

ASSESSING FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEES' VOICE BEHAVIOR IN  
ORGANIZATIONS

by

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A Thesis

Submitted to the University at Albany, State University of New York

in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

College of Arts & Sciences

Department of Psychology

2017

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## Abstract

The purpose of the present study was threefold: (1) to investigate the relationship between organizational based self- esteem and voice behavior, (2) to examine whether or not organizational identification interacts with organizational based self-esteem in significantly predicting voice behavior, and (3) to test another moderation effect, interaction of perceived organizational support and organizational based self-esteem in predicting voice behavior. Based on data from 482 undergraduate students, results suggested organization based self-esteem is strongly positively related to voice behavior. Additionally, the interaction of organization based self-esteem with both perceived organizational support and organizational identification in predicting voice behavior was not significant. Implications for both researchers and practitioners as well as limitations of the study are discussed.

## Acknowledgement

The successful completion of any task would be fragmentary without the expression of appreciation to the people who made it possible. So, with reverence I acknowledge everyone who has directly or indirectly assisted me in winding up this thesis.

I wholeheartedly thank my supervisor Dr. Sylvia Roch who enriched me with the knowledge from experiences and made me capable of utilizing my fullest of potential. The unconditional support, research acumen and guidance of my supervisor helped me during the course of this research. Moreover, I have been very fortunate in having continued support and advice from my supervisor. The supervision and support truly helped me the progression and smoothness of this research study. The co-operation is much indeed appreciated. Countless students will benefit, like I have, for furthering of knowledge.

I would like to thank my friends in I/O psychology department Yi-Ren, Youjoeng, Shashika and Matthew who have always guided me when I stumbled or when I was too anxious and stressed due to my work.

This project has been a very new and enlightening experience for me. I thank each and every participant without whose generosity this research would not been possible.

I owe a great deal of gratitude towards my parents and my friends Praval and Pouroushi, for their support and guidance, without them this project would have been a distant reality.

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Chapter 1  
Introduction

## Introduction

In today's changing and uncertain organizational environment, organizations need employee input of ideas for "doing things better" (Harrington, 2001), promoting their employees to work harder and to seek out opportunities for constructive change (Fuller, Barnett, Hester, Relyea, & Frey, 2007). Firms are becoming increasingly aware that they can gain a greater competitive advantage by extending their knowledge base than by depending only on economies of scale/scope (Grant & Ashford, 2008). They have become more reliant on their workforce as a source of constructive suggestions and insightful ideas (Detert & Burris, 2007; Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Employees' new ideas are of most value for the innovation of organization, and the new ideas are often rooted in voice behavior (Zhou, Feng & Liu, 2017). Thus, firms are encouraging employee voice (or "speaking up") behavior, which refers to "proactively challenging the status quo and making constructive suggestions" defined by Van Dyne, Cummings, and McLean Parks (1995, p.66).

Voice is a kind of extra-role behavior that is not included in the regular job performance and can be attributed to extra-role performance (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). In order to make one's opinion count, one must not only speak up about one's ideas, but also do so in a way that is noticeable or heard by important stakeholders (Kish-Gephart Detert, Treviño & Edmondson, 2009). Voice behavior is one way in which employees can share their ideas with supervisors (speaking up) and coworkers (speaking out; Liu & Liao, 2012); however, it can be an intimidating prospect, especially for people who have recently joined the organization, because it may be perceived that the employee is criticizing well-established practices. Recent research has, in general, suggested that employees are often reluctant to engage in voice behavior because they feel that it could be unsafe and risky to express their frank opinions to their direct superior

(Detert & Burris, 2007; Gao, Janssen, & Shi, 2011; Morrison, Wheeler-Smith, & Kamdar, 2011; Liang, Farh, & Farh, 2012; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009).

However, the results of organizational justice research show that if employees are provided with an opportunity to provide voice into procedures, their perceptions of fairness are improved (Mariani, Pini & Mancini, 2013). Procedural justice, the subjective reaction to the process of resource distribution, is influenced by the degree of voice allowed (Osdel, 1994). Several authors have found that procedural justice ratings are enhanced when people are allowed voice (e.g., Bies, 1987; Bies & Shapiro, 1988; Folger, 1977; Lind, Earley, & Kanfer, 1990; Tyler, Rasinski, & Spodick, 1985). Voice might influence justice perceptions possibly because people prefer an opportunity to voice as they believe it will lead to more favorable outcomes (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). The other explanation contends that people prefer voice because the opportunity to express their opinion affirms both group membership status and interactional fairness (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler, 1990). Thus, voice behavior is crucial for improving justice perceptions at work. Several researchers have examined the link between perceived justice and organizational citizenship behavior (e.g., Zhang, Farh, & Wang, 2012).

Further, withholding information by the employees might be harmful for an organization as it may indicate low employee motivation and may eventually lead to turnover and less employee engagement. Derek (2006) asserted that employee turnover is positively associated with the organization inefficiency. Retaining organizational human capital is a critical issue for organizations and consequently, employee retention is frequently cited as one of the most important problems for employers (Boswell, Shipp, Payne & Culbertson, 2009). In order to reduce costs, keep key employees, and decrease turnover rates, managers need to understand the

factors that drive quitting behavior (Dinger et al., 2011). Conceivably, voice is the portion of the turnover picture over which managers have the most control (Moore, 2011).

