resources they need to do their jobs effectively. This can include things like access to technology, office supplies, or other tools and equipment (Firdous, 2020).

7. Encouraging employee feedback: Employers should actively seek out and encourage employee feedback. This can be done through regular employee surveys or performance evaluations (Razack & Upadhyay, 2017).

8. Encourage employees to share their ideas and opinions: Employers should create an environment that encourages employees to share

their ideas and opinions. This can be achieved through open communication and through creating opportunities for employee involvement in decision-making processes (Abraham, 2012; Bani-Melhem et al., 2020b).

9. Encourage a positive work-life balance: Employers should encourage employees to maintain a positive work-life balance. This can be achieved through flexible working hours, remote working options, and other benefits that help to support employee well-being (Singh & Sharma, 2015; Bani-Melhem et al., 2020a).

10. Encourage employee engagement: Employers should encourage employee engagement by creating opportunities for employees to get involved in the organization, such as through employee committees or focus groups. This can help to create a sense of ownership and engagement among employees (Zainal & Salloum, 2021).

Promoting employee voice in the UAE requires creating an environment that encourages open communication, trust, and mutual respect between management and employees. Employers should provide opportunities for employee involvement, recognition and rewards for contributions, training and development opportunities, support and resources, and opportunities for employee feedback. Furthermore, employers should encourage positive work-life balance and employee engagement. By implementing these strategies, employers can create a more engaged and motivated workforce, which can ultimately lead to improved organizational performance (Khassawneh et al., 2022).

Practical Implications

The practical implications of employee voice have the potential to have a substantial effect on the achievement of a company's goals. In the UAE, one of the most important and major practical implications of employee voice is an improvement in communication between employees and management. It is much more probable that an employee will feel heard and respected by their employer when the employee believes that they are able to speak their mind and share their ideas and opinions (Alebri,

2022). This can result in higher levels of trust and respect between employees and management, which can contribute to the development of a more positive culture within the workplace (Al Mehrzi, 2017). In addition, when workers believe that their opinions are being taken into consideration, they are more likely to feel as though they have a personal stake in the success of the company (Zahmi & Khalfan, 2018). This, in turn, can lead to improved levels of engagement and productivity. In the UAE, increasing employee satisfaction is another practical effect of employee voice. It is more probable that employees will feel content with their work and motivated to remain with the company if they believe that they have some level of influence over the overall direction and decisions of the organization (Al-Qaiwani, 2017). This may result in lower expenses associated with employee turnover and recruitment for the firm. In addition, when workers believe that their thoughts and suggestions are being considered by their employer, they are more likely to feel appreciated and respected by their employer, which can contribute to an increase in job satisfaction (Mehrajunnisa & Jabeen, 2020). The input of staff members can also result in higher rates of innovation and productivity. It is much more probable that employees would come up with original and creative solutions to issues if they are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas. When employees have the impression that their suggestions are being considered, they are more likely to be driven to work harder and be more productive (Patterson et al., 2020). The voice of the employee can also contribute to the improvement of decision-making processes inside the firm. It is more probable that employees will bring a wide variety of perspectives to the table if they are encouraged to contribute their thoughts and ideas and given the opportunity to do so. This may result in improved decision-making and decisions that are more informed, as well as higher buy-in and support from employees (Soomro et al., 2020). However, it is important to keep in mind that the labor laws of the UAE and the culture of the country limit the extent to which employees can have their voices heard (Ababneh, 2020). As a result, it is essential for businesses to strike a balance between the benefits of encouraging employees to have their voices heard and the obligations imposed by the law (Cherian et al., 2021). For instance, the UAE has a strong culture and heritage of hierarchical organization, in which employees are expected to

follow the commands and directions of their superiors without questioning them. In addition, the laws governing labor in the UAE do not provide workers with the freedom to organize trade unions or go on strike at any time (Sifatu et al., 2020). Therefore, it is important for businesses to find alternative ways to encourage employee voice. Some examples of these alternative methods include employee surveys, suggestion boxes, and employee focus groups. These methods can provide a platform for employees to share their thoughts and ideas while still respecting the limitations that are imposed by legal and cultural norms (Jha et al., 2019).

Directions for Future Research

One direction for future studies on employee voice in the UAE would be to examine the various forms that employee voice can take. These forms can be classified into two main categories, formal and informal. Formal mechanisms for providing feedback include employee surveys, suggestion boxes, and employee representatives, while informal channels for communication include water cooler conversations, social media groups, and informal meetings with managers (Gao & Jiang, 2019). Formal mechanisms for employee voice are often structured and designed to gather specific information from employees but may not always provide a platform for open-ended discussions or for employees to express their opinions freely (Mohamed & Rosman, 2021). While informal channels for employee voice tend to be more spontaneous, less structured and provide opportunities for employees to express their opinions and concerns in a more natural and authentic way. Another important direction for future research would be to investigate the factors that influence the use of employee voice in the UAE (Duthler & Dhanesh, 2018). Cultural norms and values play a significant role in shaping employee voice in the UAE. The collectivistic culture of the UAE, characterized by strong emphasis on group identity, harmony, and loyalty, may lead to employees being more reluctant to voice dissenting opinions or concerns, especially when they may be perceived as challenging or critical of the group or organization. On the other hand, the hierarchical culture of the UAE may lead to employees being more likely to rely on formal channels for

employee voice, such as surveys or suggestion boxes, rather than taking the initiative to express their opinions in an informal way (Benuyenah & Pandya, 2020). Organizational policies and practices also play a significant role in shaping employee voice in the UAE. Organizations that encourage open communication and provide opportunities for employee participation and feedback tend to have more engaged and productive employees. However, organizations that have rigid hierarchies and lack transparency may discourage employees from expressing their opinions or concerns (Bose & Emirates, 2018). Therefore, future studies could investigate how organizations in the UAE can create a culture of open communication and participation, and how they can provide opportunities for employees to express their opinions and concerns in a constructive and meaningful way (Almarashda et al., 2021). Another direction for future research could be to investigate the relationship between employee voice and employee well-being in UAE. Studies have shown that employees who can voice their opinions and concerns at work experience lower levels of stress and burnout (Jabeen & Al Dari, 2020). Furthermore, employees who feel that their opinions and concerns are valued and considered by their employer tend to be more engaged and committed to their work. Therefore, future research could investigate how organizations in the UAE can create a culture of open communication and participation that leads to improved employee well-being and engagement (Benuyenah & Pandya, 2020). In addition, the use of technology and social media platforms have changed the way employees voice their opinions, and it is important to investigate how these changes affect employee voice in the UAE. Social media platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook, provide employees with a platform to express their opinions and concerns, and they can be a powerful tool for employees to voice their opinions and concerns in a public and visible way. Studies could investigate the impact of social media on employee voice in the UAE, and how organizations can use social media to improve employee engagement and participation (ElKaleh, 2019). Finally, future studies could investigate the impact of employee voice on organizational performance in the UAE. Studies have shown that organizations that have engaged and satisfied employees tend to perform better in terms of productivity, innovation, and customer satisfaction. Therefore, future research could

investigate how organizations in the UAE can create a culture of open communication and participation that leads to improved organizational performance (Al-Obthani & Ameen, 2019).

Conclusion

In the UAE, employee voice refers to the ability of workers to express their opinions, concerns, and ideas to management and to have those views taken into consideration when decisions are made. While the concept of employee voice is not explicitly recognized in UAE labor laws, it is becoming increasingly important as the country moves toward a more knowledge-based economy and as the workforce becomes more diverse and better educated. In practice, many companies in the UAE have implemented employee engagement programs to encourage and facilitate the expression of employee voice, and there is a growing awareness among managers of the benefits of listening to and acting on employee input. Overall, while the legal framework for employee voice in the UAE may not be as developed as in other countries, the culture and business environment are becoming more conducive to the active participation of employees in decision-making.

References

Ababneh, K. I. (2020). Effects of met expectations, trust, job satisfaction, and commitment on faculty turnover intentions in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 31*(2), 303–334.

Abraham, S. (2012). Development of employee engagement programme on the basis of employee satisfaction survey. *Journal of Economic Development, Management, IT, Finance, and Marketing, 4*(1), 27.

Afsar, B., Shahjehan, A., Shah, S. I., & Wajid, A. (2019). The mediating role of transformational leadership in the relationship between cultural intelligence and employee voice behavior: A case of hotel employees. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 69*, 66–75.

Al Amiri, N., & Abu Shawali, A. (2021). Talent management strategies of a public UAE hospital in the Industry 4.0 era: A qualitative analysis. *Problems and Perspectives in Management, 19*(1), 14–27.

Al Hosani, K. A., van Ewijk, A. R., & Hussain, M. (2021). Determinants of employee creative behavior in the UAE public sector. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPPM-11-2020-0601

Al Khayyal, A. O., Alshurideh, M., Al Kurdi, B., & Salloum, S. A. (2020, October). Women empowerment in UAE: A systematic review. In *International Conference on Advanced Intelligent Systems and Informatics* (pp. 742–755). Springer.

Al Mehrzi, N. (2017). *Exploring employee engagement in two public organizations in the UAE*. Doctoral dissertation, Nada Al Mehrzi.

Al Mehrzi, N., & Singh, S. K. (2016). Competing through employee engagement: A proposed framework. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management, 65*(6), 831–843.

Al Nuseirat, A. A., El Kahlout, Z. M., Abbas, A., Adebanjo, D., Punnakitikashem, P., & Mann, R. (2019). An analysis of a structured benchmarking project: The case of Dubai Electricity and Water Authority's benchmarking project. *Benchmarking: An International Journal, 26*, 1431–1450.

Al Samkari, H., & David, S. A. (2019). The role and impacts of authentic leadership on staff engagement and performance: A study among school leaders and teachers in private schools in the UAE. *Specialty Journal of Psychology and Management, 5*(4), 65–78.

Alansaari, O., Yusoff, R. B. M. D., & Ismail, F. (2019). The mediating effect of employee commitment on recruitment process towards organizational performance in UAE organizations. *Management Science Letters, 9*(1), 169–182.

Alebri, A. M. (2022). *The Impact of artificial intelligence on the employee engagement: A study of oil and gas originations of UAE*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

Alhashmi, M., & Moussa-Inaty, J. (2021). Professional learning for Islamic education teachers in the UAE. *British Journal of Religious Education, 43*(3), 278–287.

Al-Hawari, M. A., Bani-Melhem, S., & Shamsudin, F. M. (2021). Does employee willingness to take risks affect customer loyalty? A moderated mediation examination of innovative behaviors and decentralization. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-08-2020-0802

Alkheyi, A. A. S. A., Khalifa, G. S. A., Ameen, A., Hossain, M. S., Hewedi, M. M., & Nasir, N. S. M. (2020). Strategic leadership practices on team effectiveness: The mediating effect of knowledge sharing in the UAE Municipalities. *Academic Leadership, 21*(3), 99–112.

Almarashda, H. A. H. A., Baba, I. B., Ramli, A. A., Memon, A. H., & Rahman, I. A. (2021). Human resource management and technology development in artificial intelligence adoption in the UAE energy sector. *Journal of Applied Engineering Sciences, 11*(2), 69–76.

AlMazrouei, H., & Pech, R. J. (2015). Working in the UAE: Expatriate management experiences. *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research, 6*(1), 73–93.

Alnuaimi, A. S. A., & Yaakub, K. B. (2020). The impact of leadership practices on total quality management and organizational performance in the UAE interior ministry. *European Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, 5*(2), 5–12.

Al-Obthani, F., & Ameen, A. (2019). Association between transformational leadership and smart government among employees in UAE public organizations. *International Journal on Emerging Technologies, 10*(1a), 98–104.

Al-Qaiwani, O. S. A. (2017). *Employee Engagement and Leadership in a UAE Governmental Organization.* Doctoral dissertation, The British University in Dubai (BUiD).

AlShamsi, S. S., Bin Ahmad, K. Z., & Jasimuddin, S. M. (2022). Curiosity, proactive personality, organizational culture and work engagement in the aviation industry in the UAE during Covid-19: A non-probabilistic moderated-mediation model. *Journal of General Management.* https://doi.org/10.1177/030630702211412

Alshehhi, S., Abuelhassan, A. E., & Nusari, M. (2019). Effect of transformational leadership on employees' performances through job satisfaction within public sectors in UAE. *International Journal of Innovative Technology and Exploring Engineering, 8*(2), 588–597.

Ameen, A., AlMulla, A., Maram, M. A., Al-Shibami, A. H., & Ghosh, A. (2018). The impact of knowledge sharing on managing organizational change within Abu Dhabi national oil organizations. *International Journal of Management and Human Science (IJMHS), 2*(3), 27–36.

Anadol, Y., & Behery, M. (2020). Humanistic leadership in the UAE context. *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management.* https://doi.org/10.1108/CCSM-01-2020-0023

Askary, S., Kukunuru, S., & Pech, R. (2014). An assessment of employee commitment to work among UAE nationals. *International Journal of Business Excellence, 7*(1), 1–15.

Ayber, P. O., & Hojeij, Z. (2021). Promoting Intercultural Awareness through Stories: A UAE Case. *Journal of. Teaching and Teacher Education, 9*(02). https://doi.org/10.12785/itte/090203

Bani-Melhem, S., Al-Hawari, M. A., & Mohd. Shamsudin, F. (2021). Green innovation performance: A multi-level analysis in the hotel sector. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 30*, 1–19.

Bani-Melhem, S., Al-Hawari, M. A., & Quratulain, S. (2020a). Leader-member exchange and frontline employees' innovative behaviors: The roles of employee happiness and service climate. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*. https://doi.org/10.1108/ijppm-03-2020-0092

Bani-Melhem, S., Shamsudin, F. M., Abukhait, R., & Al-Hawari, M. A. (2023). Competitive psychological climate as a double-edged sword: A moderated mediation model of organization-based self-esteem, jealousy, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 54*, 139–151.

Bani-Melhem, S., Shamsudin, F. M., Abukhait, R. M., & Quratulain, S. (2020b). Paranoid personality and frontline employee's proactive work behaviours: A moderated mediation model of empathetic leadership and perceived psychological safety. *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*. https://doi.org/10.1108/JSTP-05-2020-0104

Barry, M., & Wilkinson, A. (2022). Employee voice, psychologisation and human resource management (HRM). *Human Resource Management Journal, 32*(3), 631–646.

Benuyenah, V., & Pandya, B. (2020). Measuring employee happiness in the UAE–integrating organisational data into the national statistics. *International Review of Management and Marketing, 10*(3), 83.

Bodolica, V., Spraggon, M., & Saleh, N. (2020). Innovative leadership in leisure and entertainment industry: The case of the UAE as a global tourism hub. *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management*. https://doi.org/10.1108/imefm-12-2019-0521

Bose, I., & Emirates, U. A. (2018). Employee empowerment and employee performance: An empirical study on selected banks in UAE. *Journal of Applied Management and Investments, 7*(2), 71–82.

Botero, I. C., & Van Dyne, L. (2009). Employee voice behavior: Interactive effects of LMX and power distance in the United States and Colombia. *Management Communication Quarterly, 23*(1), 84–104.

Cerimagic, S. (2010). Influence of culture on project practices: Insights from Australian project managers in UAE. *Education, Business and Society: Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues, 3*(4), 277–288.

Cherian, J., Gaikar, V., Paul, R., & Pech, R. (2021). Corporate culture and its impact on employees' attitude, performance, productivity, and behavior: An investigative analysis from selected organizations of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity, 7*(1), 45.

Cherian, J., Gaikar, V., Raj, P., & P. (2020). Do leadership styles impact organizational performance in the UAE context? A study. *International Journal of Mechanical Engineering and Technology (IJMET), 11*, 23–32.

Duthler, G., & Dhanesh, G. S. (2018). The role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and internal CSR communication in predicting employee engagement: Perspectives from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). *Public Relations Review, 44*(4), 453–462.

ElKaleh, E. (2019). Leadership curricula in UAE business and education management programmes: A Habermasian analysis within an Islamic context. *International Journal of Educational Management.* https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-10-2016-0220

Ellmer, M., & Reichel, A. (2021). Mind the channel! An affordance perspective on how digital voice channels encourage or discourage employee voice. *Human Resource Management Journal, 31*(1), 259–276.

Firdous, T. (2020). The effects of employee Engagement on employee turnover: A case study from the UAE. In *Human capital in the middle east* (pp. 93–118). Palgrave Macmillan.

Gao, A., & Jiang, J. (2019). Perceived empowering leadership, harmonious passion, and employee voice: The moderating role of job autonomy. *Frontiers in Psychology, 10*, 1484.

Ibrahim, M., & Al Falasi, S. (2014). Employee loyalty and engagement in UAE public sector. *Employee Relations, 36.* https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-07-2013-0098

Jabeen, F., & Al Dari, T. (2020). A framework for integrating knowledge management benefits in the UAE organisations. *Knowledge Management Research & Practice, 21*, 1–15.

Jabeen, F., & Isakovic, A. A. (2018). Examining the impact of organizational culture on trust and career satisfaction in the UAE public sector: A competing values perspective. *Employee Relations.* https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-02-2017-0038

Jamil, R., & Kumar, R. (2021). Culture, structure, and health: Narratives of low-income Bangladeshi migrant workers from the United Arab Emirates. *Health Communication, 36*(11), 1297–1308.

Jawabri, A. (2020). The impact of big-5 model leadership traits on team entrepreneurship: An empirical study of small businesses in the UAE. *Management Science Letters, 10*(3), 497–506.

Jha, N., Potnuru, R. K. G., Sareen, P., & Shaju, S. (2019). Employee voice, engagement, and organizational effectiveness: A mediated model. *European Journal of Training and Development*. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-10-2018-0097

Jolly, P. M., & Lee, L. (2021). Silence is not golden: Motivating employee voice through inclusive leadership. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, 45*(6), 1092–1113.

Karim, Y. (2020). Long working hours and their impact on employee productivity in the UAE service sector. In *Human capital in the middle east* (pp. 119–145). Palgrave Macmillan.

Khassawneh, O., & Abaker, M. O. S. M. (2022). Human resource management in the United Arab Emirates: Towards a better understanding. In *HRM in the global south* (pp. 103–128). Palgrave Macmillan.

Khassawneh, O., & Elrehail, H. (2022). The effect of participative leadership style on employees' performance: The contingent role of institutional theory. *Administrative Sciences, 12*(4), 195.