The withhold of voice may have consequences beyond its role in employee turnover. Morrison (2014) raised importance of voice behavior in context of national security and explained her point using an example from US Homeland security,

“In 2010, the US Department of Homeland Security launched a national campaign called: If You See Something, Say Something—a slogan that can be found on signs and billboards throughout the country. The idea captured by the name of this campaign seems quite simple, not just in the context of national security but also in the context of the employment relationship. If one sees a potential problem, one should notify someone in a position of authority.” (p. 174)

This quote highlights the importance of speaking up, but also implies that people may choose to remain silent when they perceive a potential problem. Researchers have argued that “voice is...insufficiently provided by employees” (Detert & Burris 2007, p. 869), that “employees frequently choose to remain silent about important issues at work” (Tangirala & Ramanujam 2008a, p. 37). As Morrison’s quote (2014) implies, if employees remain silent when they have important information or ideas, then organizations are likely to suffer. This makes studying factors contributing to enhanced voice behavior even more important.

Lepine and Van Dyne (1998) demonstrated that organization based self-esteem (henceforth OBSE) is an important predictor of voice behavior. Pierce, Gardner, Cummings and Dunham (1989) were the first ones to look onto the dynamics of OBSE and defined it as “the degree to which an individual believes him- or herself to be important, meaningful, effectual, and worthwhile within their employing organization” (p. 625). The concept has been evolving since its inception. Employees who experience higher levels of self-expression and success in an

organization are likely to manifest higher organization based self-esteem, which serves to reinforce their positive self-image (Pierce & Gardner, 2004).

Despite significant progress made by this research in identifying importance of OBSE as an antecedent of voice behavior, studies have yet to examine how employees' OBSE interact with other contextual factors, such as tenure at the organization, perceptions of organizational support etc. in predicting voice behavior. This is an important gap to address as previous research has accounted for change in voice behavior attributing it to either personality variables or psychological factors such as felt obligation, psychological safety etc. (Pacheco & Caldeira, 2015; Uğurlu & Ayas, 2016; W.H. Ng & Feldman, 2015; Zhu & Akhtar, 2017) but fewer studies are dedicated to investigating variables specific to organizational context. There may be some potential moderators that may influence the relationship between OBSE and voice, making it increase the likelihood that people inclined to share their ideas actually express them, and one such variable may be perceived organizational support (POS). Perceived organizational support (henceforth POS) fundamentally refers to "the reciprocal social exchange relationship between the employer and the employee, which emphasize the quality of the relationship" (Afzali, Motahari & Hatami-Shirkouhi, 2014, p. 625). When employees perceive organizational support, in which the organization rewards their increased work effort, provides them help when needed, recognizes their contributions, meets their socio-emotional needs, and takes their well-being into consideration, employees will feel obligated to care about the organization's welfare and make an effort for organizations to reach its objectives (Krishnan & Mary, 2012; Loi, Ao & Xu, 2014). Employees may be more willing to express their ideas when they perceive strong support from the organization, and thus increasing the level of POS may help employees with low levels of OBSE to voice their opinion. When POS is low, people may feel no obligation to share their

ideas. Low POS may also create concern in employees that they will be seen as complainers or “trouble makers” if they speak up. Thus, for employees with low levels of OBSE, focusing on increasing their POS may result in the higher levels of voice.

Studying the influence of POS would be crucial for two reasons: a) previous research focused only on looking at “promotive” aspect of voice behavior; however, present research investigates the condition of POS under which both promotive and prohibitive voice behavior operates by investigating POS as a moderator of the OBSE – voice relationship, thus increasing the criterion space. Employee attitudes such as organizational commitment has been widely studied with POS as a mediator (Arshadi, 2011; Arshadi & Hayavi, 2013; Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2013) but a thorough search of the relevant literature showed that studying POS as an operating condition for OBSE to influence voice behavior has not been examined. Organizations may use interventions that includes improving job conditions, such as aspects of training, job discretion, role stressors, relations in workplace to increase employees’ level of POS (Giorgi, Dubin & Perez, 2017). High POS employees express more trust in the organization, believing that risks can be taken on the organization’s behalf without fear of being exploited (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998). Thus, using POS as a potential moderator between OBSE and voice behavior may produce beneficial results of the organization.

Additionally, another potential moderating variable organizational identification- “the extent to which employees feel oneness or belongingness with their organization and include attributes of the organization in their self-definition” (Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008, p. 1190), is also recognized as key in efforts to understand strategic change (Ravasi & Phillips, 2011), decision-making (Riantoputra, 2010), internal conflicts (Humphreys & Brown 2002) and most importantly communication (Fombrun, 1996). Organizational identification is the perception of

oneness with or belongingness to an organization among members (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Organizational identification may make it more likely that employees will engage in voice behavior because it may help to improve the competitive stance of their organization (Dutton et al., 1994; Fisher & Wakefield, 1998). Organizations benefit from fostering identification among employees because it provides 'greater assurance that employees will decide with organizational interests uppermost in mind' (Cheney, 1983, p. 158). Researchers have studied influencing factors of organizational identification and their relation to voice on an organization wide basis (Adelman, 2012; LePine & Van Dyne, 1998; Maas & Bos, 2011; Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Prooijen, Wilke, & Bos, 2004; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009) and have shown that organizational identification leads to increased employee extra-role behavior (Makens, 2016). The present research also examines if organizational identification modifies the relationship between OBSE and voice. Strengthening organizational identification may be particularly helpful for those with lower levels of OBSE perhaps because identifying strongly with the organization provides stronger motivation for those low in OBSE to voice their concerns. While previous research on organizational identification has focused primarily on identification definition and its impact on the organization performance (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Cole & Bruch, 2006; Corley et al., 2006; Elsbach, 1999; Tajfel, 1978; Turner, Oakes, Kreiner & Ashforth, Haslam & McGarty, 1994) this study focused on the moderator effect of organizational identification in particular. It is crucial to understand how employees perceive their organization's image leading to identification, firstly, as it may lead to extra-role behavior beneficial for the growth of the company. Employees may form a psychological bond with the organization that may be expressed by an increase in OI however, employees may need to feel valued, respected and appreciated by the organization to effectively voice their opinion, i.e. their

sense of OBSE must be increased and this may be possible with increasing organizational identification. As employees identify more strongly with the organization, their beliefs about the organization are likely to become more positive (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Secondly, to the best of my knowledge, organizational identification has not been studied empirically as a potential moderator of the OBSE to voice relationship previously hence it is imperative to explore how fostering organizational identification can interact with OBSE to help companies to gain competitive advantage via increase in voice behavior by their employees. Perhaps managers may be able influence organizational identification by exposing employees to the preferred values of the organization. Human resource practices should be formulated in such a way to overcome the negative images postulated by the employees and outside society (Santhanam, Kamalanabhan, Dyaram & Ziegler, 2015).

In sum, it can be said that previous studies have indicated voice as an important form of extra-role behavior, or one of the ways in which employees can go above and beyond the requirements of their jobs (Van Dyne et al. 1995; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). But there seem to various barriers or inhibitors that have been shown to diminish voice and increase the tendency toward silence (Morrison, 2014). These may include individual-level variables such as achievement orientation (Tangirala et al, 2013) and psychological detachment (Burris et al, 2008). Others are contextual factors, such as abusive leadership (Detert & Trevino, 2010) and an organizational culture that is resistant to change (Dutton et al, 1997). Thus, there is evidence suggesting that voice is in fact stifled in many organizations and that employees are often very hesitant to engage in voice, particularly when the information could be viewed by the recipient as negative or threatening (Detert et al, 2010; Milliken et al, 2003). In this study, organization based self-esteem is investigated as individual level variable influencing voice. It may be the case that



for those with low levels of OBSE, voice behavior can be enhanced under certain conditions such as when there are higher levels of POS allowing employees to exploit their abilities without any threat to their self-esteem and they engage more in interpersonal interactions (Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2013). Furthermore, higher organizational identification may stimulate followers to show voice, especially for those with low OBSE, by guiding individuals to internalize the organization's aims and goals as their own (Mael & Ashforth 1992; Van Knippenberg 2000). Therefore, both OI and POS are the proposed moderators influencing the OBSE to voice relationship.

Chapter 2  
Literature Review

## Literature Review

Even though previous research suggests that voice behavior is directly related to organization based self-esteem (OBSE, Dutton et al., 1997; LePine & Van Dyne, 1998; Milliken et al., 2003; Morrison & Milliken, 2000), little research has examined moderators of this relationship. The following sections will first explain how OBSE is associated with voice, and then will move forward to examine some potential moderators of this relationship, and review the literature for support for the moderating role of OI (the perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organization among members, Mael & Ashforth, 1992) between OBSE and voice behavior. Next, the significance of interaction of OBSE with POS (“the reciprocal social exchange relationship between the employer and the employee, which emphasize the quality of the relationship”, Afzali, Motahari & Hatami-Shirkouhi, 2014, p. 625) in predicting voice is discussed using evidence from various research studies to propose testable moderation hypotheses. The section is concluded with a proposed model of the study.

### *Organizational Based Self Esteem and Voice*

The reason self-esteem is important is based on the proposition that people behave in a way that is consistent with their level of self-esteem (Korman, 1976). Thus, the high self-esteem individual has a “sense of personal adequacy and a sense of having achieved need satisfaction in the past” (Korman, 1966, p. 479). In addition to reflecting a cognition about oneself, Pelham and Swann (1989) noted that self-esteem also consists of an affective (liking/disliking) component – high self-esteem people like who and what they are. Thus, people high in global self-esteem agree with statements like “I am a person of worth, on an equal plane with others” and “I am satisfied with myself” (Rosenberg, 1965). Building upon the notion that self-esteem is a hierarchical and multifaceted phenomenon and Coppersmith’s (1967) observation that self-

esteem indicates the extent to which the individual believes him/herself to be capable, significant, and worthy, Pierce, Gardner, Cummings and Dunham (1989) introduced the concept of organization-based self-esteem. Consistent with Korman's (1966, 1970, 1971, 1976) view of self-esteem, people with strong organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) have a sense of having satisfied their needs through their organizational roles (Pierce & Gardner, 2004). Further, it is likely that employees with high level of OBSE may engage in organizational citizenship behavior as these employees feel that they are an integral part of the organization and that they "count around here" (Pierce & Gardner, 2004).

At the individual level, research has shown that individuals high in OBSE have greater work motivation (Pierce et al., 1989) and intrinsic motivation (Hui & Lee, 2000), and achieve higher performance ratings (Gardner, Pierce, Van Dyne, & Cummings, 2000; Marion-Landais, 2000; Pierce et al., 1993; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2003) than do persons low in OBSE. If analyzed at an organizational level, scholars have also discovered that OBSE correlates negatively with turnover intentions and with turnover (Gardner & Pierce, 2001). In the Hui and Lee's (2000) study, it emerged that employees with low OBSE showed lower organizational commitment and higher absenteeism compared to those with higher levels of OBSE. Some studies have examined the relationship between OBSE and stress and found a negative relationship (Tang & Ibrahim, 1998).