Khassawneh, O., & Mohammad, T. (2022). The influence of work diversity on organizational performance in the hospitality sector in the UAE: The moderating role of HR practices. *Administrative Sciences, 12*(4), 175.

Khassawneh, O., Mohammad, T., Ben-Abdallah, R., & Alabidi, S. (2022). The relationship between emotional intelligence and educators' performance in higher education sector. *Behavioral Sciences, 12*(12), 511.

Khassawneh, O., Mohammad, T., & Momany, M. T. (2023). Perceived over-qualification and job outcomes: The moderating role of manager envy. *Sustainability, 15*(1), 84.

Khoja, S., & Thomas, S. (2021). *Labour and employment compliance in the United Arab Emirates*. Kluwer Law International BV.

Kim, Y., & Lim, H. (2020). Activating constructive employee behavioural responses in a crisis: Examining the effects of pre-crisis reputation and crisis communication strategies on employee voice behaviours. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management, 28*(2), 141–157.

Malaeb, M., Dagher, G. K., & Messarra, L. C. (2022). "The relationship between self-leadership andemployee engagement in Lebanon and the UAE: the moderating role of perceived organizational support", *Personnel Review*, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print. https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-12-2021-0862.

Maqbool, S., Zafeer, H. M. I., Zeng, P., Mohammad, T., Khassawneh, O., & Wu, L. (2023). The role of diverse leadership styles in teaching to sustain academic excellence at secondary level. *Frontiers in Psychology, 13*, 1096151. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1096151

Matsumoto, A. (2019). Literature review on education reform in the UAE. *International Journal of Educational Reform, 28*(1), 4–23.

Mehrajunnisa, M., & Jabeen, F. (2020). Antecedents to employee suggestion schemes: The study of UAE. *The TQM Journal*. https://doi.org/10.1108/TQM-12-2018-0217

Mohamed, F., Nusari, M., Ameen, A., Raju, V., & Bhaumik, A. (2019). Impact of strategy implementation (strategy, structure, and human resources) on organisational performance within Abu Dhabi Police, UAE. *Test Engineering & Management, 81*, 1914–1920.

Mohamed, M. S., & Rosman, A. S. B. (2021). The criminal protection of public employees in the United Arab Emirates law compared with Islamic law. *Linguistics and Culture Review, 5*(S3), 154–160.

Mohammad, T., Darwish, T. K., Singh, S., & Khassawneh, O. (2021). Human resource management and organisational performance: The mediating role of social exchange. *European Management Review, 18*(1), 125–136.

Nuaimi, A. A. (2020). Low employee engagement in the UAE: Causes and solutions to overcome the issue. In *Human capital in the Middle East* (pp. 51–72). Palgrave Macmillan.

O'Neill, K., Hodgson, S., & Mazrouei, M. A. (2015). Employee engagement and internal communication: A United Arab Emirates study. *Middle East Journal of Business, 10*(4), 3–28.

Parakandi, M., & Behery, M. (2016). Sustainable human resources: Examining the status of organizational work–life balance practices in the United Arab Emirates. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews, 55*, 1370–1379.

Park, J. Y., & Nawakitphaitoon, K. (2018). The cross-cultural study of LMX and individual employee voice: The moderating role of conflict avoidance. *Human Resource Management Journal, 28*(1), 14–30.

Patterson, L., Pandya, B., & Cho, B. (2020). Exploring the motivators to satisfy UAE employees. *Polish Journal of Management Studies, 22*, 402–413.

Qasim, A. (2020). The impacts of high employee turnover in the UAE hospitality industry. In *Human capital in the Middle East* (pp. 73–91). Palgrave Macmillan.

Quratulain, S., & Bani-Melhem, S. (2020). Perceived organizational customer orientation and frontline employees' innovative behaviors: Exploring the role

of empowerment and supervisory fairness. *European Journal of Innovation Management, 24*(2), 533–552.

Rao, S., Abdul, W. K., & Kamel, Y. (2021). Empirical investigation on the effects of culture on knowledge sharing and organization citizenship behaviour: Study from UAE. *Knowledge Management Research & Practice, 20*, 1–13.

Razack, S. S., & Upadhyay, D. (2017, February 3). Employee perception of performance management systems in the UAE: An analysis. *Employee Perception of Performance Management Systems in the UAE: An Analysis*. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2910808

Rubbab, U. E., Naqvi, S. M. M. R., Irshad, M., & Zakariya, R. (2022). Impact of supervisory delegation on employee voice behavior: Role of felt obligation for constructive change and voice climate. *European Journal of Training and Development*, (ahead-of-print).

Sandybayev, A. (2019). Impact of effective entrepreneurial leadership style on organizational performance: Critical review. *International Journal of Economics and Management, 1*(1), 47–55.

Schotter, A. P., Meyer, K., & Wood, G. (2021). Organizational and comparative institutionalism in international HRM: Toward an integrative research agenda. *Human Resource Management, 60*(1), 205–227.

Sifatu, W. O., Sjahruddin, H., Fajriah, Y., Dwijendra, N. K., & Santoso, A. (2020). Innovative work behaviors in pharmacies of Indonesia: Role of employee voice, generational diversity management and employee engagement. *Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy, 11*(2), 725–734.

Singh, A., & Sharma, J. (2015). Strategies for talent management: A study of select organizations in the UAE. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis, 23*(3), 337–347.

Slak Valek, N. (2018). The relationship between community sporting event participants and the media. The case of Abu Dhabi. *Journal of Sport & Tourism, 22*(3), 187–205.

Soomro, B. A., Memon, M., & Shah, N. (2020). Paternalistic leadership style, employee voice and creativity among entrepreneurs: Empirical evidence from SMEs of a developing country. *Management Decision, 59*, 285–305.

Suliman, A., & Hayat, R. (2011). Leadership in the UAE. *Leadership Development in the Middle East, 104*(34), 22–27.

Tlaiss, H. A. (2014). Women's entrepreneurship, barriers and culture: Insights from the United Arab Emirates. *The Journal of Entrepreneurship, 23*(2), 289–320.

Townsend, K., Wilkinson, A., Dundon, T., & Mowbray, P. K. (2022). Tracking employee voice: Developing the concept of voice pathways. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources, 60*(2), 283–304.

Wilkinson, A., Barry, M., & Morrison, E. (2020). Toward an integration of research on employee voice. *Human Resource Management Review, 30*(1), 100677.

Zahmi, A., & Khalfan, K. (2018). *Antecedents of Employee Engagement in a Multicultural Work Environment: The Case of the UAE*. Dissertation. Business Administration

Zainal, A. Y., & Salloum, S. A. (2021, March). Business excellence in enhancing global competitive advantage in healthcare sector of UAE. In *International Conference on Advanced Machine Learning Technologies and Applications* (pp. 260–274). Springer.

Zeffane, R., & Melhem, S. J. B. (2017). Trust, job satisfaction, perceived organizational performance and turnover intention: A public-private sector comparison in the United Arab Emirates. *Employee Relations, 39*(7), 1148–1167.

Zhu, H., Khan, M. K., Nazeer, S., Li, L., Fu, Q., Badulescu, D., & Badulescu, A. (2022). Employee voice: A mechanism to harness employees' potential for sustainable success. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19*(2), 921.

10

The Mediating Role of Culture on Employee Voice: Insights from Saudi Arabia

Tamara Mohammad, Rabeb Ben-Abdallah, and Robert P. Karaszewski

Introduction

Employee voice has piqued the interest of researchers because it has been demonstrated to lead to positive employee reactions at work, such as improved perceptions of procedural justice, job tenure, and employee productivity (Arain et al., 2021). According to labour relations studies, unionised employee voice reduces employee quit rates, increases employee job tenure, and improves employer investment in human capital and employee productivity (Hameed et al., 2020). According to these studies, employee voice has an impact on both individual and organisational outcomes. However, Park and Kim (2016) suggest that researchers broaden employee voice studies to examine voice through a variety of lenses other than trade union activity. Researchers have examined a variety of employee behavioural and attitudinal factors that may encourage or discourage their voice. Promotive voice refers to making suggestions for improvement, whereas prohibitive voice is concerned about unethical or negative

T. Mohammad (✉) • R. Ben-Abdallah • R. P. Karaszewski
American University in the Emirates, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

practices (Chetty, 2021). Alshahrani (2021) suggests that individual behaviour may be important predictors of both prohibitive and promotive forms of employee voice. Given that individuals' dispositions are shaped in part by their work-related religious beliefs (Altheeb, 2020), we tend to investigate how and when (Muslim) employees' Islamic work ethic (Mohammad et al., 2018) leads to them exhibiting promotive and prohibitive voice behaviours in organisations.

This chapter reviews the conceptual and empirical literature in order to explain the role of culture on employee voice in Saudi Arabia. In general, Saudi Arabia is a safe country with low crime rates, particularly against foreigners. According to Fallatah and Syed (2017), there is a scarcity of literature on the relationship between societal culture and employee voice, particularly in Saudi Arabia and the wider Middle East region. However, encouraging employees to speak up is not guaranteed unless the organisation sends a clear message that doing so is both safe and effective. By reviewing the previous studies, we identify key variables that contribute to the formation of voice norms in organisations across national cultures in this chapter. By developing a multilevel conceptual framework of employee voice, we investigate how organisational norms related to different voice channels provide signals to employees about voice consequences, namely voice safety and effectiveness. Given that organisations do not operate in a vacuum, we also employ a macrolevel analysis of national culture values that influence organisational voice norms in order to influence safety and effectiveness signals. A conceptual framework is presented, as well as future research proposals.

Saudi Arabia's Social, Economic, Political, and Religious Context

King Abdulaziz Bin Saud established the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, also known as Saudi Arabia, in 1932. With a land area of 2,149,790 million square kilometres, or 830,039 square miles, the country is located in southwestern Asia and occupies a large portion of the Arabian Peninsula (Al-Rasheed, 2010). According to the Central Department of Statistics

and Information (2022), the country's population in 2021 was estimated to be 34,110.821 people (including 9,723,214 foreign expatriates from different nations of the world). The population is growing at a 1.2% annual rate, making it one of the countries with the fastest growth rates in the world (1.03%). The citizens are ethnically diverse; the majority (90%) is Arab, with the remaining (10%) Asian and African origins (Algaissi et al., 2020). The kingdom is divided into 13 administrative provinces, with over 5000 cities and villages. Riyadh, the country's capital, is located in the centre of the country, as are Jeddah, the main port on the Red Sea, and Dammam, the main port on the Arabian Gulf. Saudi Arabia is the wealthiest country in the Middle East, as evidenced by its $1.045 billion budget for 2021 (Al Naimi, 2022). Furthermore, the economy has been among the fastest growing in the Middle East and North Africa over the last decade. However, the economy is heavily reliant on oil as the primary source of wealth, accounting for more than 80% of the country's income. Saudi Arabia currently has the world's largest proven petroleum reserves (about 25% of global reserves). Because of the massive revenue generated by oil, the country has rapidly developed and has become one of the region's leading economic and political powers (Abid et al., 2022).

Although oil was discovered in the country in the late 1930s, the oil industry and prices did not begin to thrive and boom until the 1970s (Maspul et al., 2022). Since then, the country has amassed enormous wealth, and the government has committed to massive spending on infrastructure (e.g., transportation, housing), education, and healthcare (Islam et al. 2022). Due to a shortage of citizen labour, the government and employers have turned to foreign expatriates from various countries. Since the 1970s, a large influx of foreign workers has entered the country; they now account for 32% of the population, with the majority coming from Asian (e.g., India, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Indonesia) and Middle Eastern countries (e.g., Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, and Yemen). Furthermore, Saudi Arabia was one of the top five migrant destinations in the world and the second largest migrant-remittance-sending country (Alharbi, 2022). Remittance outflows from expatriates are a significant source of income for their home countries (Maspul et al., 2022).

In terms of government, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a hereditary monarchy, with the King serving as both head of state and prime minister. The King appoints a Crown Prince, who is second in line to the throne, to assist him in some of his responsibilities. The Council of Ministers, also known as the King's Cabinet, assists the King in ruling the country (Osmanovic et al., 2022). The Cabinet consists of 22 government ministers, each of whom oversees a different aspect of government, such as education, health, or finance. The Cabinet meets once a week and is chaired by the monarch (the Prime Minister) or his delegate (the Crown Prince). In addition to overseeing the country's general affairs, the Council of Ministers drafts and oversees the implementation of defence, external, internal, financial, economic, and education policies (Al Naimi, 2022). Furthermore, the Cabinet is the state's final authority in executive, administrative, and financial matters. The Consultative Council (Majles Alshura), on the other hand, advises the King and his Cabinet on matters such as education, the economy, and Islamic affairs. The Monarch appoints 150 members to the Consultative Council based on their reputation and experience (Yusuf & Rajeh, 2022). The Consultative Council also reviews the country's internal and external policies and has the authority to refer any governmental action to the Monarch if it is not approved by the Council. As a result, the Monarch is the final arbiter for the affairs of the country (Saiz-Alvarez et al., 2022).

The majority of Saudi citizens are Muslims, and the official religion is Islam, with Arabic as the official language. More importantly, the country is the birthplace of Islam and the location of the two holiest sites for Muslims: AlmasjedAlharam in Mecca and AlmasjidAlnabawi in Medina (Almathami et al., 2022). As a result, Islam is central to all aspects of Saudi life and dominates their culture, beliefs, and customs. Furthermore, the government is founded on Islamic principles, which guide its functions and policies. As a result, the country's constitution and legal framework are based on Shari'ah principles (Islamic law). Furthermore, Islam remains at the heart of the educational system. For example, Islamic subjects make up a large portion of all levels of students' curriculum (Tlaiss & Al Waqfi, 2022).

Culture in Society

Culture is important in the development and enhancement of an organisation because it highlights individual behaviour and attitudes at work. It consists of a set of societal moral values manifested through individual behaviour (Saad & Abbas, 2018) or the entire set of human behaviour patterns. The broad concept of culture necessitated the development of a specific definition for societal culture. The importance of restricting the scope of research based on societal culture is to provide a precise and focused investigation throughout the investigation. Thus, Alofan et al. (2020) defined societal culture as a set of values and principles shared by a specific group of people in a specific country or region. The majority of studies in the literature took this perspective on societal culture (Alshammari et al., 2019). Furthermore, Mohammad et al. (2021) stated that societal culture could be defined as the collectively acquired traditions, customs, values, and norms of a group of people. Furthermore, the National Centre of Cultural Competence (NCCC) defined "culture" as an incorporated set of human behaviours of a social, religious, or ethnic group that can transmit this set of human behaviours to future generations. The link between societal culture and organisational success has become increasingly clear over the last decade (Basaffar et al., 2018).

According to Alofan et al. (2020), recognising the cultural element has proven to be critical in the mix of any successful organisation. To achieve its goals and objectives, any organisation must incorporate local culture into its strategies. Furthermore, a thorough understanding of societal culture can represent one organisation's competitive advantage over another. According to Arain et al. (2021), organisations achieve varying degrees of success, with those that have a better understanding of culture achieving a higher level of success. Furthermore, understanding the significance of national culture in organisational strategies and practices is critical (Saad & Abbas, 2018). Thus, in an environment where success is highly competitive, taking the cultural aspect into account can prove to be the determining factor for an organisation's success by establishing effective HRM practices and policies based on a thorough understanding of the cultural aspect (Varshney, 2019).

Due to the mix of local Saudis and a significant expatriate workforce that accounts for one-third of the total KSA working population, work relationships among employees in Saudi organisations are extremely complicated (Baabdullah et al., 2019). Importantly, research indicates that this expatriate workforce is significantly less privileged than their Saudi counterparts, with expatriates frequently having significantly lower wages (for the same work), bargaining power, job autonomy, job security, and the right to speak up against any supervisory abuse than their Saudi counterparts (Adeinat & Abdulfatah, 2019). As a result, we believe that this labour-market context (locals vs. expatriates) will act as a boundary condition for the mediating effects of supervisor-based self-esteem in the relationship between leader-member exchange social comparison and employee constructive—promotive and prohibitive—voice.

The organisational environment and culture in Saudi Arabia can be easily classified into two distinct segments. First, Saudi nationals with high-paying administrative jobs in government organisations with guaranteed employment and all fringe benefits such as health care, educational scholarships, and other financial benefits (Alofan et al., 2020). Second, the vast majority of non-Saudis work for private-sector organisations. These employees are in Saudi Arabia on short-term work visas. Islamic values and Arab cultural norms are strictly adhered to due to strict Sharia laws (Arafa et al., 2021). Furthermore, according to Hofstede (1980), power distance, uncertainty prevention, and collectivism can be easily identified as dimensions of organisational culture in Saudi culture. The power distance dimension addresses the fact that not all individuals in societies are equal; it expresses culture's attitude towards these inequalities among us. Power distance is defined as the level to which less powerful members of a country's institutions expect and accept unequal power distribution (Khassawneh & Elrehail, 2022). Saudi Arabia has a high score on this dimension (72), indicating that people accept a hierarchical order in which everyone has a place, and no further justification is required. Organisational hierarchy is viewed as reflecting inherent inequalities, centralisation is popular, subordinates expect to be told what to do, and the ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat (Arain et al., 2021). Uncertainty Avoidance refers to how a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known: Should we try to control it or just let it

happen? This ambiguity causes anxiety, and different cultures have learned to deal with it in different ways. The score on Uncertainty Avoidance reflects the extent to which members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations and have created beliefs and institutions to avoid them (Auf et al., 2018). Saudi Arabia has a score of 64 on this dimension, indicating a preference for avoiding uncertainty. Countries with a high Uncertainty Avoidance maintain rigid belief and behaviour codes and are intolerant of unconventional behaviour and ideas. There is an emotional need for rules in these cultures (even if the rules never seem to work), time is money, people have an inner urge to be busy and work hard, precision and punctuality are the norm, innovation may be resisted, and security is an important component in individual motivation (Rampersad & Althiyabi, 2020). Collectivism focuses on the degree of dependency that people in a society have on one another. Whether "I" or "We" serves as the foundation for one's sense of identity is at stake. People in individualistic society are responsible exclusively for themselves and their immediate families. People in Collectivist societies are part of "in groups" that provide for them in exchange for their allegiance (Baabdullah et al., 2019). According to the index, Saudi Arabia is a moderately collectivistic society with a score of 48. This is shown in a strong sense of loyalty to one's "group," whether that be a nuclear family, a larger family network, or a group of friends. When it comes to social norms, loyalty takes precedence in a collectivist society (Basaffar et al., 2018). The society encourages its members to form close bonds in which they look out for one another. Management in collectivist civilisations is the management of groups, where offense results in humiliation and loss of face, where the employer–employee connection is seen in moral terms (like a family bond), where hiring and promotion decisions consider the employee's in-group (Alharbi et al., 2020).