Many research studies provide evidence that OBSE is related to organization specific factors especially, organizational citizenship behavior dimensions such as altruistic behavior and conscientiousness, civic virtue etc. The study of OCB has also expanded into many disciplines, such as marketing, hospital administration, international management, economics, leadership, and others (Frazier, 2009). For instance, Chattopadhyay and George (2001) observed a positive

relationship between OBSE and altruism in their study of employees in a computer manufacturer company. This study, recognizing the importance of extra-role behavior at workplace, focuses on a particular type of citizenship behavior: voice behavior. Van Dyne and colleagues (1995) suggested that one of the facet of citizenship behavior was organizational participation, which consisted of staying informed of organizational issues and involved in the governance of the organization. The original label for voice behavior was “advocacy participation”, which consisted of behavior that was innovative, maintained high standards, challenged others, and made suggestions for constructive change. These were the behaviors “typical of an internal change agent” (Van Dyne et al., 1994, p. 783).

However, only a few research studies assess the relationship of OBSE with voice behavior amongst employees, which is an integral part of an individual’s work environment. Scholars have acknowledged the contributions that voice and change-oriented behavior can make to organizational effectiveness (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Nemeth & Staw, 1989; Schein, 1968). Researchers attempted to analyze the influence factors of voice from different angles, but certain aspects of the process have been more explicit than others (Tang, 2015). Interestingly, LePine and Van Dyne (1998) explicated that OBSE is likely to influence employees’ perceptions of behavioral control over work behaviors, particularly for behaviors that require considerable social and political maneuvering such as voice. Because employees with higher OBSE believe that they are of higher value to the organization and enjoy relatively high social status among their colleagues, they are also more likely to infer that they have access to resources and opportunities needed to effectively voice and be heard, especially as a lack of status is a common deterrent to speaking up (Dutton et al., 1997; Milliken et al., 2003; Morrison & Milliken, 2000).

Consistent with this logic, Van Dyne et al. (1995) proposed that organizational based self-esteem would positively relate to voice because high self-esteem individuals are more willing to engage with the work environment (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998). Brockner, Heuer, Siegel, Wiesenfeld, Martin and Grover (1998) bring together the results from five studies that test the hypothesis that higher levels of voice are likely to elicit more positive reactions from people who have relatively high levels of organization based self-esteem and will eventually lead to higher perceptions of procedural justice. Self-esteem is believed to influence the relationship between voice and procedural justice because people who have high organization based self-esteem are more likely to believe that their perspectives are correct and that their actions will make a difference, which reinforces their OBSE (Pierce & Gardner, 2004).

Researchers have linked OBSE with both leadership behavior and voice behavior. In a study by Liang (2017) mediating roles that authentic leadership and organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) play in predicting employee voice behavior were examined. It was found that authentic leadership influence subordinates' voice behavior through the subordinates' perceptions of OBSE. Thus, one specific type of leadership facilitates expression of voice behavior via perceptions of OBSE such that employees with low level of OBSE may not engage in voice.

Liang, Farh, Crystal and Farh (2012) demonstrated how three psychological antecedents (psychological safety, felt obligation for constructive change, and organization-based self-esteem) uniquely, differentially, and interactively predict supervisory reports of promotive (expressing suggestions in order to improve the organization) and prohibitive voice behavior (expressing concerns in order to prevent the organizations from harmful events). Looking specifically at results for organization-based self-esteem, they found that with increase in

perceptions of psychological safety, expression of promotive voice also increased but only for employees with low levels of OBSE. This would imply that organizations may want to work on employees with low levels of OBSE in order to have an effect on their expression of voice because those employees who already have higher levels of OBSE may engage in voice regardless of any other factor. Along similar lines, Payne (2007) reported that employees with low OBSE feel that they are not valued at their workplace and this feeling affects their communication on the job. Therefore, it is employees with low OBSE that need a push to start expressing their opinions at workplace. If an individual recognizes himself as a valuable part of his organization, he or she is more likely to engage in promotive voice behavior which represents a concern for improvement of work processes and constructive opinions and ideas to help the organization in achieving performance target (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Further, the individual may engage in prohibitive voice behavior also which includes suggestions of employees to prohibit some practices that may cause any harm and may create critical issues in organization (Rusbult et al., 1988; Withey & Cooper, 1989).

In sum, organizations inevitably need their employees' ideas and thoughts to speed innovation and enhance organizational effectiveness, which in return improves organizational flexibility, realizing innovative and sustainable development. Employees with lower level of OBSE may have lower self-confidence in their abilities, so they fail to even try doing tasks that might seem outside of their comfort zone. They might perform in a way that is just enough to complete the task. Organization based self-esteem has been theorized to relate positively to voice because individuals with high self-esteem are less concerned about being negatively impacted by the interpersonal consequences of voice (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998; Van Dyne et al., 1995).

The moderating role of OBSE with many other factors has been established to influence voice behavior but not many articles yield support for the direct relationship. Researchers, however, have attempted to look at the secondary role of OBSE to enhance voice behavior taking into account other antecedents such as psychological safety, felt obligation etc. but these empirical articles do not yield much support for existence of direct relationship between OBSE and voice. Drawing from the above discussion, this study proposes that organizational-based self-esteem is positively related to voice behavior at workplace. Accordingly, the research hypothesis is stated as follows:

*Hypothesis 1: Organization-based self-esteem is positively related to voice behavior*

Although OBSE might explain when and why an employee expresses one's opinion, there could some potential moderating variables such as organizational identification and perceived organizational support. Individuals occupy multiple roles, and identity theory is concerned with how the social embeddedness of roles in valued relational networks increases their likelihood of being activated and performing well in a given situation (Ashforth et al, 2008). The more valued the relationship, the more important the role identity and the more likely the person will strive to affirm the identity (Burke & Reitzes, 1991). Further, identity is the central, distinctive, and enduring characteristic of an organization: it is how the collective answers the question: who are we as an organization? (Albert & Whetten, 1985). Organizations are composed of groups or teams with specific roles, and as society is built on the development of groups and subgroups with specific roles, social identity may be extrapolated to the analysis of organizations (Hogg et al, 2004). Thus, among all possible identities, this research focuses specifically on organizational identity. Another possible moderating variable between OBSE to voice purposed in this study is perceived organizational support, which has been used to signify



and assess an organization's handling of employees that how much the organization values and supports its employees to perform their work roles effectively (Malik & Noreen, 2015).

According to organizational support theory, high level of perceived organizational support gives confidence to employees to improve their output (Eisenberger et al., 2001). According to Eisenberger et al., (1986) employees have a propensity to outline comprehensive beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization considers the worth of employees' contribution and thinks about their well-being. Thus, POS is specifically studied in a moderation context between OBSE to voice in the present research. The following paragraphs will expand on how both OI and POS may moderate the relationship from OBSE to voice.

#### *Moderator - Organizational Identification*

Organizational identification (henceforth OI) examines the process whereby an individual's identity becomes psychologically intertwined with the organization's identity (Cole & Bruch, 2006). Consistent with social identity theory and the group identification literature, OI is the "perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organization, where the individual defines him or herself in terms of the organization in which he or she is a member" (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, p. 104). This construct is concerned with the question "Who am I in relation to the organization?" (Pratt, 1998). Van Knippenberg (2000) argued that organizational identification elicits a sense of oneness with the organization, which makes the individual take the organization's perspective and goals as his or her own (Ellemers, De Gilder & Haslam, 2004). This in turn strengthens work motivation and ultimately performance (Qi & Ming-Xia, 2014). Organizational identification has been linked to a variety of other work attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes which support the organization, including individual decision making (Cheney, 1983) commitment to common goals (McGregor, 1967) and employee interaction

(Patchen, 1970). When an individual identifies with the organization, he or she will make decisions that are consistent with organizational objectives (Barney & Stewart, 2000; Patchen, 1970), will self-consciously direct his or her efforts towards the organizational objectives and gain intrinsic satisfaction through the perception of movement toward relevant objectives (McGregor, 1967). Organizational identification can affect both the satisfaction and behavior of employees and the effectiveness of the organization (Albert et al., 2000; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hall & Schneider, 1972; Lee, 1971; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). For employees who strongly identify with their organizations, their sense of self may be defined in terms of the organization's identity. This may guide individuals to internalize the organization's aims and goals as their own (Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Van Knippenberg, 2000). Thus, the expected positive effect of identification on performance should be most prevalent for forms under the volitional control of the individual, such as extra role or voice behaviors (Qi & Ming-Xia, 2014).

Although previous research has not examined the moderating role of OI on the OBSE-voice relationship, it has consistently found that individuals who are strongly identified with their teams and/or organizations are more satisfied and more likely to show extra-role behavior (Riketta & Dick 2005). Research found positive relationships between identification and employees' beliefs and behaviors (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Barney & Stewart, 2000; Dutton et al., 1994; Lee, 1971). In one study, organizational identification moderated the relation between authenticity (the subjective experience of alignment between one's internal experiences and external expressions, Roberts et al., 2009) and silence, such that for employees with high levels of identification, the relation between authenticity and silence was stronger (Knoll & Dick, 2013). Just as employee authenticity interacts with OI in predicting voice, OI and OBSE may interact as well in predicting higher expression at work. This may be possible as people with

lower OBSE may feel threatened to genuinely express their internal feelings as they might perceive that they do not have access to the necessary resources and opportunities to perform a behavior. However, if organization foster higher levels of identification amongst these people and strengthens employees' drive to make a positive difference, it may encourage them to voice their opinions. Thus, increasing identification with the organization is more important for those low in OBSE than high in OBSE.

In one study, level of organizational identification was found to modify the extent to which workload affects employee engagement and burnout levels (Guarana, 2010). It showed that organizations need to provide more resources and/or less demand to have highly engaged employees with low identification. Basically, identification with the organization creates a healthy environment, which may be especially helpful for employees with lower levels of OBSE, with increasing identification, these employees may start to feel as worthier members of the organization. When employees feel a sense of membership in the collective whole and internalize its values and goals it helps employees to differentiate their organizations from other salient competitors. This extra effort results in higher levels of engagement and corroborates with Swann's (1990) research that highly identified individuals systematically strive to promote the perception that they are worthwhile persons (Guarana, 2010).