According to Budhwar and Mellahi (2018), organisational culture must be addressed due to the ad hoc culture in Arab organisations. Currently, Arab organisations are resistant to emphasising employees' personal and work-related attitudes as a key determinant of organisational performance. The Arab culture has been observed to be highly resistant to change, as they dislike anything that forces them to change their way of life. A review of the existing literature reveals that the impact

of personality traits has not been extensively studied in the context of Arab nations, particularly Saudi Arabia. The majority of research on job performance and satisfaction has been conducted in the United States and the United Kingdom. Satisfaction is found to be the most important factor influencing employee work attitudes, and it is strongly related to perceived discrimination (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022). Some human resource management experts have also investigated the relationship between job satisfaction and personality traits, whereas few researchers investigated the interconnection between satisfaction and reward; however, very few efforts have been made to investigate the relationships between cultures, work-related attitudes, and job performance (Saad & Abbas, 2018).

Employees Who Use Their Voices Constructively

Any attempt at all to change rather than escape from an objectionable situation is defined as "voice" (Cherif, 2020). As a result, they emphasised the source of the voice as "personal" dissatisfaction. Employees who are unhappy with their current situation may choose to speak up or remain silent, depending on their level of loyalty to their company. Furthermore, Tlaiss and Al Waqfi (2022) investigated the role of voice in union representation and the expression of concerns on behalf of "collective action." In order to make good decisions in a timely manner that can adequately meet current and future challenges, modern organisations rely heavily on communication from their lower levels upwards (Mira et al., 2019). Allowing employees to make voluntary voice suggestions, provide ideas for improvement, and raise concerns about work-related problems to management is one way to encourage employees' upward communication with the goal of improving the overall functioning of the organisation (Alhejji et al., 2018). While early research defined voice as an employee's "self-oriented" reaction to dissatisfying organisational treatment, this definition has since been modified. Later research focuses on an employee's "other-oriented" discretionary prosocial voice behaviour,

which aims to improve team and organisational effectiveness (Cherif, 2020). As a result, Ruparel et al. (2020) define voice as an employee's initiative for making creative suggestions for change and recommending changes to standard process even when others disagree.

According to this definition, Galloway (2020) divide constructive voice behaviour into two types: promotional and prohibitive. Using one's "promotive voice" means offering ideas for enhancing the effectiveness of one's organisation or department. In contrast, prohibitive voice involves speaking up about a procedure, practice, or employee behaviour that could be harmful to the company (Um-Al-Zain, 2022). Promotive and prohibitive voice are both prosocial activities, but they are different from other organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) that are much less dangerous than these voice actions, such aiding others (Sienko OBE, 2022). According to reports, using a prohibitive voice in particular poses a particularly high-risk prosocial behaviour because it exposes an employee to criticism, mockery, and accusations of disloyalty because it may challenge the attitudes, practices, and behaviours of coworkers, managers, or other members of the organisation (Mira et al., 2019). Recent studies have found that prosocial constructive voice behaviours are specifically linked to a range of advantageous work outcomes. These studies used prohibitive and promotional forms of constructive voice (Hitka et al., 2019). The promotive voice was more concerned with team productivity than the prohibitive voice, which was more concerned with team safety (Alhashedi et al., 2021). More recent studies have started to look into the possible causes of the promotive and prohibitive voice, such as psychological safety, feelings of responsibility for positive change, approach-avoidance orientations, transformational leadership, ethical leadership (Altheeb, 2020), organisational identification (Alghamdi, 2021), and peer support (Naushad, 2021). However, no research has been conducted to investigate how religiously based work-related beliefs, such as Islamic work ethics (IWE), influence employees' promotive and prohibitive forms of constructive voice behaviour. Given that recent research confirms employees' IWE as a potential intrinsic motivator of prosocial work behaviours like OCBs, helping, and knowledge sharing (Helmi & Abunar, 2021), we extend this work by investigating the relationship between employees' IWE and their promotive and prohibitive forms of

constructive voice behaviours. As stated in the previous chapter, societal culture is defined as a set of values and principles shared by a specific group of people in a specific country or region (Ali et al., 2020). As a result, this section examines one of the most important aspects of Saudi societal culture: the influence of Islamic values on work ethics. The investigation of this specific aspect is thought to aid in the process of understanding why Saudi employees behave in a certain way at work. Also, why would Saudi employees prefer certain HRM practices and policies over others? HRM practices have previously been defined as any aspect of managing people within an organisation (Saad & Abbas, 2018).

Work Ethics in Islam

Islamic attitudes about work are based on knowledge from the Quran and Hadith. In the Muslim culture, daily business decisions are commonly influenced by faith to distinguish between moral and immoral behaviour, claim Ahmad and Owoyemi (2012). In more than 50 passages (Hayati & Caniago, 2012), the Quran uses the word "labour" in connection with the word "faith," highlighting the need to strike a balance between performing the obligatory ceremonial duties and serving as God's vicegerent on earth through useful employment (Mohammad et al., 2018). According to Beekun and Badawi (2005), the Islamic view of man as God's vicegerent on earth can be a powerful intrinsic motivator for Muslims at work to care for God's creation by not only modelling positive work behaviours and abstaining from those that are harmful but also by "commanding right" and "forbidding wrong" to others in the workplace (Ahmed et al., 2019). Although a high percentage of people believe that religion is an important factor in dictating how they approach their daily requirements and obligations, most management research appears to overlook religion as an influencing factor in management (Gheitani et al., 2018). According to Javed et al. (2019), the reason for the lack of religion in research is that most researchers assume that organisations have a neutral view on religious beliefs and that employees leave those beliefs at home before going to work. This assumption, however, has been proven to be incorrect, particularly by literature associated with

Middle Eastern countries. The inaccuracy of that assumption stems from the fact that employees who follow the religion of Islam are required to act in accordance with the teachings of the Islamic faith regarding their behaviour and manners in the workplace (Tufail et al., 2017), who claimed that religious values and beliefs affect workplace behaviours directly and indirectly. Raja et al. (2020) backed up this claim by stating that religion interacts with all levels of human resources through its code of ethics and teachings regarding compensation, penalties, acceptable behaviours, prohibited behaviours, and employee relations. Furthermore, management researchers began incorporating employees' religious beliefs as a significant part of management research, as shown in the following paragraph. Due to its undeniable influence on workplace manners and behaviours such as ethics and moral codes (Salin et al., 2017), management styles and their level of success, staff practices (Mohammad & Darwish, 2022), employees' degree of job satisfaction (King & Williamson, 2005), and workplace religious diversity, religion began to gain the deserved recognition (Gheitani et al., 2018).

Taking this as a foundation, Islamic work ideology (IWE) has been described as a set of work-related Islamic principles and values (such as dedication, hard work, commitment, frugality, desire to improve the community, and societal welfare) that help a believer distinguish between good and bad work attitudes and behaviours (Mahmood & Iqbal, 2018). IWE is described as four categories of work-related values by Harbi et al. (2017): effort, competition, transparency, and morally upright conduct. These four categories underline that in order to create a successful economy, a person must strive to serve both himself and their community, compete fairly with others, make their actions or activities transparent, and engage in commercial operations in an ethical and moral manner. Although the protestant work ethic and other religion-based work ethics share some of these characteristics, the IWE stands out from them in two ways: it emphasises "intentions" rather than results and places a strong emphasis on group accomplishments (Dirani et al., 2017).

Although the first empirical study on IWE was published more than 20 years ago, there is little research on the effects of IWE on attitudes and actions at work (Raja et al., 2020). Asutay et al. (2022) identify two important research gaps in the existing IWE literature after reviewing 28

studies on IWE published over the past two decades. First, prior IWE research has concentrated on the impact of IWE on work attitudes rather than its impact on work behaviours. Early studies, for example, primarily investigate the positive relationships between IWE and a variety of positive work attitudes such as organisational commitment (Abou-Moghli & Al-Abdallah, 2019), job satisfaction and job involvement (Varshney, 2019), innovation, and attitude towards organisational change (Harbi et al., 2017). Research on IWE as an intrinsic driver of prosocial behaviours, such as helping behaviour, OCBs, and knowledge-sharing behaviour, as well as an inhibitor of antisocial behaviours, such as deviant work behaviours, has only recently started (Azim & Islam, 2018). Second, earlier IWE research has mostly been unsuccessful in examining the underlying mediating mechanisms or widely acknowledged theory(ies) from the psychology and organisational behaviour literature to account for how IWE affects work attitudes and behaviours (Dirani et al., 2017).

Mahmood and Iqbal (2018) make the case for IWE as a crucial personal resource that may encourage helping behaviour, especially in work contexts characterised by the resource-depleting leadership style of despotic leadership, but they do not explain the underlying mediating mechanism by which IWE influences helping behaviour. We therefore merge the theoretical frameworks of social identity theory and self-consistency theory, and we suggest a mediating model in which IWE first leads to a mediator, such as moral identity, which then leads to promotive and prohibitive types of constructive voice actions (Khassawneh & Abaker, 2022).

Employee Moral Identity and Islamic Work Ethic

Identity refers to a person's deeply established conception of himself or herself (Saad & Abbas, 2018). Based on the social identity theory, Mohammad et al. (2018) argue that while moral identity has its roots in a trait-based conceptualisation, it is also vulnerable to social referents like God or religious faith, like other identities. Applying this justification to the setting of IWE, we contend that employees' IWE has a favourable

impact on their "moral identity strength," or the extent to which moral values are absorbed in one's self-identity (Ahmed et al., 2019). IWE, in particular, instructs Muslims to discern between good and harmful work attitudes, behaviours, and practices. For many Muslims, Islam provides a full rule of life that governs how they spend their lives ethically (Gheitani et al., 2018), Therefore, adhering to IWE consistently is extremely likely to increase one's perception of oneself as a moral person in regard to the IWE they practice at work. In reality, the bulk of IWE views are strongly tied to the nine moral identity features that Raja et al. (2020) discovered. In contrast, the IWE tenet of competition asks for fair competition and the avoidance of underhanded behaviour, making it closely related to the characteristic of fairness. For instance, the IWE tenet of effort, which is the most essential, is directly associated to the attribute of industrious. According to Salin et al. (2017), these two tenets must not purposefully bring harm to anyone. The third transparency tenet follows, which demands and enforces honesty. While the sixth and last component of morally righteous conduct, friendliness, kindness, caring, compassion, generosity, and helpfulness can be argued to comprise all six of the other attributes (Mohammad & Khassawneh, 2022).

Employee Constructive Voice and Moral Identity

Identity refers to a person's deeply established conception of himself or herself (Alshahrani, 2021). Based on the social identity theory, Mohammad et al. (2018) argue that while moral identity has its roots in a trait-based conceptualisation, it is also vulnerable to social referents like God or religious faith, like other identities. Applying this justification to the setting of IWE, we contend that employees' IWE has a favourable impact on their "moral identity strength," or the extent to which moral values are absorbed in one's self-identity (Fallatah & Syed, 2017). IWE, in particular, instructs Muslims to discern between good and harmful work attitudes, behaviours, and practices. For many Muslims, Islam provides a full rule of life that governs how they spend their lives ethically.

Therefore, adhering to IWE consistently is extremely likely to increase one's perception of oneself as a moral person in regard to the IWE they practice at work. In reality, the bulk of IWE views are strongly tied to the nine moral identity features that Gheitani et al. (2018) discovered. In contrast, the IWE tenet of competition asks for fair competition and the avoidance of underhanded behaviour, making it closely related to the characteristic of fairness. For instance, the IWE tenet of effort, which is the most essential, is directly associated to the attribute of industrious. According to Tufail et al. (2017), these two tenets must not purposefully bring harm to anyone. The third transparency tenet follows, which demands and enforces honesty. While the sixth and last component of morally righteous conduct, friendliness, kindness, caring, compassion, generosity, and helpfulness can be argued to comprise all six of the other attributes (Mohammad & Khassawneh, 2022). The work environment in the KSA is distinguished not only by demographic and cultural diversity but also by diversity in human resource management (HRM) policies and practices that favour locals (i.e. Saudis) over expatriates (Asutay et al., 2022). Given the complexities of employee relations in the Saudi workplace, it is not surprising that employees in Saudi companies have differing perceptions of the freedom to speak up, that is, the perceived voice opportunity, regarding organisational issues to top management (Abou-Moghli & Al-Abdallah, 2019). Thus, regardless of the strength of the moral identity fostered by IWE, employees' willingness to engage in promotional and prohibitive voice behaviours would be determined by the amount of voice opportunity they perceived in their workplace (Mohammad, 2019).

Conclusion

Employees' relationship with their line managers is just as important as that with their supervisors. Managers may be made aware of this through company handbooks, memos, or formal training and development programmes. Organisations can adopt and diffuse communication technologies such as social media to ensure effective communication between managers and employees. What is less well grasped in the commercial

and labour relations research is how employee voice behaviour differs across cultures, particularly in international business settings. People's behaviours in society are influenced by the values and cultural norms that govern their workplace: Employees, management, and workplaces are all influenced by the cultural values of the societies in which they operate. This chapter sought to investigate an understanding of employee voice behaviours across cultures. When employees face something unfair or unsatisfactory at work, they have several options: They can leave the organisation (exit), express their opinion or idea to improve the situation (voice), continue to support the organisation (loyalty), or do nothing (neglect). These behaviours may be influenced by a variety of personal, societal, institutional, and organisational factors. Individual employees may hesitate to express their opinions in an authoritarian organisational or national culture, for example, and may choose to ignore a workplace issue. Employees' reactions to these situations, on the other hand, are complex and multidimensional, and understanding how employees exercise their voice has been an important area of study in organisational behaviour and labour relations. In conclusion, we have presented a multilevel conceptual framework of employee voice based on a review and extension of existing literature by identifying organisational norms for voice channels that are aligned with national culture values, signalling to employees the safety and effectiveness of the different voice channels. We have argued that employees may be encouraged to speak up when organisational norms indicate that there will be no retaliation and that their concern or idea will be addressed effectively.

References

Abid, M., Gheraia, Z., & Abdelli, H. (2022). Does renewable energy consumption affect ecological footprints in Saudi Arabia? A bootstrap causality test. *Renewable Energy, 189*, 813–821.

Abou-Moghli, A. A., & Al-Abdallah, G. M. (2019). A systematic review of women entrepreneurs' opportunities and challenges in Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Education, 22*(6), 1–14.

Adeinat, I. M., & Abdulfatah, F. H. (2019). Organisational culture and knowledge management processes: case study in a public university. *VINE Journal of Information and Knowledge Management Systems, 49*(1), 35–53.

Ahmad, S., & Owoyemi, M. Y. (2012). The concept of Islamic work ethic: An analysis of some salient points in the prophetic tradition. *International Journal of Business and Social Science, 3*(20), 116–123.

Ahmed, A., Arshad, M. A., Mahmood, A., & Akhtar, S. (2019). The influence of spiritual values on employee's helping behaviour: the moderating role of Islamic work ethic. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 16*(3), 235–263.

Al Naimi, S. M. (2022). Economic diversification trends in the Gulf: The case of Saudi Arabia. *Circular Economy and Sustainability, 2*(1), 221–230.

Algaissi, A. A., Alharbi, N. K., Hassanain, M., & Hashem, A. M. (2020). Preparedness and response to COVID-19 in Saudi Arabia: Building on MERS experience. *Journal of Infection and Public Health, 13*(6), 834–838.

Alghamdi, M. I. (2021). Determining the impact of cyber security awareness on employee behaviour: A case of Saudi Arabia. *Materials Today: Proceedings, 7*(1), e06016.

Alharbi, F. M. (2022). How do the remittance outflows react to economic development in Saudi Arabia? Evidence from NARDL. *Economies, 10*(5), 105.

Alharbi, J., Jackson, D., & Usher, K. (2020). Personal characteristics, coping strategies, and resilience impact on compassion fatigue in critical care nurses: A cross-sectional study. *Nursing & Health Sciences, 22*(1), 20–27.

Alhashedi, A. A. A., Bardai, B., Al-Dubai, M. M. M., & Alaghbari, M. A. (2021). Organisational citizenship behaviour role in mediating the effect of transformational leadership on organisational performance in gold industry of Saudi Arabia. *Business: Theory and Practice, 22*(1), 39–54.

Alhejji, H., Ng, E. S., Garavan, T., & Carbery, R. (2018). The impact of formal and informal distance on gender equality approaches: the case of a British MNC in Saudi Arabia. *Thunderbird International Business Review, 60*(2), 147–159.

Ali, I., Ali, M., Grigore, G., Molesworth, M., & Jin, Z. (2020). The moderating role of corporate reputation and employee-company identification on the work-related outcomes of job insecurity resulting from workforce localization policies. *Journal of Business Research, 117*, 825–838.

Almathami, R., Khoo-Lattimore, C., & Yang, E. C. L. (2022). Exploring the challenges for women working in the event and festival sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *Tourism Recreation Research, 47*(1), 47–61.

Alofan, F., Chen, S., & Tan, H. (2020). National cultural distance, organisational culture, and adaptation of management innovations in foreign subsidiaries: A fuzzy set analysis of TQM implementation in Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Business Research, 109*, 184–199.

Al-Rasheed, M. (2010). *A history of Saudi Arabia*. Cambridge University Press.

Alshahrani, S. G. S. (2021). Determinants of employee performance in Saudi Arabian public organizations: The mediating role of quality of working life. *International Journal of Contemporary Management and Information Technology (IJCMIT), 1*(2), 23–27.

Alshammari, F., Pasay-an, E., Alboliteeh, M., Alshammari, M. H., Susanto, T., Villareal, S., Indonto, M. C. L., & Gonzales, F. (2019). A survey of hospital healthcare professionals' perceptions toward patient safety culture in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Africa Nursing Sciences, 11*, 100149.

Altheeb, S. A. (2020). Leadership style and employee motivation: A study of Saudi Arabian work environment. *Journal of Educational Psychology-Propositos y Representaciones, 8*(2), 138–152.

Arafa, A., Mohammed, Z., Mahmoud, O., Elshazley, M., & Ewis, A. (2021). Depressed, anxious, and stressed: What have healthcare workers on the frontlines in Egypt and Saudi Arabia experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic? *Journal of affective disorders, 278*, 365–371.