Along these lines, the present research focuses on whether organization identification moderates the extent to which OBSE affects voice behavior but no research has tested this proposition in the best of my knowledge. When employees have low levels of organizational based self-esteem and their level of OI is too low to feel a responsibility towards the organization, they may exhibit few voice behaviors. It is expected that high OBSE individuals exhibit voice behaviors regardless of their level of OI. Following the discussion above, it is

hypothesized that organizational identification will moderate the relationship from organizational based self-esteem to voice behavior.

*Hypothesis 2: Organizational Identification moderates the relationship between OBSE and voice behavior*

#### *Moderator – Perceived Organizational Support*

Along with organizational identification as a moderator between OBSE and voice behavior, perceived organizational support might also modify the relationship of OBSE to voice behavior amongst employees. Perceived Organizational Support (POS) is defined as the employee's conviction regarding the degree to which an organization and its members rate the employee's well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986; Ferris, Douglas & Heller, 2009). Specifically, when individuals feel their employing organization cares for their wellbeing and shows a personal concern for them, they experience high levels of POS (Eisenberger et al., 1986). While individuals strive to maintain high organization based self-esteem (Crocker & Park, 2004), the interpersonal environment can sometimes frustrate belonging and self-esteem goals by failing to provide support, which communicates to the individual that they are not valued (Leary et al., 2006). In an organizational context, this suggests that low OBSE levels represent a hindrance to voice behavior under the conditions where perceptions of organizational support are also low. When organizationally based self-esteem is low and employees develop negative beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization care about the employee's well-being, this may lead to lower level of voice behavior than if the employee believes that the organization cares about them. Employees may be reluctant or hesitant to express their opinions either due to low self-confidence or out of concern of

organizational retribution, sanctions, or embarrassment. Low levels of POS may heighten these concerns, whereas high levels of POS may soften them. Previous research shows POS and OBSE to be correlated (Chen, Aryee & Lee, 2005; Lee & Peccei, 2007); POS may bolster feelings of OBSE but it may also provide the contextual support for translating OBSE into voice. When people low in OBSE want to give voice having high POS would make it more likely. It is possible that POS may have a minimal effect on individuals with high OBSE – they tend to express voice regardless of their level of POS.

A large body of evidence indicates that employees with high levels of POS judge their jobs more favorably (e.g., increased job satisfaction, more positive mood, and reduced stress) and are more invested in their organization (e.g., increased affective organizational commitment, increased performance and reduced turnover; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Perceived organizational support is strongly linked with the respect for organization (Davis & Gardner 2004; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). With employees having lower levels of OBSE, lack of organizational support results in further lowering of their morals in terms of their identity, integrity, and competency (Aquino & Douglas, 2003; Ferris et al. 2009) therefore, increasing POS would especially be important for those low in OBSE in predicting their voice behavior.

Thus, it is proposed that:

*Hypothesis 3: POS will act as a moderator between OBSE and voice behavior.*

Following model is proposed based on the aforementioned propositions:

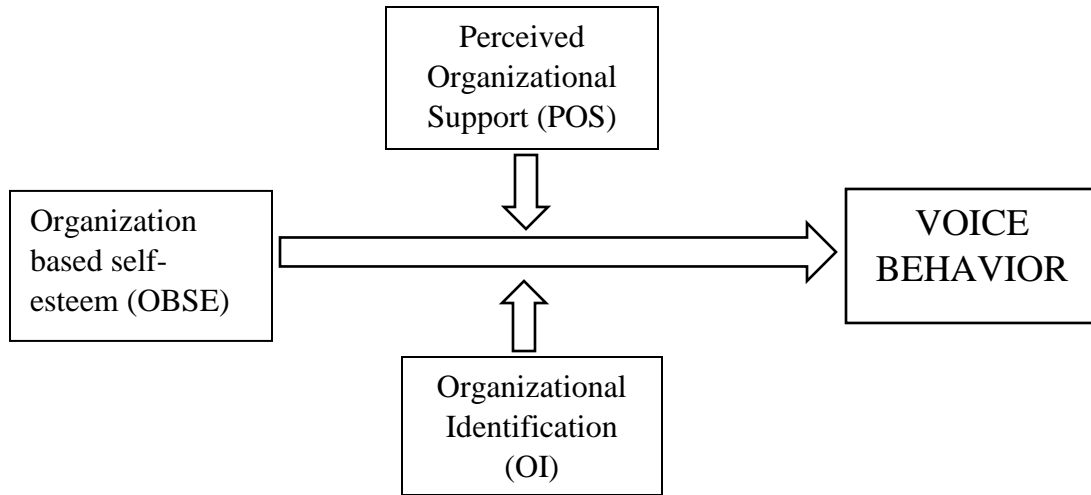


Figure 1: Proposed model of the study

## Chapter 3

### Method

## Method

### *Participants*

The research was conducted at University at Albany, New York using the university's research pool. Participants voluntarily signed up for the study and were given 0.5 credit for participation. Students were recruited through the on-line Psychology Research Pool site, where they could view the study's description and determine if they wish to participate for credit towards their Psychology course's research requirement. Only those students who were employed for at least three months or if they were presently employed were allowed to participate in the study.

In total, 620 students completed the study but only those participants who responded correctly to all 5 random response items were included in the study. These five irrelevant and absurd random response items were added throughout the survey to detect unreliable responses. Items included "Elephants are smaller than dogs" and "Ants are bigger than giraffes." Data points were eliminated based on participant responses to these items such that those who answered either "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" to any of the items were removed. A total of 138 participants were eliminated based on their scores to random response items. The final sample size included 482 participants for analysis. From the final sample, 43.6% of the respondents were men. About 87.8% of the participants were in the 16-20 age category, while 10% were in the 21-24 age range and 1% belonged to 25-30 age category. For working hours per week categories, 39.6% of the respondents answered that they worked between 10 and 20 hours per week, 21.2% responded working between one to 10 hours per week, while 17% were or had worked more than 20 hours per week. Furthermore, 57% of the final sample were Caucasian, 13% were Hispanic, 12% were African-American while 11% were Asians. Additionally, 45% of the participants had



worked for about one to three months at their current or past job they were describing while 35% had a tenure of about 7 to 12 months. In the final sample, 60% of the participants were describing their experience at a past job they had held.

### *Procedure*

Data was collected via Google Forms, an online survey service. Participants took the survey at their convenience and did not need to come to a lab to complete it. This survey was a part of a larger study that consisted of 161 items and took approximately 30 minutes to complete. Out of the total 161 items, 46 items were part of the current research.

### *Measures*

*Organizational Identification scale.* This scale was developed by Edwards and Peccei (2007), and it comprised of six items categorized into three sub-factors representing organizational identification: a) the categorization of the self as an organizational member; b) the integration of the organization's goals and values; and c) the development of an emotional attachment, belongingness, and membership to the organization. Each sub-factor had two items covering the respective domain. Edwards et al. (2010) reported good to acceptable levels of internal consistency for all three sub-factors with values 0.69, 0.76 and 0.82, respectively. Some of the items were: "What the organization stands for is important to me" and "I feel strong ties with the organization". These items were measured on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree."

*Organization-Based Self-Esteem Scale.* Organization-based self-esteem was measured using the Organization-Based Self-Esteem Scale (Pierce et al., 1989). Participants are required to state their agreement with 10 items; responses range from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly

agree. Sample items of this Likert-type scale include “I count around here” and “I am taken seriously around here”. Cronbach’s alpha is .91 in the existing literature.

*Perceived Organizational Support.* Perceived organizational support was measured using the six item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support measure (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988). Respondents were required to state their agreement with 6 items; responses ranged from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. Sample items include “My supervisor really cares about my well-being” and “Help is available from my supervisor when I have a problem.” Cronbach’s alpha for the scale is .98 in the existing literature

*Voice behavior.* Liang, Farh and Farh (2012) developed 10 items voice scale which was used in the present study. They followed the scale of Van Dyne and LePine (1998); Van Dyne et al.(2003); Premeaux and Bedeian (2003); and of Farh and colleagues (2002, 2004). Two sub-scale, promotive and prohibitive voice behavior has 5 items each, respectively. This instrument has been used by number of studies: (Hassan et al, 2015; Jung, 2014; Shin, 2013; Ward, 2013; Xie et al, 2015). Responses range from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. Sample items of this scale include “This employee proactively develops and makes suggestions for issues that may influence the change implementation processes” and “This employee speaks up honestly with problems in the change implementation processes that might cause serious loss to the organization, even when/though dissenting opinions exist”.

Chapter 4  
Results

## Results

### *Descriptive Statistics and Correlations*

Means, standard deviations, intercorrelations, and Cronbach's alphas of the variables of interest are presented in Table 1. As shown, all of the measures have acceptable levels of reliability ranging from 0.86 to 0.93. Employee's voice behavior was positively and significantly correlated with (a) Perceived Organizational Support ( $r = .52, p < 0.01$ ), (b) Organization based self-esteem ( $r = .52, p < 0.01$ ), and (c) Organizational Identification ( $r = .48, p < 0.01$ ). It was also observed that OBSE was positively related to POS ( $r = .59, p < 0.01$ ) and Organizational Identification ( $r = .51, p < 0.01$ ). Given that voice behavior and organizational based self-esteem are strongly and positively related, hypothesis 1 stating that OBSE is significantly related to voice behavior was supported.

Table I.

### *Descriptive statistics and Correlations among study variables*

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. POS	4.85	1.22	(.89)			
2. Voice behavior	4.36	1.23	.52**	(.93)		
3. OBSE	5.82	.93	.59**	.52**	(.93)	
4. Organizational Identification	3.51	.72	.67**	.48**	.51**	(.86)

*Note:* N= 482. Measure reliabilities are noted on the diagonal. POS = Perceived Organizational Support, OBSE = Organization based self-esteem

\*\* $p < .01$

### *Moderation Analyses*

To test moderation, moderated regression analysis was used to analyze if organizational identification moderated the relationship between OBSE and voice behavior. Model 2 of the PROCESS macro in SPSS was used for these analyses (Hayes, 2013). Specifically, moderated regression analyses were conducted to test Hypotheses 2 and 3, proposing that organizational

identification would moderate the relationship between organization based self-esteem and voice behavior, and POS would moderate the relationship between organization based self-esteem and voice behavior. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

*Moderator- Organizational Identification*

For Table 2, OBSE and OI were entered at step one. The interaction term (OBSE x OI) was entered along with the two predictors in the second step. Results indicated that organizational identification and organization based self-esteem significantly predicted dependent variable, i.e. voice behavior. However, there was not a significant interaction effect ( $\beta = -0.47, p > .05$ ). No further analysis was conducted due to insignificant interaction. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 stating that organizational identification interacts with organizational based self-esteem in significantly predicting voice behavior was not supported.

Table II.