Arain, G. A., Bhatti, Z. A., Crawshaw, J. R., Ali, I., & Papa, A. (2021). Does LMX always promote employee voice? A dark side of migrant working in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Manpower*. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-03-2021-0166

Asutay, M., Buana, G. K., & Avdukic, A. (2022). The impact of Islamic spirituality on job satisfaction and organisational commitment: exploring mediation and moderation impact. *Journal of Business Ethics, 181*(4), 913–932.

Auf, M. A. A., Meddour, H., Saoula, O., & Majid, A. H. A. (2018). Consumer buying behaviour: The roles of price, motivation, perceived culture importance, and religious orientation. *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research, 12*(4), 1–10.

Azim, M. T., & Islam, M. M. (2018). Social support, religious endorsement, and career commitment: A study on Saudi nurses. *Behavioural Sciences, 8*(1), 8.

Baabdullah, A. M., Alalwan, A. A., Rana, N. P., Kizgin, H., & Patil, P. (2019). Consumer use of mobile banking (M-Banking) in Saudi Arabia: Towards an integrated model. *International Journal of Information Management, 44*, 38–52.

Basaffar, A. A., Niehm, L. S., & Bosselman, R. (2018). Saudi Arabian women in entrepreneurship: Challenges, opportunities and potential. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship, 23*(02), 1850013.

Beekun, R.I. and Badawi, J.A. (2005), "Balancing ethical responsibility among multiple organizational stakeholders: the Islamic perspective", *Journal of Business Ethics, 60*(2), 131–145.

Budhwar, P., & Mellahi, K. (2018). HRM in the Middle East. In *Handbook of research on comparative human resource management*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Cherif, F. (2020). The role of human resource management practices and employee job satisfaction in predicting organisational commitment in Saudi Arabian banking sector. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, 40*(7/8), 529–541.

Chetty, K. (2021). ICU nurses voice their concerns on workload and wellbeing in a Saudi Arabian Hospital: a need for employee wellbeing program. *Saudi Journal of Nursing and Health Care, 4*(9), 296–307.

Dirani, K. M., Hamie, C. S., & Tlaiss, H. (2017). Leadership in Saudi Arabia: a multifaceted phenomenon. In *Leadership development in emerging market economies* (pp. 245–260). Palgrave Macmillan.

Fallatah, R. H. M., & Syed, J. (2017). *Employee motivation in Saudi Arabia: An investigation into the higher education sector*. Springer.

Galloway, A. H. (2020). Equality in Saudi Arabia workforce. *Electronic Interdisciplinary Miscellaneous Journal, 6*, 1–28.

Gheitani, A., Imani, S., Seyyedamiri, N., & Foroudi, P. (2018). Mediating effect of intrinsic motivation on the relationship between Islamic work ethic, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment in banking sector. *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management, 12*(1), 76–95.

Hameed, I., Bhatti, Z. A., Khan, M. A., & Syed, S. (2020). How and when Islamic work ethic (IWE) leads to employee promotive and prohibitive voice? The interplay of employee moral identity and perceived voice opportunity. *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management*. https://doi.org/10.1108/IMEFM-09-2019-0382

Harbi, S. A., Thursfield, D., & Bright, D. (2017). Culture, Wasta and perceptions of performance appraisal in Saudi Arabia. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28*(19), 2792–2810.

Hayati, K., & Caniago, I. (2012). Islamic work ethic: The role of intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and job performance. *Procedia-Social and Behavioural Sciences, 65*, 1102–1106.

Helmi, T., & Abunar, M. (2021). The impact of job satisfaction on employee job performance. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology, 18*(14), 510–520.

Hitka, M., Kucharčíková, A., Štarchoň, P., Balážová, Ž., Lukáč, M., & Stacho, Z. (2019). Knowledge and human capital as sustainable competitive advantage in human resource management. *Sustainability, 11*(18), 4985.

Hofstede, G. (1980). Culture and organizations. *International Studies of Management & Organization, 10*(4), 15–41.

Islam, M. S., Alsaif, S. S., & Alsaif, T. (2022). Trade openness, government consumption, and economic growth Nexus in Saudi Arabia: ARDL cointegration approach. *SAGE Open, 12*(2) https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221096661

Javed, B., Fatima, T., Yasin, R. M., Jahanzeb, S., & Rawwas, M. Y. (2019). Impact of abusive supervision on deviant work behaviour: The role of Islamic work ethic. *Business Ethics: A European Review, 28*(2), 221–233.

Khassawneh, O., & Abaker, M. O. S. M. (2022). Human resource management in the United Arab Emirates: Towards a better understanding. In *HRM in the global south* (pp. 103–128). Palgrave Macmillan.

Khassawneh, O., & Elrehail, H. (2022). The effect of participative leadership style on employees' performance: The contingent role of institutional theory. *Administrative Sciences, 12*(4), 195.

King, J. E., & Williamson, I. O. (2005). Workplace religious expression, religiosity and job satisfaction: Clarifying a relationship. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 2*(2), 173–198.

Mahmood, A., & Iqbal, N. (2018). Impact of psychological contract breach on job outcomes: Moderating role of Islamic work ethics. *Asian Management Research Journal, 3*(1), 24–38.

Maspul, K. A., Akrem, A. M., & Bondk, B. (2022). Local economy empowerment through the sustainable coffee knowledge for coffee professionals in Buraidah, Saudi Arabia. *Eqien-Jurnal Ekonomi dan Bisnis, 10*(2), 141–146.

Mira, M., Choong, Y., & Thim, C. (2019). Mediating role of port supply chain integration between involvement of human resource practices and port performance in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *Uncertain Supply Chain Management, 7*(3), 507–516.

Mohammad, J., Quoquab, F., Idris, F., Al-Jabari, M., Hussin, N., & Wishah, R. (2018). The relationship between Islamic work ethic and workplace outcome: A partial least squares approach. *Personnel Review*. https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-05-2017-0138

Mohammad, T. F. (2019). Human resource management practices and organisational performance of the healthcare sector: An empirical study in Jordan (Doctoral dissertation, University of Gloucestershire).

Mohammad, T., Darwish, T. K., Singh, S., & Khassawneh, O. (2021). Human resource management and organisational performance: The mediating role of social exchange. *European Management Review, 18*, 125–136. https://doi.org/10.1111/emre.12421

Mohammad, T., & Darwish, T. K. (2022). Human resource Management in Jordan: Challenges and future prospects. HRM in the Global South: A Critical Perspective, 155–187.

Mohammad, T., & Khassawneh, O. (2022). The impact of humor on work efficiency at workplace: An empirical examination in tourism and hospitality sector in the United Arab Emirates. https://doi.org/10.12944/JBSFM.04.01.08

Naushad, M. (2021). Investigating determinants of entrepreneurial leadership among SMEs and their role in sustainable economic development of Saudi Arabia. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business, 8*(4), 225–237.

Osmanovic, N., Puska, A., Thomas, S. S., & Stojanovic, I. (2022). Sustainable economic performances of Islamic banks in Gulf countries: Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. *Journal of Sustainable Finance & Investment*, 1–15.

Park, J. Y., & Kim, D. O. (2016). Employee voice behavior across cultures: examining cultural values and employee voice behaviors in Korea and the United States. In Employee voice in emerging economies (Vol. 23, pp. 73–103). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Raja, U., Haq, I. U., De Clercq, D., & Azeem, M. U. (2020). When ethics create misfit: Combined effects of despotic leadership and Islamic work ethic on job performance, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being. *International Journal of Psychology, 55*(3), 332–341.

Rampersad, G., & Althiyabi, T. (2020). Fake news: Acceptance by demographics and culture on social media. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics, 17*(1), 1–11.

Rubbab, U. E., Naqvi, S. M. M. R., Irshad, M., & Zakariya, R. (2022). Impact of supervisory delegation on employee voice behaviour: role of felt obligation for constructive change and voice climate. *European Journal of Training and Development*, (ahead-of-print). https://doi.org/10.1108/ejtd-01-2022-0006.

Ruparel, N., Dhir, A., Tandon, A., Kaur, P., & Islam, J. U. (2020). The influence of online professional social media in human resource management: A systematic literature review. *Technology in Society, 63*, 101335.

Saad, G. B., & Abbas, M. (2018). The impact of organisational culture on job performance: a study of Saudi Arabian public sector work culture. *Problems and Perspectives in Management, 16*(3), 207–218.

Saiz-Alvarez, J. M., Coduras, A., & Roomi, M. A. (2022). Senior Entrepreneurship and Family Business Vitality in Saudi Arabia. In *Research anthology on strategies for maintaining successful family firms* (pp. 917–936). IGI Global.

Salin, A. S. A. P., Ab Manan, S. K., Kamaluddin, N., & Nawawi, A. (2017). The role of Islamic ethics to prevent corporate fraud. *International Journal of Business and Society, 18*(S1), 113–128.

Sienko Obe, K. A. (2022). *Exploring the use of coaching for the development of Saudi Arabian healthcare managers through the perspectives of coaches, coachees and coaching sponsors*. Doctoral dissertation, Middlesex University.

Tlaiss, H. A., & Al Waqfi, M. (2022). Human resource managers advancing the careers of women in Saudi Arabia: caught between a rock and a hard place. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 33*(9), 1812–1847.

Tufail, U., Ahmad, M. S., Ramayah, T., Jan, F. A., & Shah, I. A. (2017). Impact of Islamic work ethics on organisational citizenship behaviours among female academic staff: the mediating role of employee engagement. *Applied Research in Quality of Life, 12*(3), 693–717.

Um-Al-Zain, H. B. (2022). The training needs of the administrators at the university College in Al-Qunfideh in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from their point of view. *Jordanian Educational Journal, 7*(2), 265–289.

Varshney, D. (2019). The strides of the Saudi female workforce: Overcoming constraints and contradictions in transition. *Journal of International Women's Studies, 20*(2), 359–372.

Yusuf, N., & Rajeh, M. T. M. (2022). Policy implications to mitigate economic impact of Covid-19 and enhance healthcare services during pandemic in Saudi Arabia. *European Journal of Sustainable Development, 11*(1), 191–191.

11

The Role of Employee Voice in Promoting Social and Organisational Justice: Insights from Argentina

Gisela Delfino and José Delfino

Introduction

Since the beginning of history, people, workers, and civilisations have always sought equity, justice, and peace as the goal of their aspirations and projects. They have not always succeeded, but there is no doubt that much progress has been made towards building a more just society (Pinker, 2011). Social justice is a concept that has become very relevant in the last 100 to 150 years. In the nineteenth century, the conflict created by the growing number of workers' demands was called the "social question" and was growing worldwide (Jaccard, 1977). The expression social justice was coined by the Italian Jesuit priest Luigi Taparelli. His book "Theoretical Essay on Natural Law Supported by Facts", published in 1843 in Livorno, Italy, affirms that social justice must equalise all men

G. Delfino (✉)
Comillas Pontifical University, Madrid, Spain
e-mail: gidelfino@comillas.edu

J. Delfino
University of Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina

regarding humanity's rights. He is therefore considered one of the founders of the Social Doctrine of the Church. Social Democracy adopted this concept. In Argentina, the Socialist Party incorporated it through Alfredo Palacios, elected as a Member of Parliament in 1904 (Palacios, 1954). In the first decades of the twentieth century, the Welfare State and Labour Law ideas emerged. These issues were quickly linked to social justice views. In 1931, the notion of social justice was fully incorporated into the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church when Pope Pius XII used it in the Encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno" (Velasco, 2021).

Since the Ancient Ages, workers have united in guilds to defend their rights and achieve some social representation. In Argentina, workers have been associated with guilds or trade unions since 1857. There are two primary forms of trade union organisation: The "unions" have direct jurisdiction over the whole territory in which they operate, and the "federations" can be either national or provincial (Cattaruzza, 2014). Trade unions represent the workers of this country vis-à-vis employers, the management, or the state. According to Article 14 bis of the Argentinean Constitution, workers are guaranteed the "free and democratic trade union organisation recognised by simple registration in a special register". This constitutional norm is protected by Law 23551 on Trade Union Associations and regulated by Decree 467/1988. In this paper, we highlight the actions taken by workers and their representative organisations to make their voices heard to achieve social justice and project their future development. The chapter presents a detailed revision of literature enriched by leaders' opinions, trade union magazines, and specialised journalists. We make a historical review of the union's origins, its ideological evolution, and trade union violence. Trade union organisations and labour laws are analysed. We consider the union's social actions related to health, tourism, and education. Finally, the current state of the activity and its possible future development is presented.

This chapter is divided into six sections that account for the evolution of workers' voices over time. "The first voices" ranges from the 16th to the end of the nineteenth century when graphic workers made the first significant strike in Argentina. From the early 1900s to the late 1930s, "the organised voices" shows the development of the first trade union organisations of diverse ideological orientations and their demands in the

different economic activities and country regions. "The voices heard" covers the period from 1940 to 1955 and shows the consolidation of trade union organisations under the protection of the Peronist government, marking important advances in social and distributive justice. "The voices of violence", 1955–1983, presents the bloodiest period in Argentina's history. It analyses the struggles of right-wing and left-wing ideologies in the quest to seize power. In this period, workers' organisations display ideological differences and resolve them violently, with visible political, economic, and social repercussions at the national level. "The voices of democracy", 1983–1999, tells the story of the trade union organisations restructuring along democratic lines and the government's attempts to revive the economy and achieve social improvements. "The voices of today, the Third Millennium", 2000–present, describes the political crises resulting from economic blunders and workers' struggles to keep their jobs and sustain their social gains. We present four boxes that comment on aspects of the workers' voice of that historical moment.

The First Voices

From the sixteenth century until the end of the eighteenth century, the territories that today make up the Argentine Republic had a "subsistence economy", characterised by the existence of several economic-social complexes in different regions of the country, which produced for internal consumption with deficient levels of productivity (Ferrer, 1968). Having no precious metals to export nor other goods that might be required in Europe, the importance of the Rio de Plata was geographic or strategic, not economic. In such a way that there were no intensive jobs or industries, the motivations for creating guilds were scarce. However, there were some attempts, such as the silversmiths, shoemakers, stockbreeders, grocers, bakers, and Blacks. None of the guilds established in the Rio de la Plata managed to get the Kings of Spain to approve their statutes; consequently, they lacked legal existence (Cortese, 1962).

From 1860 onwards, the so-called primary export economy began. Argentina started vigorously joining the expanding international that ended with the world crisis of 1930. During this period, the expansion of

agricultural exports, the arrival of large numbers of immigrants and the settlement of foreign capital transformed the economic and social structure of the country in just a few decades. Between 1853 and 1890, almost 1,500,000 immigrants arrived, primarily Europeans who brought their ideology and demands for better work and life. The 1914 national census shows that nearly 30% of the population was foreign (Ferrer, 1968). The different groups of immigrants, grouped by nationality, created their healthcare centres. The first was the French Hospital, which dates to 1832. It was followed by the British Hospital (1844), the Spanish Charity Society (Spanish Hospital, 1852), the Italian Charity Society (Italian Hospital, 1853), the German Hospital (non-profit Civil Association, 1867), and the Galician Centre of Buenos Aires (1907). The first trade union organisation dates to 1857, San Crispín Shoemakers' Society (Fernández, 1937). The first organised workers' demonstrations were carried out for mutual aid purposes. On 25 May 1857, the Buenos Aires Typographical Society was founded. In 1887, railway drivers and stokers founded "The Fraternity" for mutual aid purposes, which later took on the defence of workers' rights. Gradually, organisations appeared or turned towards trade union struggles, such as the Marble Workers' Resistance Society (1883), the Society of Bakery Workers (1885) and, in 1877, the Typographical Union (derived from the Typographical Society). In 1878, the latter carried out the first significant strike in the country (Matsushita, 1986).

The Organised Voices

In the 1917–1922 quinquennium, workers' conflicts (strikes and other violent acts) increased considerably, finding their origin in the preaching of anarchist and communist leaders framed in the proposals of the Russian Revolution. From 1900 until 1947, trade union organisations in the agricultural sector developed in the core zone of the Pampean region and the southeast of Buenos Aires province. In the Patagonian region, trade union experiences were temporary, and in the other areas, they emerged late and dispersed, as was the case in the territory of Chaco. Specific organisations for the sugar, wine, and fruit industries were

formed in the provinces with predominantly agro-industrial production, such as Tucumán, Mendoza, and San Juan (Ascolani, 2021). The demands of the rural labourers were mainly concerned with achieving better working conditions, higher wages, and recognition of their trade union organisations (Trpin, 2021).

As trade union organisations grew, attempts were made to form workers' centres. These initial organisations and actions were carried out by foreign workers who brought their ideologies. Thus, anarchism arrived around 1870. In 1896, the Argentinean Juan B. Justo founded the Argentine Socialist Workers' Party. The third ideological current was syndicalism, introduced around 1903 by socialist dissidents; their thinking can be summarised as "trade unions and non-political parties are the main weapons of the proletarian struggle". Later, the communists appeared. The trade unionists achieved hegemony in the General Workers' Union (UGT), maintained it in the 1909 Workers' Confederation of the Argentine Republic (CORA), where anarchists and socialists also participated, and then in 1914 Workers' Federation of the Argentine Republic (FORA). By 1930 the workers tried to unify the labour movement despite internal differences. On 27 September 1930, the Argentine Workers' Confederation (COA) of socialist orientation and the Argentine Trade Union (USA) of syndicalist orientation were unified, taking the name of General Labour Confederation of the Argentine Republic (CGT) (Matsushita, 1986).

Electoral fraud was commonplace in the early twentieth century, and this method did not listen to the voices of a large population sector. In 1912, at the behest of then President Luis Saenz Peña, on 10 February 1912, Law 8871 was passed. The Saenz Peña Law provided secret and compulsory voting for all Argentine citizens over 21 recorded in the military service register, excluding women from voting. The first elections using this method were held in 1916. Hipólito Yrigoyen won as the Radical Civic Union (UCR) candidate, the main opposition force to the National Autonomist Party (PAN), which until then had been unable to gain access to power. Argentina is an agro-exporting country where rural trade unions are not robust (Ascolani, 2021; Trpin, 2021). Despite the epic character given by some historians (e.g., Bayer, 1972; Borrero, 1928; Godio, 1987) to the actions of the trade union groups in Argentine

Patagonia and southern Santa Fe (La Forestal) at the beginning of the twentieth century, their efforts were not very relevant or significant at the level of the entire organised workers' movement. However, the death of many workers in the face of the violent official reaction was a testimonial act. Nevertheless, the voices of the industrial and service workers were heard. In 1916, strikes began; the main ones were those of the dock, municipal, agricultural, meatpacking, and railway workers. In 1917, there were 136,000 workers on strike; in 1918, there were 138,000, and in 1919, it rose to more than 300,000. The metalworkers' strike at the Vasena workshops should be highlighted. It led to "Tragic Week", which was severely repressed. In this period, 70% of the strikers belonged to the transport sector, and their demands were higher wages, an eight-hour working day, a reward for Sunday work, and overtime pay, among others (Ceruti, 2015).

Access to housing has always been a severe problem in Argentina. During the country's most significant economic boom, this problem was not addressed, much less overcome. The immigration waves built the population, especially in Buenos Aires and other important cities of the country. The population was growing much faster than the construction of housing. Between 1900 and 1930, a vital urbanisation process represented 36% of the country's capital increase. Nevertheless, much money was applied to urban infrastructure works and housing for the upper class, but no investment was made in housing for wage earners or workers (Ferrer, 1968). The 1904 census of the City of Buenos Aires reports the existence of 559 tenements "without bathroom" and an average of 11.5 people per house. It declared that 10% of the population lived in rooms of 4 metres per 6 metres with little ventilation and up to ten people per room. This way, many workers lived in deplorable conditions and overcrowding. In November 1906, tenants from Buenos Aires grouped in the "League Against Rents and Taxes", which had the support of the union organisations and the socialist party. In September 1907, faced with an increase in rent and taxes, workers living in Buenos Aires stopped paying the rent. The protest quickly spread to other big cities in the country. Tenants asked for reductions in Rosario, Bahia Blanca, Mar del Plata, La Plata, and Mendoza. The conflict began to decline towards the end of November of the same year (Godio, 1987).

On 30 July 1905, the socialist party created the cooperative "The Workers' Home". One of its goals was the construction of housing. From 1907 onwards, it built houses, workers' neighbourhoods, and collective housing buildings (flats), mainly in Buenos Aires and various districts surrounding the city. The voice of protest raised in 1907 met a slow response from the National State. It was not until 1915, at the proposal of a conservative senator, that Law 9677 was passed, creating the National Commission of Economic Houses for Workers and Employees. The first building constructed was the Valentín Alsina collective house, in 1919, in the Parque Patricios neighbourhood. All the constructions carried out by the commission took place in Buenos Aires. Trade unionism did not oppose the military coup that overthrew President Hipólito Yrigoyen in 1930. Perhaps because of compliance with the principle of political neutrality of trade unionism, or possibly, as Matsushita (1986) says, when the revolution of 6 September took place, the workers' organisations, in general, were neither for nor against it. It is plausible if one considers the trade unions' attitude towards the Yrigoyen government. Only some trade unionists supported it. For the majority, including socialists, there was no notable difference between the Yrigoyen government and the conservatives.

The Voices Heard

At the beginning of the 1940s, the different components that would forge the new Argentina were making their presence felt. The 1929 crisis and the Second World War forced the substitution of imports, and a light industry began to develop to supply the domestic market. A new type of businessman and a new type of worker or worker originated. Former rural labourers were attracted to Buenos Aires and its suburban area, forming a unique rural and urban proletariat. They were the "little black-heads" who would form the social base of Peronism. The political class had fallen into total disrepute or rejection. There was an international environment favourable to the development of the welfare state and the nationalisation of the economy. It had already been seen in Mexico and, after the war, in Great Britain, it would be carried out by the Labour

administration (Bonasso, 1997). Concepts of distributive justice (Rawls, 1971) began to be internalised among intellectuals and progressive politicians.

On 4 June 1943, a military coup led by General Rawson overthrew the constitutional (although fraudulent) government of Ramón Castillo. CGT member unions look upon the anti-constitutional coup with some enthusiasm. However, there were also some clashes. At that time, there were four antagonistic labour centres, one communist, two socialists, and one anarchist. After a short time and due to the Labour Secretary's management, the CGT began to absorb a significant part of the independent organisations and adopted an attitude of close collaboration with the government. The union unity was rapidly materialising (Luna, 1971). The government that emerged from the democratic elections of 1945 finds its roots in the philosophy and procedures of Italian fascism, Christian social justice, and distributive justice. Perón explains it in articles signed with the pseudonym Descartes (Descartes/Perón, 1953) and published in the newspaper Democracia between 24 January 1951 and 15 May 1952 (see Box 11.1 "In Perón words"). The workers' desire for political participation, and the awakening of national consciousness registered before 1943, facilitated the establishment of a new relationship between them and Perón. It meant a straightforward way to relate to the government (Matsushita, 1986).

The Peronist/Justicialist tradition or liturgy assumes the non-existence of union movements of importance before 1945. The 17 October 1945 meat union workers' participation is also minimised. Matsushita (1986)

Box 11.1   In Perón's Words

We have our ideals, and we have our solutions. We are also convinced that these ideals and these solutions could save the world. A new dawn would brighten for all populace and all men if the three banners of Justicialism—social justice, economic independence, and political sovereignty—fluttered in the wind of all continents ("Political and war conduction", 2 August 1951, p. 66).

Only Justicialism saw clearly from the beginning. Its causes (social justice, economic independence, and sovereignty) staggered the real solutions. Satisfied and dignified peoples are the death of national communism. Free

refuted it. The meat industry has been one of the leading industries since the end of the nineteenth century. Almost all of them were of foreign capital in the province of Buenos Aires (Avellaneda, Berisso, Ensenada, La Plata, and Zárate). The critical Liebig meat packing plant was in Colón, Province of Entre Ríos, but there are no registries of its workers' unionisation. These unions were grouped in the Federation of Meat Industry Workers (FOIC) led by the communists. In 1943, Cipriano Reyes founded the Autonomous Union of the Meat Industry (SAIC) in opposition to the communist and anarchist ideology that dominated the Federation. Reyes and the leaders of SAIC were part of the alliance that various non-communist workers' leaders maintained with army officers on the eve of the 1943 revolution and took an active role in the movement of 17 October 1945. In June 1946, they founded the Labour Party, which supported the presidential candidacy of J. D. Perón, contributing a critical number of votes. On 17 June 1946, the Labour Party was dissolved, and in 1947 Reyes was imprisoned (Luna, 1971).

In 1944, the Statute of the Rural Labourer was approved (Decree/Law 28169), establishing minimum wages, meal breaks, Sunday rest, paid holidays, severance pay, and so on. In 1947, Law 13020 regulated temporary labourers' work, employers' obligation to resort to labour exchanges, harvest work and wage conditions and create local joint commissions (Villulla, 2015). The Christmas bonus or complementary annual salary was established by Law 12921 and was initially calculated as one-twelfth of the compensation received during the year. It had been decreed the previous year, but its application generated resistance from employers. The CGT passed a general strike, and the employers closed

for three days. During 1945, private activity did not pay for it. The Christmas bonus was an essential incentive for tourism. Workers with higher salaries could think about taking holidays with this additional salary. The middle class that was becoming established within the economic system made its appearances, first timidly and later with a certain arrogance, in summer resorts exclusive to the upper classes until then. Mar del Plata (Province of Buenos Aires) and Villa Carlos Paz (Province of Cordoba) became the preferred destinies. Years later, trade unions began to buy or build hotels in Mar del Plata and Costa Atlántica (Buenos Aires), Córdoba, Mendoza, Bariloche (Neuquén), Iguazú (Misiones), and other places suitable for family holidays. Nowadays, union hotels have more beds than private tourism in Mar del Plata. Something similar happens in the Province of Cordoba.

In 1947, the Argentine Federation of Rural Workers and Stevedores (FATRE) was founded with national scope and strong state support. It was attached to the CGT, and despite the considerable mass of members (at that time, between 1,000,000 and 1,200,000 workers), it never occupied a leading position in the Argentine labour movement. They had close links with politics and, within the CGT, with the Peronist grouping "62 Organisations" (Ascolani, 2021). The right of women to vote was a women's struggle that began in the United States of America and Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. In Argentina, it was a banner of the Socialist Party and its leading promoter Alicia Moreau de Justo. Still, only the Justicialist government listened to the voice of women and had the necessary strength to take it to the National Congress, transform it into Law 13010 and enable women to vote in the 1951 elections. Many laws and regulations in workers' support and defence were passed, mainly by socialist initiatives, but were not applied in practice. They were put into effect only after 1945. A section of society had long been calling for a "divorce law", which was resisted by the Church. The most visible institutional sign of the confrontation between Peronism and the Catholic Church was the passing of the Law of Divorce (Law 14394), by which divorced people could remarry.

The military coup of 1955 intervened in all the trade unions. The widespread reaction was not very combative. Some isolated reactions existed in highly industrialised localities such as Avellaneda, Berisso,

Ensenada, and Rosario. Di Pietro, the General Secretary of the CGT, only called for national reconciliation. Perón, in declarations made in exile, was astonished that the trade union leadership had not called for a general strike in defence of his government. Trotskyism, from "La Verdad" newspaper, called for reorganisation based on internal commissions and the delegates' bodies. Only this would guarantee to stop the bosses' offensive and achieve a new leadership that would reverse the situation of impotence. In the absence of centralised administration, the struggle was fought from below, albeit in an atomised form. From there, they called a general strike on 17 October 1955, which, according to the organisers, resulted in 75% non-attendance at work (Palacios, 1994). Although people did not arm themselves or riot in his defence, Perón, "the General", as his supporters called him, remained—from exile—their undisputed leader. He set the general political guidelines that the labour movement followed, regardless of the nuances of each situation, personal ambitions, and the loyalties and disloyalties of the leaders of the day. Perón moved to radicalised sectors for disciplined and hardened local power against the military government that had banned him. Despite being clear that the workers' movement is the backbone of the Peronist movement and without changing his intimate ideological conviction, Perón took tactical steps to get closer to the left-wing sectors (Montes de Oca, 2018).

The Voices of Violence

The period 1955–1983 is possibly the most violent in Argentine history. Some romantically called it "the beauty in violence", previously proclaimed by fascism. Society had seen its traditional paradigms shaken, workers saw some of their gains being diluted, and their yearnings for economic and social improvement ceased to be proclaimed objectives by the state. It produced frustration and rage. To this was added the Cuban Revolution, the preaching and action of Ernesto "Che" Guevara, and the Catholic Church's turn with the current "Liberation Theology" from the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the Episcopal Conferences of Medellin (1968), and Puebla (1979), stressing that the Gospel demands

the preferential option for the poor. The French May contributed its share of violent reaction, and the actions of the Red Brigades in Italy were also models of violence followed by the local Trotskyists and Communists. Nor can it be omitted that some of the most violent Argentine organisations were led by Catholics from traditional families (Montes de Oca, 2018). United Nations (2004) consider terrorism as any act intended to cause death or injury to a civilian or non-combatant when the purpose of such action is to intimidate a population or to compel a government or an international organisation to do or abstain from doing any act. During this period, acts of terrorism were every day. On 9 June 1956, a group of military and civilians led by General Juan J. Valle attempted a rebellion to force a negotiation to allow Peronism's return. It began in Barracas in Buenos Aires and La Plata, with the participation of civilians organised as commands and was supported by groups of civilians in Rosario and La Pampa. However, the Peronist masses' reaction was between indifference and fear; the imagined popular uprising never happened. General Valle accepted his defeat and was shot on 12 June. Thirty-one deaths were recorded in the open fields and police stations in the days following Valle's rebellion (Montes de Oca, 2018).

In 1957, the CGT interventor called for elections to normalise some unions. The "yellows" triumphed in the bankers' association. In the viti-culture union, the Peronists. In the gastronomic, the Communist Party. In all those unions where Peronism could resist the fraud and the objections, it triumphed, as was the case in health, plastics, leather, dyers, etc. In the meat union, the Peronist lists were prevented from taking part. In August, the intervention called for a CGT normalising congress and prepared a statute to prevent Peronism from winning. Here the 62 Peronist organisations, which brought together the most militant sector of Peronist trade unionism, played an important role. The ideological and power struggles were fierce, sometimes violent, and even reached the point where the foreign press became interested. The credentials and representativeness of the participants were contested. Peronism began to manage the situation, the pro-government trade unions left Congress without a quorum, and the CGT failed to reorganise (Palacios, 1994).

In 1958, the military government called elections with Peronism banned, and the Arturo Frondizi ticket won with the support of part of

Peronism. However, the political climate was deteriorating with the rising cost of living, trade union opposition, and strikes that led to the application of the "Conintes" Plan (Commotion of internal order). The crisis worsened after the 1962 parliamentary elections, in which Peronism won in four provinces, including the Province of Buenos Aires. The decision to intervene culminated in Frondizi's dismissal by a military coup and his confinement to Martín García Island (Fernandez & Tamaro, 2004a). Jose María Guido, interim President of the Senate, completes his term of office. On 24 December 1959, a group of self-called Uturuncos (tigers in Quechua) stormed a police station in Frías (Province of Santiago del Estero), stealing uniforms and weapons. A few days later, they were captured. It was a military failure but a propaganda success. Violence was a possible tool for positive change (Montes de Oca, 2018).

From the second half of the twentieth century onwards, some trade unions tried to solve the housing needs of the workers in their activity and began to implement housing plans for their members, with mortgage credits and, in some cases, state contributions. The Association of State Workers was one of the pioneers in this activity, creating neighbourhoods in different parts of Greater Buenos Aires (Boulogne, Ezeiza, etc.). The Telephone Union also built gigantic buildings for its members in the districts of Liniers and Colegiales in Buenos Aires. In 1965, the Light and Power Union founded its Housing Cooperative to build or acquire housing for its members (Sindicato de Luz y Fuerza, 2022). National economic vicissitudes and inflation sabotaged these attempts to give wage earners mass access to their accommodation. The national economic deterioration led to a decline in the quality of health care, which until previous years had been outstanding, especially in Buenos Aires and its surroundings. Some trade unions, such as railway workers, metalworkers, and commerce, activated pharmacies and health centres to ensure or partially provide their members' medical services (Cetrángolo & Goldschmit, 2018).

On 23 August 1962, Felipe Vallese (22 years old), a militant and delegate of the Metalworkers' Union (UOM), disappeared. He was claimed as the first worker and Peronist to disappear. The CGT's assembly hall was named after him (Cairoli, 1971; El Mundo, 25 August 1962). On 7 July 1963, Arturo U. Illia won the national elections with 21.15% of the

votes with the People's UCR ticket (which he shared with Carlos Perette from Entre Ríos). The second place in the elections had been won blank votes (19.72%), which was the banned Peronism expression of resistance. This government was born with an intrinsic weakness: The Peronism abstention constituted a severe stumbling block because the trade unions were adhering to Peronism, nor did it have the support of the military. The same year, with the help of Fidel Castro's communist Cuban regime, the National Liberation Army (ELN) was created. They began training in Argentina's northwest and southern Bolivia. Later it was renamed the People's Guerrilla Army. The National Gendarmerie defeated it on 18 April 1964. Almost all of their members were killed, and the others were imprisoned (Montes de Oca, 2018).

On 13 June 1966, UOM leader Rosendo García was assassinated in the Real Patisserie (Avenue Bartolomé Mitre and Sarmiento, Avellaneda, Province of Buenos Aires) (Giampaolo, 2021; Walsh, 1969). On 30 June 1969, the UOM General Secretary and CGT leader, Augusto T. Vándor,

---

Box 11.2 The Creole Mass

The voices of Catholic Christians worldwide, especially in Latin America, were imploring the modernisation of the Christian Rite. The Second Vatican Council, which met under the presidency of Pope Paul VI, authorised the celebration of masses in national or local languages. The Argentinian musician Ariel Ramírez (1921–2010) composed "La Misa Criolla" (The Creole Mass) in 1964, a musical work of a religious and folkloric nature, which was immediately very popular and sold over 16 million records worldwide. The liturgical texts were translated into Spanish by the priests Antonio O. Catena, Alejandro Mayo, and Jesús G. Segade. Beyond its religious content, it is a hymn of love, unity, and respect between nations and a recognition of the Native American peoples. It is full of Argentinean rhythms and uses instruments from the Andes, like the charango (small guitar), the "quena" (straight Indian flute), and the "bombo" (Argentine drum). The Kyrie adopts the rhythm of "vidala", the Glory of "carnavalito", the Creed of "chacarera", the Sanctus of carnival of Cochabamba, and the Agnus Dei of a Pampean style. On 12 December 2014, it was sung in St. Peter's Basilica at the Holy Mass for the Solemnity of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Although it was not the first time it was performed in the Vatican, it had the particularity of being performed in the presence of Pope Francis (Provocanto, 2021).

was assassinated in his office. Some accused him of the death of Rosendo García and of promoting "Peronism without Perón". On 28 June 1966, President Illia was overthrown by a military coup led by General Juan C. Onganía, who took over the presidency and announced the dissolution of the political parties (Fernández & Tamaro, 2004b). Nor did the workers mass oppose this new institutional and anti-democratic outrage. Even a delegation of the CGT was present at the swearing-in of the "de facto" President. No intervention or dissolution of the CGT was decreed, although some unions controlled by left-wing groups were raided (Palacios, 1994).

On 29 May 1969, a protest movement known as "Cordobazo" broke out in the industrial area of Cordoba City. The strike and its official forces' repression gave rise to a popular reaction never seen before in the country, which involved student militants, political activists, trade unionists, and numerous inhabitants. For a day, the city of Cordoba remained in the hands of the demonstrators. Agustín Tosco and René Salamanca, the leaders of the militant left, achieved prominent positions in the national political arena (Palacios, 1994). These actions were replicated in Rosario (Province of Santa Fe) and Buenos Aires, albeit with less violence. At the same time, the Peronist resistance had given rise to a series of organisations run by young people interested in political participation, eager to find a revolutionary space within the movement, that began to identify themselves as Peronist Youth (JP). This vocation for power and action led them to clash increasingly with the trade union structures that maintained their anti-communist stance. The Cordobazo showed or hinted at a certain discrediting of Peronist trade unionism in some sectors, especially industrial ones, in various parts of the country. As a result, retaliatory groups began to form in some trade unions, which later became part of Triple A (Argentine Anti-communist Action or Argentine Anti-communist Alliance) (Montes de Oca, 2018).

Eduardo Firmenich and Fernando Abal Medina commanded the Montoneros. Both were former students at the National Buenos Aires School and participants in the activities of Catholic Action, of which priest Mujica was also a member during the period when they carried out arms thefts and other attacks. Priest Mujica (Carlos Francisco Sergio Mujica) withdrew when discussing launching an armed struggle.

However, he continued in the line of the Movement of Priests for the Third World and was one of the founders of the movement known as Curas Villeros (Villero or Slum Priests). He was assassinated outside mass on 17 May 1974. Also of great importance was the existence of left-wing parties that had opted for violent action to achieve their objectives. Between a wide range of positions, the Revolutionary Workers' Party (PRT) highlighted. Its armed wing was the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), commanded by Mario Roberto Santucho. In 1971, they decided to become a military force with military uniforms and a combat flag. In December of that year, they marched into the bush of Tucuman to create a "liberated zone". In 1974, they began a campaign of assassinations of military personnel, from generals to officers of different ranks, including some who had played no part in the persecution of the terrorist guerrillas. They even divided their forces into "urban battalions" and "rural battalions" according to their area of action (Montes de Oca, 2018).

On 23 February 1970, the military government passed Law 18610 that provided for workers' and employers' contributions to the trade union social welfare fund and created the National Institute of Social Welfare Funds (INOS), which would be responsible for supervising the system. From then on, workers took charge of their families' health and significantly increased their political capacity. The expansion of social welfare became the trigger mechanism for the development of the health sector, orienting its demand towards private providers, chemical-pharmaceutical companies, and producers of medical equipment, which was decisive for the growth of the private sub-sector (Cetrángolo & Goldschmit, 2018).

On 29 May 1970, in search of a violent action which would also give them notoriety, a group of Montoneros, in the Pindapoy operation, led by Firmenich, kidnapped and subsequently assassinated, on 31 May 1970, General Pedro Eugenio Aramburu. Aramburu was the de facto President after the overthrow of Perón and had ordered the execution of General Valle. In the communiqué that gave an account of the execution, they ended with "May God have mercy on his soul", revealing the Christian roots of its members. The Montoneros and other terrorist organisations of the time that professed Catholic values or sentiments claimed to find their sources in some paragraphs of the Populorum

Progressio encyclical of 26 March 1967. On 21 March 1972, a commando of the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) kidnapped Oberdán Salustro, an Italian-Paraguayan businessman and director of Fiat Concord, causing a considerable local and international commotion. On 10 April 1972, after a "people's trial", they found him guilty, assassinating him in Rosario (Province of Santa Fe). On the same day and city, General Juan Carlos Sánchez was assassinated in a joint operation by the ERP and the FAR (Revolutionary Armed Forces) (Yofre, 2009).

In 1972, Law 19929 created the National Housing Fund (FONAVI) to build popular housing, whose deficit was estimated at more than one million homes. It was only in Law 21581 that its activities were determined and organised. It built large housing blocks and complexes in Buenos Aires, its surroundings, and various provinces. It was dissolved on 31 August 1998 without having fulfilled its objective. Three days before the inauguration of Héctor Cámpora as President, on 22 May 1973, Dirk H. Kloosterman, the General Secretary of the Union of Mechanics, and Related Workers of the Automotive Transport Sector (SMATA), was assassinated outside his home in the city of La Plata (Province of Buenos Aires). The attack was claimed by the national commando of the Peronist Armed Forces (FAP) (Anguita & Caparrós, 2021). On 25 May 1973, Héctor J. Cámpora and Vicente Solano Lima (Vice-President), who had won the elections of 11 March, took over the presidency and received the presidential attributes from General Alejandro A. Lanusse after seven years of military dictatorship. During the election campaign, a refrain had been circulated and chanted at all political meetings and events: "Cámpora President, freedom to the combatants". A few hours after Cámpora took office, the Villa Devoto prison (Buenos Aires) was surrounded by activists of the ERP, Montoneros and other terrorist organisations. There were situations of great uncertainty, with the intervention of the Minister of the Interior, Montoneros leaders and other officials of the area. Finally, towards dawn, the prison doors were opened and "the political prisoners of the dictatorship" and other common criminals got out. In other prisons of the country, the issue was handled more responsibly. Perón, who was in Spain, expressed his displeasure when he heard the news (Bonasso, 1997).

The 20 June 1973 was the date announced for the return of J. D. Perón to Argentina. A vast operation was organised to receive him at the Ministro Pistarini Airport in Ezeiza (Province of Buenos Aires). More than a million people of all ages and ideologies gathered to welcome him (see Box 11.3). The right- and left-wing leaders knew that this was the moment to show "the Leader" who was the strongest and who was prepared to use the violence of arms to achieve hegemony. There was no official report. The newspaper Clarín reported 13 dead and 355 wounded. Detailed information published twelve years later by the journalist Raúl Verbitsky confirms the number of 13 dead and establishes 365 wounded (Bonasso, 1997).

Box 11.3   Welcoming Perón in First Person

That day dawned pleasantly. We lived near Ezeiza station (at that time, Esteban Echeverría district). My father, Plinio (59), and I, José Luis (24), wanted to welcome Perón. We were from the area, knew the internal roads, and got to a good place near the stage. We knew it would not be a recital. Violence was in the air, so we wore trainers, jeans, and a light coat. We were not the only ones who knew that pathway. Before arriving, we saw compact columns of four or six people per row occupying the central part of the road. They were martial looking, with Peronist youth's banners and thick sticks or wire sticks in one hand and holding a chain that enclosed each column. We passed them, and Dad told me that maybe the ones in the centre were armed.

   We stood on the grass, in front of the balcony, with the trees of the Olympic pools behind us. Shortly after we were there, Dad met a friend who introduced me, but I do not remember his name. He looked nervous and worried; looking towards the columns said: "My son is with the columns of the Peronist youth. They call themselves Peronists because the tiger's son is born with stripes, but that is not Peronism". The wait became long, and my father's friend repeated the slogan. His concern was evident; he had more information than we did.

   At some point, the voice of Leonardo (the Turk) Fabio was heard announcing that the plane had entered Argentine soil. Applause, movements, and then the sound of gunshots. Dad told me to get down on the ground. I and some others picked up stones or sticks and threw them towards the balcony. Dad grabbed me by one leg and threw me to the ground. I saw a young man fall a few metres away, wounded by a bullet and another lying on his face with a red star-shaped stain on his back. I also saw a man in a white smock fall into the balcony area.

Box 11.3 (continued)

Those were terrible moments: announcements, appeals for calm, and threats over the loudspeakers. Fabio's voice was unhinged. Then the pigeons were released, the national anthem was sung, and it was announced that the plane carrying Perón had landed at El Palomar, a nearby military airport. It was already late afternoon, and the order to decentralise was given. We went back the same way. The Peronist youth columns were gone. My mother and sister Nora were waiting for us at home, listening to the radio and somewhat anxious. We were sad and tired. We hardly spoke about it.

Three or four days later, Dad told me: "Tomorrow, I am not going to work. I am going to the Ezeiza Hospital Morgue to recognise some bodies". I asked him if I should go. Did they not have relatives? The answer was simple. They did not do it because of fear or shame. He told me: "They are boys that I think I knew, and as I am close by. There is no need for you to come". The veteran fighter of the Peronist resistance and delegate of the Association of State Workers (ATE) was still putting his body into it. He did not want to expose me.

On 13 July 1973, after 49 days in office, Cámpora and Solano Lima resigned. The President of the Chamber of Deputies, Raúl Lastiri, took over and called for elections on 23 September 1973. On 6 September 1973, a group of 14 members of the ERP stormed the Army Health Command in Parque Patricios (Buenos Aires), killing an Army Lieutenant Colonel. The attackers were imprisoned. On 27 September 1973, the UOM General Secretary and the CGT leader, José I. Rucci, Perón's most loyal and beloved activist, was assassinated. Montoneros accompanied all their public demonstrations with the chant: "Rucci, traitor, what happened to Vandor will happen to you". The reaction was immediate. That same night the left-wing Peronist leader Enrique Grynberg was assassinated. Two days later, a bomb destroyed the house of the newspaper El Mundo editor in Paraná (Province of Entre Ríos). The next day the lawyer Roberto R. Catalá was shot. In Rosario (Province of Santa Fe), Constantino Razzeti, a well-known leader of the Peronist resistance, was captured and executed. A long, almost daily sequence of assassinations, bombings, and kidnappings began, culminating in death or disappearance (Montes de Oca, 2018).

The Juan Domingo Perón—María Estela Martínez de Perón ticket won with 61.86% of the votes. On 12 October 1973, they took office. The charisma of the old leader was not enough to solve the severe economic problems and the even more serious clashes between the violent right and left, together with the coup ambitions of the Armed Forces. On 27 January 1974, the terrorist guerrillas carried out a violent attack on the military regiment of Azul (Province of Buenos Aires), which radicalised the government's response, leading to the creation of clandestine detention centres (Montes de Oca, 2018). The 1976 military government continued to use and expand them, locating them on the outskirts of the big cities. In 1974, Law 20744 on Employment Contracts put the rights and benefits of rural workers on the same footing as those of industrial or urban workers. In 1980, the Peon's Statute was replaced by the National Regime of Agrarian Labour (Law 22248), which determined the deregulation of the working day and the modalities of remuneration, disarticulating collective bargaining. In 2011, the Agrarian Labour Regime (Law 26727) was sanctioned (Villulla, 2015).

On 1 May 1974, the national situation was one of internal upheaval. Perón and the Montoneros knew they were acting out the end of an idyll that had lasted almost ten years. The youth of the "glorious Peronist youth", as the Montoneros and other violent groups of the Peronist left called themselves, or "the marvellous youth" as Perón had praised them from exile, had published a petition with demands for the government. The two voices of society were at stake: that of the peaceful and constant worker who knows how to listen, wait and respect opposing voices even if he does not share them and that of the hasty, arrogant, violent, and totalitarian who despise life and recognise no reason but their own. The traditional Peronist liturgy was broken when Perón appeared on the Government House (Pink House) balcony after 19 years of absence. When "the leader" speaks, the workers are supposed to keep quiet and listen (Duzdevich, 2022).

Nevertheless, this time, it was different. There were reproach chants to Perón's collaborators and offensive chants towards his wife, Vice-President María Estela Martínez, without her voice being heard. Perón's response was not extended in coming, calling them "stupid" and "imbibes". The Montoneros left the rally. The space they left in the crowd in the square

resembles the "crack" that separates Argentines today. Hours earlier, Perón had given the opening speech at the ordinary Congress meetings. He said that "basic consonance excludes violence and implies understanding that the only path to fertile construction is based on ideas, values and principles whose concrete practice does not cut off the channel of peace". Those words were not considered or were forgotten (Duzdevich, 2022). On 1 July 1974, President Juan Domingo Perón died and was succeeded by Vice-President María Estela Martínez, who was to complete the presidential mandate until 1977. The political, social, and economic situation was severe. The violence was terrible, and the right and the left attacked each other daily in their quest for hegemony. The Act of National Compromise, called the "Social Pact", signed in the early days of the Cámpora government, in which the trade unions granted a two-year truce in exchange for an immediate wage increase, had already shown its ineffectiveness (Bonasso, 1997). Then came a period of high inflation and changes in the Ministry of Finance.

On 15 July 1974, Arturo Mor Roig, former Radical deputy, and Interior Minister in the military government of Lanusse, was murdered in a restaurant in San Justo (Buenos Aires surroundings) by a Montoneros commando. It was a message from the terrorists to warn the National Government and the Radical Party that the armed organisation should be considered in political negotiations (Potash, 2012). As dated a few days after the inauguration of the M. E. Martínez de Perón government, it was also interpreted as part of a plan to demonstrate Montonero's power and intimidate the government (Barovero, 2014). In case any doubt remained about the identity of the perpetrators and their aims, the Montoneros' surface groups chanted slogans at university assemblies along the lines of 'Today, today, today… how happy I am, long live the Montoneros who killed Mor Roig' (Alaniz, 2016).

On 19 September 1974, a commando of the terrorist guerrilla group Montoneros kidnaps Juan and Jorge Born, the sons of the powerful businessman Jorge Born, owner of Bunge & Born, the most significant cereal exporting company and the first multinational in Argentina, obtaining a ransom of 60 million dollars (O'Donnell, 2016). On 23 December 1975, an ERP terrorist group attempted to storm the Monte Chingolo barracks to seize 13 tons of weapons and ammunition. There was a fierce battle,

the attackers had 62 dead and 32 wounded, and the army had between 7 and 10 dead, and the injuries were not specified (Plis-Sterenberg, 2003). On 24 March 1976, another military coup d'état, the so-called National Reorganisation Process, ended the government of María Estela Martínez and dissolved the National Congress. The situation was terrible from the economic point of view (exchange control policy, inflation, etc.). The social situation was dire; attacks, disappearances, and murders were daily news. A Gallup poll showed that 75% of those surveyed agreed with the coup d'état, and more than 50% supported taking radical measures against the guerrillas. A period of institutional violence ensued. After the return to constitutional rule, studies report that 8961 people disappeared, and some 1000 people were killed in armed clashes (Montes de Oca, 2018).

The self-called National Reorganisation government suspended wage negotiations between trade unions and companies. The General Labour Confederation (CGT) was intervened by Military Board communiqué No. 58. Military interventors were appointed in most trade unions. A military interventor administered the trade union welfare funds, and some leaders of essential trade unions were imprisoned. Law 21356 prohibited trade unions' electoral activities. Law 21261 banned strikes, and Law 21274 allowed the dismissal of public employees. There was no reaction of struggle from the trade union leadership, perhaps intimidated by the repression. On 4 August 1976, Monsignor Angelelli, Province of La Rioja Bishop, was assassinated on the road. His death was tried to conceal as a traffic accident (Castillo, 2022). Between 1976 and 1980, approximately 20% of industries closed their doors, and unemployment rose from 5.5% to 9%. The purchasing value of the average wage was reduced by 50% (Montes de Oca, 2018). On 11 February 1977, Oscar Smith, leader of the Light and Power Union, disappeared in a situation that had never been clarified. Some sectors pointed the finger at the military government because there was a dispute over the electricity company privatisation promoted by the Ministry of Economy. The government claimed the disappearance was due to left-wing groups (Baizán & Mercado, 1987). In 1978, the National Labour Commission was set up with the participation of representatives who were not very militant or sympathetic to the military government. Some of them accompanied General

Videla, head of the Military Board, to the sessions of the International Labour Organisation celebrated in Geneva (Switzerland) in 1979.

That same year some trade union leaders who had been imprisoned, first on the Granaderos ship and then in the Magdalena prison, regained their freedom. Among the most prominent were Lorenzo Miguel from Metallurgists-UOM and Diego Ibáñez from Oil tankers-SUPE (State Oil Workers' Trade Union). On 27 April 1979, the so-called Group of 25, made up of leaders of unions that had not been intervened, and Saul Ubaldini, the Secretary General of CGT Brasil (the name of the street where the CGT was precariously located), launched the first strike. After this, several leaders were imprisoned for several months (Montes de Oca, 2018). In 1980, Law 18610 was replaced by Law 22269, which regulates the structure and functioning of the trade union welfare funds. Saul Ubaldini (Brewers) called a general strike on 30 March 1982 in protest at the catastrophic consequences of the economic plan. Opposition was short-lived. The following 2 April, the head of the Military Board, General Leopoldo F. Galtieri, ordered the invasion of the Falkland Islands. The trade union leaders and politicians marched with numerous columns supporting the war in all the country's cities. A truce was proclaimed until the Argentine troops surrendered in the Falklands on 14 June 1982. Amid a state of repudiation and discredit never seen before, Galtieri was replaced by General Vignone and general elections, free and without banned, were called for on 30 October 1983 (Montes de Oca, 2018). Raúl Alfonsín for Radicalism and Italo A. Luder for Peronism were leading candidates. Alfonsín won with 51.75% of the vote.

The Voices of Democracy

Despite his good political intentions, the initial solid electoral support, and the trial of the Military Board, Alfonsín's economic programme did not work. His promise of economic reactivation and increased employment was not fulfilled. In 1984, Law 23056 established the National Food Programme to temporarily solve the hunger and malnutrition left by the military government. The first deliveries were to Greater Buenos Aires, Santiago del Estero, and Misiones. Initially, it lasted two years and

was extended for the entire term of office. It consisted of a box containing ten non-perishable products that reached 800,000/1,200,000 people monthly. Other Latin American countries imitated the programme (La Nación, 2003). After a short-term success, the Sourruille (Ministry of Economy) Plan to stop inflation with a surprise change of currency (14 July 1985) failed in the medium term (Dornbusch & De Pablo, 1988). The CGT organised 13 general strikes during Alfonsín's almost six years in office.

In the second half of the 1980s, the supposed stability proclaimed by the Austral Plan (the currency name that replaced the Peso after a significant devaluation) encouraged some small unions to venture into the construction of housing for their members. Some of them were SUTERyH (Building Supervisors), SOMRA (Cleaning), and Medical Propaganda Agents (Medical Visitors). The failure of the economic plan and the return to inflation threatened the continuity of the programme. Some projects were completed in their entirety, with the support of the trade union organisation, and others were only partially completed. On 8 June 1987, Law 23515 was passed, modifying the Civil Code about marriage, and allowing for divorce, echoing the demands of an essential part of society and the promises made during the election campaign. At the end of 1988, the National Health Insurance System (SNSS) was created by Laws 23660 and 23661. Law 23660 repealed Law 22269 in Article 44. It defined the new system without substantial changes, where the trade union welfare was its main component. Law 23661 created the SNSS with the scope of social insurance to ensure the full right to health for all the country's inhabitants (Cetrángolo & Goldschmit, 2018). During strikes, marches, and looting of businesses, Raúl Alfonsín had to hand over power early on 8 July 1989 to the Peronist Carlos Saul Menem, who had won the elections.

President Menem managed to stabilise the currency. After the devaluation, one Peso was equal to one Dollar. He privatised numerous public companies. Under the complaint of left-wing and some nationalist sectors, created a "voluntary retirement" plan to reduce the number of employees in public administration and public service companies. There were various workers' protests. A new wave of reforms, very different in orientation from previous laws, was inaugurated with the passing of

Decree 9 of 1993. It incorporated the free choice of trade union welfare funds, where each beneficiary could reallocate his contribution to the welfare funds of his choice. The contributions belong to each member, who can freely choose the insurance agent (Art. 16 Decree 576/1993). There was a weakening effect of cross-subsidies between members with higher and lower incomes within each branch of activity, favouring the concentration of members with higher contributions and lower risk in a specific group of trade union welfare funds (Cetrángolo & Goldschmit, 2018).

In 1994, following an agreement with the Radical Party, Menem called a Constituent Assembly, which took place in Paraná (Province of Santa Fe). The National Constitution was modified. "Direct voting" for the election of the President was established, the presidential term was reduced to 4 years, and re-election for one term was allowed. New rights and guarantees (for consumers, political parties, etc.) were incorporated, among other modifications (Law 24430).

Monetary stability brought tranquillity to wage negotiations, which were practically at a standstill. The changes during this decade modified the social base of workers' associations. Unemployment and precariousness reduced the political and social strength of trade unions. Ambiguous relations were generated between the providers of work and the workers, which were called "unregistered", "clandestine", or "black labour". At the end of the 1990s, trade union representation was divided into three central organisations: the Official CGT, the Dissident CGT, and the CTA (Argentina Workers' Central). The last had been founded in 1997 with public employees: ATE (State Workers Association), Primary Teachers, CTERA (Confederation of Education Workers), Confederation of Education Employees, Judicial Employees union, and little representation of industrial and service sectors. What is new at the "trade union level" is that it incorporates "non-workers", that is, leaders of Social Movements and left activists (Palomino, 2000). There was an increase in unemployment disguised by the apparent welfare provided by the stable value of the currency. After 50 years of inflation, although typical in most countries, Argentina's currency stability was unprecedented and highly valued. After the first period of government, the "convertibility" model began to show its shortcomings. The economic recovery was not as

expected, and the closure of factories and businesses was accentuated, producing more unemployed. In the ten years of Menem's government, the CGT held eight general strikes. However, the re-election won in 1995 gave President Menem the political space to continue this change, which was economically unsustainable in the medium term. On 10 December 1999, Fernando De la Rúa became President of the Nation and Carlos Álvarez Vice-President, as candidates of the UCR-FREPASO alliance, with 48.73% of the votes (Fernandez & Tamaro, 2004c).

Voices of Today: The Third Millennium

The turn of the millennium was celebrated as transitioning to a new, fairer, and more caring society, open to listening to different opinions. Nevertheless, soon optimistic expectations were frustrated. The third millennium was economically tricky for Argentines. The economic slowdown that had been dragging on for several years, and the unemployment hidden in marginal activities, could not be ignored. The CGT decreed eight general strikes in the two years of Fernando de la Rúa's term of office. Added to this, political disagreements in the ruling coalition and suspicions of corruption in the Senate, which led to the resignation, before been one year at the office, of Vice-President Carlos (Chacho) Álvarez on 2 October 2000, made President De la Rúa's political management very difficult (Reato, 2015).

On 3 December 2001, faced with the possibility of a financial collapse, De la Rúa decreed limits on withdrawing funds from personal bank accounts (maximum 250 pesos = 250 dollars per week), which was called the "corralito". This measure generated violent reactions from the population in all the country's major cities. There were spontaneous "Cacerolazos". People gathered in groups of hundreds or thousands, banging pots, pans, or cans, marching through the streets or cutting off intersections of essential avenues. There was looting of supermarkets, warehouses, and other shops. The situation was dire. On the evening of 19 December, the President announced on the national television network that he had decreed a state of siege to prevent violent acts. There were clashes and 38 dead, hundreds were wounded, and some 4,000 were

arrested (Rodríguez, 2021). The measure effectively froze people's deposits, halted payment chains, and deepened the country's embroiled crisis. People protested massively in the streets, there was looting, and the government repressed with violence: 39 people died, according to the Argentine Human Rights Secretariat (Padinger, 2021). On 21 December 2001, after repealing the state of siege, Fernando De la Rúa resigned from the presidency and left the Government House.

In compliance with the National Constitution and the Acephalia Law (Law 20972), the provisional President of the Senate, Ramón Puerta, took office and convened a Legislative Assembly to elect the person who would hold the presidency until the new President was elected. On 23 December 2001, the Legislative Assembly elected Adolfo Rodríguez Saá, with 169 votes in favour and 138 opposed. He was sworn in until 5 April 2002, and early elections were called for 3 March. He announced the default with the cessation of payments on the foreign debt and the maintenance of the "corralito". On 28 December, another massive popular revolt took place (Rodríguez, 2021). The day began with a strike by railway workers on the Sarmiento line and was joined by users who set fire to several trains and caused destruction at Once station (the head of the line). At midday, hundreds of people gathered in front of the Courts, demanding the resignation of the Supreme Court of Justice. In the evening, a crowd marched on Plaza de Mayo and tried to force open the doors of the Government House. They are turned back. Another group marched to the National Congress, where they forced the iron gates, and some entered the Congress and caused damage. On 29 December, the Cabinet resigned, and the President called a meeting of governors, which failed. He resigned from San Luis, his home province (Rodríguez, 2021). A few minutes after learning of the President's resignation, the provisional President of the Senate resigned too. The head of state then fell to the President of the Chamber of Deputies, Eduardo Oscar Caamaño, who took office on 30 December and was formally sworn in on 31 December. He urgently summons the Legislative Assembly for 1 January 2002 at 2 pm. The Legislative Assembly met and approved the appointment of Eduardo Duhalde with 262 votes in favour, 21 against and 18 abstentions. Duhalde confirmed the foreign debt payment moratorium, liquidated the Peso's convertibility from $ 1 = USD 1 to $ 3 = USD 1,

and applied a fiscal adjustment. He endured two CGT general strikes, made the corralito more flexible, and finally lifted it. His mandate lasted until May 2003, when President Néstor Kirchner took office (Rodríguez, 2021).

In the elections held in 2003, the rules of the 1994 Constitution were applied: direct vote for the president's election and the second round in case no candidate obtained more than 45% of the votes. Candidate Carlos S. Menem received 25% of the votes. He won in 12 of the 24 electoral districts. The second was Néstor Kirchner, with 21% of the votes, won in only eight districts. Menem, in a legitimate act but of dubious democratic ethics, did not run in the second round. Kirchner won the presidency with only 21.65% of the vote. He sought consensus among the opposition parties and obtained support from the left, activist groups and "piqueteros" (Workers' Party, Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, and others). He reactivated military boards' trials for so-called crimes against humanity and supported the blockades of the international bridges with Uruguay due to the conflicts over the pulp mills, which according to some environmentalists, affected the environment. Foreign currency was brought in because commodities (soya, wheat, and corn) had high prices, allowing the delivery of subsidies and other unemployment benefits, which technically reduced poverty rates. However, it did not significantlychange in employment policies, industrialisation, or infrastructure works (Montes de Oca, 2018).

In the 2007 elections, Cristina Fernández (Kirchner's wife) took office as President and Julio Cobos (UCR) assumed as Vice-President. At the beginning of 2009, Kirchner, as President of the Justicialist Party, proposed "testimonial candidacies" for the elections of 22 June of that year. Prestigious officials put themselves forward as candidates in the elections for positions they were not willing to run for but whose popularity suggested that they would "drag votes" for that list or grouping (Smink, 2009). Even though the system seemed fraudulent or deceitful, the Electoral Justice allowed it. Of the 42 "testimonial candidates" that the Justicialist party presented in the Province of Buenos Aires, at least 22 resigned before 19 December (the day the newly elected authorities took office). Among the most relevant are Daniel Scioli (former Governor of the Province) and Sergio Massa (former National Chief of Cabinet)

(Corral & Ricci, 2009). The CGT held four general strikes during the four years of Néstor Kirchner's government and five during the eight years of Cristina Fernández's.

Listening to the voices, not of the majority, but of the left and fashion, in July 2010, Equal Marriage Law (Law 26618) was passed, allowing same-sex marriage. Argentina was among the first ten countries in the world to admit it. The problem of child labour is another alarm bell that is ringing through society. International Convention on the Rights of the Child, held in New York (USA) on 20 November 1989, made child labour and its consequences more visible. The National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labour (CONAETI) estimates that more than 1,500,000 children under 15 are working. The inter-union commission against child labour opposes all types of child labour because children should have only one job: to be children, to go to school, to play, and to rest. To this end, it proposes decent work for adults and quality education for children. Law 26390 sanctions the prohibition of child labour and the protection of adolescent work (Requena & Monzane, 2009).

The National Health System provides services to 60% of the population. Most of the people are covered by the trade union welfare funds (54.3%), the social welfare funds of the Armed Forces, Universities, and others (27.1%), and the National Institute of Social Security for Retired and Pensioned Persons (INSSJP) (18.6%). The trade union welfare funds constitute a system of solidarity and self-management. The Compulsory Medical Programme (PMO) includes care for people affected by AIDS-HIV, drug dependency, alcoholism, diabetes, disability, obesity, etc. PMO has been significantly increased by medical technology and medicines costs and aggravated in the last years by the exchange regulations (official Dollar, parallel Dollar, Dollar for tourism, Dollar for the export of grains, Dollar for imports, etc.) (Cetrángolo & Goldschmit, 2018). The sector has 266 trade union welfare funds: some with national coverage (bankers' social security, metal workers' union), others within a province (medical propaganda agents in Cordoba, press workers in Buenos Aires, cleaning workers' union in Buenos Aires), and others with only local or regional coverage (taxi workers in Buenos Aires, sugar workers at the Ledesma sugar mill, etc.) (Superintendencia de Servicios de Salud, 2010).

The trade union welfare fund with the most significant number of beneficiaries is the Federation of trade employees, with 1,200,000 members, followed by the construction workers' union, with 404,000 members and the union of nation civilian personnel, with 388,000 members. The resources allocated to health financing in Argentina are estimated at 10% of GDP in 2015, which places it considerably above the average for Latin America and close to the values of European countries (Cetrángolo & Goldschmit, 2018). At present, several unions continue to implement housing plans; some of them are construction (UOCRA), bakers, workers of sports and civil entities (UTEDyC), the insurance union, underground workers (AGTSYP), etc. The general administration of the Housing Institute (Procrear Plans) and provincial or municipal governments support them. However, they are small-scale projects and limited housing built and awarded. The voice of the workers continues to proclaim the need for access to decent housing.

Trade unions have also taken up the issue of education with responsibility and enthusiasm. Since the second half of the last century, they have set up training centres (trade union schools) to improve workers' qualifications and contribute to developing human capital, constituting a robust network. Since 1990 and in the face of factory closures and rising unemployment, trade union associations have been committed to ensuring the transfer of knowledge and skills from more experienced workers to younger workers. Numerous trade unions have vocational training centres, with 66,637 enrolled by 2017. Some of them are the metal workers' union (UOM) (Noticias Gremiales, May 2022b), the union of auxiliary personnel in private households (UPACP), the construction workers' union (UOCRA), the hotel and restaurant workers' union (UTHGRA), the union of mechanics and related workers of the automotive transport sector (SMATA), the Argentine Federation of trade and services employees (FAECYS), light and power union (LyF) (Línea Sindical, July 2022), the association of supervisors of the metallurgical industry (ASIMRA) (Noticias Gremiales, June 2022a), etc. Other unions conduct courses and training sessions for their members without formally establishing their training centres, such as the cleaning workers' union (SOMRA) (Sladogna, 2018). The Argentine Union of Rural Workers and Stevedores (UATRE) has been part of the Rural Literacy Programme (PAR) of the National

Registry of Rural Workers and Stevedores for 20 years. On 30 August 2022, in the Province of Salta, 34 workers from the Wichis, Tobas, and Pilagás communities graduated from the programme. One of the students said, "I learnt mathematics, I learnt to divide and multiply, I learnt everything you need to learn to be able to shop and do the paperwork" (Noticias Gremiales, September 2022c).

In the twenty-first century, UATRE has been far from representing rural workers' demands and needs in all its diversity. Especially in the face of deepening labour informality, the expansion of labour outsourcing companies and work cooperatives makes working conditions in rural areas of Argentina more precarious (Trpin, 2021). A variant taking shape about the expression of workers' voices is the representation carried out by "delegate bodies", which gives rise to the so-called grassroots trade unionism. Many new leaders have been influenced by struggles outside the workplace, such as neighbourhood assemblies, roadblocks, and militancy in left-wing parties (Lenguita, 2011). This format is not new, as they appeared with a particular boom in the 1950s and 1970s, driven by left-wing political movements such as communism and Trotskyism. The new forms of business management developed in the third millennium came with precarious labour, the spread of commercial contracts, and the rupture of loyalties involved in new management forms. The trade unions lost their capacity for recruitment and representation in the work world. The trade union model that the CTA supports is different from the traditional one. Membership of the CTA is individualised, and a direct vote of its members carries out its leadership election. This profile gives it the character of political trade unionism. The most novel aspect it proposes is the social articulation for its search, integrating the trade union struggle with social movements organised around social and civil rights defence (Palomino, 2000). There are four possible scenarios for trade unions in the future: marginalisation, dualisation, replacement, and revitalisation (International Labour Organisation, ILO, 2021). Regarding revitalisation, it highlights organising and serving new members, such as young workers, workers in the informal economy or the digital platform economy. In 2021, there were 3290 trade unions, 110 federations, and 19 confederations in Argentina, representing some 3 million workers.

Box 11.4   The Journalists' Opinion

We have consulted journalists in Argentina about to what extent unions make the workers' voices heard, the evaluation of present workers' and trade unions' situation, and the workers' reasons for joining trade unions. The repeated responses were:

"Unions make the voice of the workers heard". "There is discontent among the rank because of the passivity of sectors of the central workers' organisations". "Other sectors also make their voices heard", such as "popular or social movements, the unemployed, students, business chambers or the liaison bureau". "Media specialised in trade union issues can better express the feelings of the unions and the workers".

"The situation of the workers, despite the power that the unions still have, is losing strength". "It depends on the trade union achievements analysed in each period. In the current period, there is a great openness that invites workers to become increasingly involved". "There is a great offensive to undermine the power of trade unions to strip workers of their rights". "In some cases, trade union representatives do not help to show a better image".

"In the trade unions, they see the possibility of collective claims and conquests". "The affiliation gives better salary possibilities, social rights and access to health". "Fundamentally to be supported". "Sense of belonging". "To enjoy benefits such as social tourism and others". "To be able to work in a union". "To have a sense of belonging".

A voice rarely listened to in Argentina is that of the "ex-workers". Not because it is not heard, but because it does not want to be heard. During their 30 or 40 years of working, older adults contributed their efforts to the country's functioning. The official statistics for the first quarter of 2022 (ANSES, 2022) show that there are 8,670,328 benefits (5,229,189 retirees, 1,689,415 pensioners, and 1,751,724 non-contributive beneficiaries) paid monthly to 7,386,150 beneficiaries (a person can receive more than a benefit). The minimum benefit or retirement salary is $ 32,630 (on 30 June 2022, according to the Bank of the Argentine Nation, $ 130 = USD 1, but in the parallel market, $ 288 = USD 1). Forty-seven percent of the beneficiaries earn a minimum benefit, 17% between one and two ($ 32,630–$ 65,260), 10% two ($ 65,260), and 26% more than two (more than $ 65,260). The basic household basket is $ 93,177. Thus, at least 80% of social security beneficiaries earn below the poverty line. Totally, 36.50% of Argentina's population, 10,600,000 people, are

impoverished (INDEC, 2022). These are the voices that should be heard. Is distributive justice not working? Is it not being considered? Is it not doing its job?

Conclusion

Social justice has different nuances that have varied with the times, geographies, and ideologies. Argentina has a long history in its search. The struggles for its achievement have had diverse evolutions, and it is not easy to weigh them objectively. The golden age of trade unionism and social conquests was 1945–1955 and 1973–1976. Both governments ended with an anti-democratic institutional coup. The economic situation in Argentina has deteriorated steadily for the past 70 or 80 years. As the controversial President J. D. Perón said, "No one can be fulfilled in a country that does not fulfil itself". The political leadership—civilian and military, radical, Peronist and developmental, personalist and anti-personalist—proclaimed the need to industrialise the economy. That is, to generate an industrial economic model. The project has not been fulfilled, and Argentina depends on an agro-export model. The necessary structural changes, both economic and social, have not taken place, and the economic and social situation continues to deteriorate and affects education. The workers are trying to keep their jobs, unemployment is growing disproportionately, and the deterioration of wages is notorious. In this context, the postulates of procedural and interactional justice (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993) cannot be demanded. Workers and their representative organisations find no space or opportunity to make their voices heard. The various national governments provide unemployment subsidies and others with different names and motivations, which do not meet their objectives. Not having genuine funding sources results in higher taxes and higher monetary emissions, which reactivates inflation.

According to the International Labour Organisation, Argentina has a high level of unionisation, leading in South America, with 40% of workers affiliated to a union, followed by Brazil and Chile (20%), Mexico and Colombia with less than 10% (Tomada et al., 2018). Society constantly evolves, and people are making their voices heard, demanding solutions

to their needs. Technology also provides the impetus for change. With the world change in the social and economic structure, joblessness as an endemic state of global (or at least Western) activity and the proliferation of informal or "undeclared" work has become an observable reality affecting workers, in general, and the less skilled to a greater degree. The lack of work led to the institution of "the plans". With a clear political orientation, their beneficiaries constituted the "social groups" that exercised their mobilisation power, even applying reprehensible practices, such as involving children or pregnant women in "camps" or marches. Trade unions take on the challenge of including or integrating these jobless people. However, the problem becomes philosophical or ideological. Trade unions were and are associations of workers grouped by trade or company, but always workers dependent on a principal or giver work. So, is a trade union of the unemployed valid? Jaccard (1977) affirmed that there is invention, discovery, economic growth, and social progress when manual and intellectual labour is treated with all honours; ruin is not far off, however, when the worker is despised. Workers have tried to make their voices heard in calling for a society of solidarity. Without ignoring the natural differences arising from different geographies, social and economic contexts, or each person's abilities, unions search to ensure a decent life for the worker and their family: safe working conditions and adequate remuneration that allow access to health, housing, education, and leisure. For 150 years, trade union organisations in Argentina have proved to be a good instrument for expressing the needs and aspirations of workers.

References

Alaniz, R. (2016). Asesinato de Mor Roig [Murder of Mor Roig]. https://rogelioalaniz.com.ar/2016/07/07/asesinato-de-mor-roig/

Anguita, E., & Caparrós, M. (2021). *La Voluntad 3. La patria socialista* (1973–1974) [The Will 3. The socialist homeland (1973–1974)]. Random House.

ANSES. (2022). Informe de Estadísticas de la Seguridad Social. I Trimestre 2022 [Social Security Statistics Report. I Quarter 2022]. https://www.anses.gob.ar/sites/default/files/archivo/2022-07/Informe%20de%20Estadisticas%20de%20la%20SS%20I%20Trimestre%202022.pdf

Argentinean Constitution, Article 14 bis. https://www.congreso.gob.ar/constitucionParte1Cap1.php

Ascolani, A. (2021). Federación Argentina de Trabajadores Rurales y Estibadores (FATRE). Argentina, 1947–1988 [Argentine Federation of Rural Workers and Stevedores (FATRE). Argentina, 1947–1988]. In J. Muzlera, & A. Salomón (Eds.), *Diccionario del Agro Iberoamericano* [Dictionary of Ibero-American Agriculture] (pp. 547–558). TeseoPress. https://www.coninagro.org.ar/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Diccionario-del-Agro-Iberoamericano.pdf

Baizán, M., & Mercado, S. (1987). *Oscar Smith: el sindicalismo peronista ante sus límites* [Oscar Smith: Peronist trade unionism facing its limits]. Puntosur.

Barovero, D. A. (2014). Arturo Mor Roig: el crimen sin razón [Arturo Mor Roig: crime without reason]. https://institutoyrigoyen.tripod.com/morroig.htm

Bayer, O. (1972). *Los vengadores de la Patagonia Trágica* [The avengers of Tragic Patagonia]. Galerna.

Bonasso, M. (1997). *El presidente que no fue* [The president that was not]. Planeta.

Borrero, J. M. (1928). *La Patagonia Trágica* [The Tragic Patagonia]. Kraft.

Cairoli, I. (1971). *Carne de perro* [Dog meat]. Plus Ultra.

Castillo, L. (2022, August 4) A 46 años del asesinato del obispo Angelelli, un religioso comprometido con la opción por los pobres [46 years after the assassination of Bishop Angelelli, a religious committed to the option for the poor]. *Telam Digital*. https://www.telam.com.ar/notas/202208/600614-aniversario-46-anos-del-asesinato-del-obispo-angellli.html

Cattaruzza, A. (2014). Crisis económica, avance del Estado e incertidumbre política (1930–1943). Sudamericana.

Ceruti, L. (2015, December 16). La Semana Trágica de 1919: huelga, lucha y represión [The Tragic Week of 1919: Strike, Struggle and Repression]. *Diario La Izquierda* [The Left Newspaper]. https://www.laizquierdadiario.com/La-Semana-Tragica-de-1919-huelga-lucha-y-represion-Parte-I

Cetrángolo, O., & Goldschmit, A. (2018). Organización y financiamiento de la provisión de salud por parte de la seguridad social en Argentina [Organisation and financing of health care provision by social security in Argentina]. University of Buenos Aires. http://bibliotecadigital.econ.uba.ar/econ/collection/docin/document/docin_iiep_025

Corral, Y., & Ricci, V. (2009). Qué vacío intentan llenar las candidaturas testimoniales en la democracia representativa argentina? [What void are testimonial candidacies trying to fill in Argentina's representative democracy?]. Unirsity of Buenos Aires. https://www.aacademica.org/000-089/288.pdf

Cortese, A. (1962). *Historia económica argentina y americana* [Argentine and American economic history]. Macchi.

Decree 576/1993. Social welfare. Regulation of the system. Sanctioned on 1 April 1993. Published on 7 April 1993 National Gazette. National Executive Power, Argentina. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/decreto-576-1993-12548

Decree 9/1993. Social welfare. Free choice. Sanctioned on 7 January 1993. Published on 18 January 1993 National Gazette. National Executive Power, Argentina. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/decreto-9-1993-11554

Decree/Law 28169/1944. Rural workers. Rural labourer. Statute of the rural labourer. Sanctioned on 17 October 1944. Published on 18 October 1944 National Gazette. National Executive Power, Argentina. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/decreto_ley-28169-1944-294999

Descartes/Perón, J. D. (1953). Política y estrategia (no ataco, critico) [Politics and strategy (I don't attack, I criticise)]. Democracia. http://www.labaldrich.com.ar/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Pol%C3%ADtica-y-Estrategia-Descartes-Per%C3%B3n.pdf

Dornbusch, R., & De Pablo, J. C. (1988). *Deuda externa e inestabilidad macroeconómica en la Argentina* [External debt and macroeconomic instability in Argentina]. Sudamericana.

Duzdevich, A. (2022, May 1). El último 1° de mayo de Perón: el día que echó a los Montoneros de la Plaza y los trató de imberbes y estúpidos [Perón's last May Day: The day he kicked the Montoneros out of the Plaza and treated them as imbebes and fools]. *Infobae.* https://www.infobae.com/sociedad/2022/05/01/el-ultimo-1-de-mayo-de-peron-el-dia-que-echo-a-los-montoneros-de-la-plaza-y-los-trato-de-imberbes-y-estupidos/

El Mundo. (1962, August 25). Como en Chicago [As in Chicago]. *El Mundo Newspaper.*

Fernández, A. (1937). *El movimiento obrero en la Argentina* [The labour movement in Argentina]. Plus Ultra.

Fernandez, T., & Tamaro, E. (2004a). Arturo Frondizi. Biografías y vidas [Biographies and lives]. https://www.biografiasyvidas.com/biografia/f/frondizi.htm

Fernandez, T., & Tamaro, E. (2004b). Arturo Umberto Illia. *Biografías y vidas* [Biographies and lives]. https://www.biografiasyvidas.com/biografia/i/illia.htm

Fernandez, T., & Tamaro, E. (2004c). Fernando de la Rúa. *Biografías y vidas* [Biographies and lives]. https://www.biografiasyvidas.com/biografia/r/rua.htm

Ferrer, A. (1968). *La economía argentina. Las etapas de su desarrollo y problemas actuales* [The Argentine economy. The stages of its development and current problems]. Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Giampaolo, F. (2021, May 16). La verdad detrás del asesinato de Rosendo García, un episodio cruento del sindicalismo peronista [The truth behind the assassination of Rosendo García, a bloody episode in Peronist trade unionism]. *Infobae*. https://www.infobae.com/sociedad/2021/05/16/la-verdad-detras-del-asesinato-de-rosendo-garcia-un-episodio-cruento-del-sindicalismo-peronista/

Godio, J. (1987). *El movimiento obrero argentino (1870–1910)* [The Argentinean labour movement (1870–1910)]. Legasa.

INDEC. (2022). Índice de precios al consumidor (IPC) [Consumer Price Index (CPI)]. https://www.indec.gob.ar/uploads/informesdeprensa/ipc_06_22C1D48A9B6E.pdf

International Labour Organisation. (2021). La transición de los sindicatos: ¿qué papel tendrán en el futuro del trabajo? [The transition of trade unions: What role for the future of work?]. https://www.ilo.org/infostories/es-ES/Stories/Labour-Relations/trade-unions

Jaccard, P. (1977). *Historia social del trabajo* [Social history of work]. Plaza & Janés.

La Nación. (2003, June 15). A seis meses de asumir, el gobierno de Raúl Alfonsín hizo el lanzamiento de las cajas PAN, el gran antecedente [Six months after taking office, Raúl Alfonsín's government launched the PAN boxes, the great precedent]. *La Nación*. https://www.lanacion.com.ar/economia/a-seis-meses-de-asumir-el-gobierno-de-raul-alfonsin-hizo-el-lanzamiento-de-las-cajas-pan-el-gran-antecedente-nid503874/

Law 12921. SAC—Living and mobile minimum wage. 21 December 1946. Sanctioned on (Decree/Law 33302) 20 December 1945. Published on 31 December 1945 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/decreto_ley-33302-1945-96344

Law 13010. Women's political rights. Sanctioned on 9 September 1947. Published on 27 September 1947 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-13010-47353

Law 13020. Minimum wages. Harvest wages. Sanctioned on 22 September 1947. Published on 6 October 1947 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-13020-45924#:~:text=Resumen%3A,COMINSION%20NACIONAL%20DE%20TRABAJO%20RURAL%20

Law 14394. Civil Code. The regime of minors and the family. Sanctioned on 22 December 1954. Published on 30 December 1954 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-14394-103605

Law 18610. Social security organisations. Operating rules. Sanctioned on 23 February 1970. Published on 5 March 1970 National Gazette. National Executive Power, Argentina. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-18610-115615

Law 19929. Housing. National housing fund—creation. Sanctioned on 3 November 1972. Published on 13 November 1972 National Gazette. National Executive Power, Argentina. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-19929-263460

Law 20744. Employment contract. Sanctioned on 5 September 1974. Published on 27 September 1974 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-20744-25552

Law 20972. Acephalia law. Presidency of the Argentine Nation. Sanctioned on 11 November 1975. Published on 22 July 1975 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-20972-81179

Law 21261. Collective labour disputes. Strike. Strike right suspension. Sanctioned on 24 March 1976. Published on 26 March 1976 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-21261-303522

Law 21274. Public employees. Judicial personnel. Legislative staff. Municipal staff. Dispensability. Indemnification: Exceptions. Sanctioned on 29 March 1976. Published on 2 April 1976 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-21274-1976-303533

Law 21356. Professional associations of workers. The holding of elections and assemblies or congresses is suspended. Sanctioned on 22 July 1976. Published on 28 July 1976 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. http://servicios.infoleg.gob.ar/infolegInternet/anexos/300000-304999/303592/norma.htm

Law 21581. National housing fund. Implementing body. Sanctioned on 23 May 1977. Published on 2 June 1977 National Gazette. National Executive Power, Argentina. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-21581-30932#:~:text=Resumen%3A,DEMAS%20NORMAS%20Y%20DISPOSICIONES%20REGLAMENTARIAS.

Law 22248. National agricultural workers' scheme. Sanctioned on 10 July 1980. Published on 18 July 1980 National Gazette. National Executive Power, Argentina. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-22248-1980-29273

Law 22269. Trade union welfare funds. New regime. Sanctioned on 15 August 1980. Published on 20 August 1980 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-22269-114909

Law 23056. National Food Programme. Sanctioned on 15 March 1984. Published on 22 March 1984 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-23056-28150/texto

Law 23515. Civil code. Amendments. Sanctioned on 8 June 1987. Published on 12 June 1986 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-23515-21776

Law 23551. Trade Union Associations. Sanctioned on 23 March 1988. Published on 22 April 1988 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-23551-20993

Law 23660. Social welfare. New scheme. Sanctioned on 29 December 1988. Published on 20 January 1989 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-23660-62

Law 23661. Social welfare. National Health Insurance System (ANSSAL). Sanctioned on 29 December 1988. Published on 20 January 1989 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-23661-63

Law 24430. National Constitution. Publication order. Sanctioned on 14 December 1994. Published on 10 January 1995 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-24430-804

Law 26390. Prohibition of child labour and protection of adolescent labour. Sanctioned on 4 June 2008. Published on 25 June 2008 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-26390-141792

Law 26618. Equal Marriage. Sanctioned on 15 July 2010. Published on 21 July 2010 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. http://servicios.infoleg.gob.ar/infolegInternet/anexos/165000-169999/169608/norma.htm

Law 26727. Agricultural work. Sanctioned on 21 December 2011. Published on 28 December 2011 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-26727-192152

Law 8871. Electoral System. Sanctioned on 13 February 1912. Published on 26 March 1912 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-8871-310143

Law 9677. Affordable Housing. Sanctioned on 27 September 1915. Published on 6 October 1915 National Gazette. Honourable Congress of the Argentinean Nation. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/ley-9677-291446

Lenguita, P. (2011). Revitalización desde las bases del sindicalismo argentino [Grassroots revitalisation of Argentinean trade unionism]. *Nueva Sociedad, 232*, 137–149. https://nuso.org/articulo/revitalizacion-desde-las-bases-del-sindicalismo-argentino/

Línea Sindical. (2022, July). FATLYF presente en la inauguración del Instituto Superior de Formación Profesional Nro. 240 [FATLYF present at the inauguration of the Higher Vocational Training Institute No. 240]. *Línea Sindical.* https://www.lineasindical.com.ar/fatlyf-presente-inauguracion-instituto-superior-formacion-profesional-nro240-n-1686490.html

Luna, F. (1971). *Crónica de un año decisivo* [Chronicle of a decisive year]. Sudamericana.

Matsushita, H. (1986). Movimiento obrero argentino 1930–1945 [Argentine labour movement 1930–1945]. Hyspamerica.

Montes de Oca, I. (2018). *El fascismo Argentino. La matriz autoritaria del peronismo* [Argentine Fascism. The authoritarian matrix of Peronism]. Sudamericana.

Niehoff, B. P., & Moorman, R. H. (1993). Justice as a mediator of the relationship between methods of monitoring and organizational citizenship behavior. *Academy of Management Journal, 36*(3), 527–556.

Noticias Gremiales. (2022a, June). El Instituto Superior ASIMRA se sumará a la FEDUTEC para potenciar la educación técnico profesional [The ASIMRA higher institute will join FEDUTEC to promote technical and professional education]. *Noticias Gremiales, 962*, 18. https://noticiasgremiales.com/Archivo/archivo_962.html

Noticias Gremiales. (2022b, May). UOM: encuentro nacional de su red de centros de formación profesional [UOM: National meeting of its network of

vocational training centres]. *Noticias Gremiales, 960*, 33. https://noticiasgre-miales.com/Archivo/archivo_960.html#

Noticias Gremiales. (2022c, September). Salta: aprendiendo a leer con el Programa de Alfabetización Rural [Salta: Learning to read with the Rural Literacy Programme]. *Noticias Gremiales, 967*, 29. https://www.noticiasgre-miales.com/Masinf/masinf_0159.html

O'Donnell, M. (2016). *El secuestro de los Born* [The kidnapping of the Born]. Debate.

Padinger, G. (2021, December 20). A 20 años del corralito: la medida que dio inicio al estallido social y una histórica crisis en Argentina [20 years after the corralito: The measure that started the social outburst and a historic crisis in Argentina]. *CNN Español.* https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2021/12/20/20-anos-corralito-argentina-orix/

Palacios, A. L. (1954). *La justicia social* [Social justice]. Claridad.

Palacios, H. A. (1994). *Historia del movimiento obrero argentino*, Tomo III [History of the Argentine labour movement, Vol. III]. Impresiones Avellaneda.

Palomino, H. (2000). Los sindicatos en la Argentina contemporánea [Trade unions in contemporary Argentina]. *Nueva Sociedad, 169*, 121–134. https://nuso.org/articulo/los-sindicatos-en-la-argentina-contemporanea/

Pinker, S. (2011). *The better angels of our nature: The decline of violence in history and its causes*. Allen Lane.

Plis-Sterenberg, G. (2003). *Monte Chingolo: la mayor batalla de la guerrilla argentina* [Monte Chingolo: Argentina's greatest guerrilla battle]. Planeta.

Potash, R. (2012, July 28). *¿Por qué Mor Roig?* [Why Mor Roig?]. Perfil. http://www.historiaydoctrinadelaucr.com/2016/01/robert-potash-por-que-mor-roig-14-de.html

Provocanto. (2021). Misa criolla [Creole Mass]. http://provocanto.nl/ENG/Content%20Eng/Misa%20Criolla%20EN.html

Rawls, J. (1971). *Teoría de la justicia* [Theory of justice]. Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Reato, C. (2015). *Doce noches* [Twelve nights]. Sudamericana.

Regulatory Decree 467/1988. Regulation Law 23551: Trade Union Associations. Sanctioned on 14 April 1988. Published on 22 April 1988 National Gazette. National Executive Power, Argentina. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/norma-tiva/nacional/decreto-467-1988-46044

Requena, R., & Monzane, M. (2009). *La problemática del trabajo infantile en las américas* [The problema of child labor in the americas]. Union Network.

Rodríguez, M. (2021, December 14). Crisis del 2001 en Argentina: los 5 presidentes que hubo en 11 días [Argentina's 2001 crisis: The 5 presidents in 11 days]. *Página 12*. https://www.pagina12.com.ar/389232-crisis-del-2001-en-argentina-los-5-presidentes-que-hubo-en-1

Sindicato de Luz y Fuerza. (2022). Cooperativa de vivienda [Housing cooperative]. https://www.sind-luzyfuerza-cap.org.ar/slyf/cooperativas/

Sladogna, M. (Ed.) (2018). *Sindicatos y formación profesional en Argentina: antecedentes y desafíos* [Trade unions and vocational training in Argentina: Background and challenges]. Confederación General del Trabajo de la República Argentina.

Smink, V. (2009, April 16). Los "falsos candidatos" de Argentina [Argentina's "false candidates"]. *BBC Mundo*. https://www.bbc.com/mundo/america_latina/2009/04/090416_0010_candidatos_falsos_argentina_jrg

Superintendencia De Servicios De Salud. (2010). *Los 40 años del sistema de obras sociales* [40 years of the social welfare system]. Edeme.

Tomada, C., Schleser, D., & Maito, M. (2018). Radiografía de la sindicalización en Argentina [Radiography of unionisation in Argentina]. Universidad Nacional de San Martin. http://noticias.unsam.edu.ar/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/sindicalizacion.pdf

Trpin, V. (2021). Unión Argentina de Trabajadores Rurales y Estibadores (UATRE). Argentina, 1988–2017 [Argentinean union of rural workers and stevedores (UATRE). Argentina, 1988–2017]. In J. Muzlera, & A. Salomón (Eds.), *Diccionario del Agro Iberoamericano* [Dictionary of Ibero-American agriculture] (pp. 1257–1266). TeseoPress. https://www.coninagro.org.ar/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Diccionario-del-Agro-Iberoamericano.pdf

United Nations. (2004). Resolution 1566 (2004)/adopted by the Security Council at its 5053rd meeting on 8 October 2004. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/532676/files/S_RES_1566%282004%29-EN.pdf

Velasco, L. M. (2021). Día internacional de la justicia social. Breve racconto histórico de la misma [International Day of Social Justice. A brief historical overview of the day]. *Revista IDEIDES, 58*. http://revista-ideides.com/dia-internacional-de-la-justicia-social-breve-racconto-historico-de-la-misma/.

Villulla, J. M. (2015). *Las cosechas son ajenas. Historia de los trabajadores rurales detrás del agro-negocio* [The harvests belong to others. The story of rural workers behind agribusiness]. Cienflores.

Walsh, R. (1969). *Quién mató a Rosendo?* [Who killed Rosendo?]. De la Flor.

Yofre, J. B. (2009). *Volver a matar* [Back to killing]. Sudamericana.

Index