*Result of Moderation Analysis for Organizational Identification*

Variable	B	SE	$\beta$	CI (95%)	$pr^2$	$sr^2$
Step 1						
OBSE	.49**	.06	.37	.37, .60	.36	.32
OI	.50**	.07	.29	.36, .65	.29	.25
Step 2						
OBSE	.47**	.06	.35	.37, .60	.36	.31
OI	.50**	.07	.29	.36, .65	.29	.25
OBSE*OI	-.05	.04	-.05	-.13, .03	-.05	-.04
Intercept	-.24	.30				

Note: N = 482, dependent variable = voice behavior

$\Delta R^2 = .002$

\*\* $p < .01$

### *Moderator- Perceived Organizational Support*

The regression analysis included entering independent variables (OBSE and POS) in the first step and interaction variable (OBSE with POS) was entered at second step. Although perceived organizational support and organization based self-esteem were positively associated with the dependent variable, there was not a significant interaction effect ( $\beta = -0.16, p > .05$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 predicting a significant interaction of POS and OBSE in explaining voice behavior was not supported.

Table III.

*Result of Moderation Analysis for Perceived Organizational Support*

Variable	B	SE	$\beta$	CI (95%)	$pr^2$	$sr^2$
Step 1						
OBSE	.43**	.06	.32	.31, .55	.31	.26
POS	.34**	.05	.34	.25, .43	.32	.27
Step 2						
OBSE	.42**	.06	.32	.31, .55	.31	.26
POS	.34**	.05	.33	.25,.43	.32	.27
OBSE*POS	-.02	.04	-.016	-.09, .06	-.02	-.01
Intercept	.23	.29				

Note: N = 482, dependent variable = voice behavior

$\Delta R^2 = .00$

\*\* $p < .01$

### *Post Hoc Analyses*

Additional analyses were conducted due to insignificant results of the study wherein tenure (number of months/year at the job) was added as a covariate in a hierarchical regression with voice behavior as the outcome. It can be argued that as tenure increases, employees become

more involved with organization and start to balance personal goals with those of organizations and thus shows more engagement in the form of more verbal expression. Therefore, to test this possibility, two moderation analyses were conducted controlling for tenure to find out if there are any significant interaction effects.

For the first step, tenure was entered, followed by organizational identification and OBSE in the second step, and the third step included the interaction effects of organizational identification and OBSE. Table 4 lists the results of this analysis. Adding in tenure to the analysis failed to produce any significant incremental change. Thus, non-significant interactions indicate that organizational identification is not a significant moderator between OBSE and voice behavior.

Table IV.

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analyses for moderator Organizational Identification*

Variable	B	SE	$\beta$	CI (95%)	$pr^2$	$sr^2$	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1							.23	.05	.05
Tenure	-.24**	.05	-.23	-.33, -.15	-.23	-.23			
Step 2							.58	.34	.29
Tenure	-.04	.04	-.03	-.12, .05	-.04	-.03			
OBSE	.43**	.06	.33	.31, .55	.31	.26			
POS	.32**	.05	.32	.22, .42	.28	.24			
Step 3							.58	.34	.00
Tenure	-.04	.04	-.04	-.12, .05	-.04	-.03			
OBSE	.43**	.06	.32	.30, .55	.30	.25			
POS	.32**	.05	.32	.22, .42	.28	.23			
OBSE*POS	-.02	.04	-.02	-.09, .06	-.02	-.02			

Note: N = 482, dependent variable = voice behavior

\*\* $p < .01$

Table 5 displays results for hierarchical regression analyses when tenure was added as a covariate and the moderator variable was perceived organizational support. As seen in Table 5, adding tenure in step 1 did not lead to any significant interaction effect, implying that perceived organizational support does not moderate the relationship between OBSE and voice behavior.

Table V.

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analyses for moderator Perceived Organizational Support*

Variable	B	SE	$\beta$	CI (95%)	$pr^2$	$sr^2$	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1							.23	.05	.05
Tenure	-.24**	.05	-.23	-.33, -.15	-.23	-.23			
Step 2							.57	.33	.28
Tenure	-.04	.04	-.04	-.12, .05	-.04	-.03			
OBSE	.49**	.06	.37	.38, .60	.36	.32			
OI	.47**	.08	.28	.31, .63	.26	.24			
Step 3							.58	.33	.002
Tenure	-.04	.04	-.04	-.13, .04	-.04	-.04			
OBSE	.47**	.06	.35	.35, .59	.34	.29			
OI	.46**	.08	.27	.30, .63	.25	.21			
OBSE*OI	-.05	.04	-.05	-.13, .03	-.06	-.05			

Note: N = 482, dependent variable = voice behavior

\*\* $p < .01$



Chapter 5  
Discussion

## Discussion

The current study proposed that employees' expression of their opinions and feelings are dependent upon their organizational related self-esteem. The present study also focused on the moderating influences of organizational identification and perceived organizational support on the relationship of organizational based self- esteem with the voice behavior.

Voice is defined as non-required behavior that emphasizes expression of constructive challenge with an intent to improve rather than merely criticize (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998, p. 109). Employees are regarded as major sources of change, creativity, learning, and innovation, which are critical factors to the success of organizations (Tang, 2015). Given that in today's quickly changing world organizations need employees to express their ideas, researchers have analyzed the influence factors of voice from different angles, but certain aspects of the process have been more explicit than others (Tang, 2015). Results of this study show that voice behavior is significantly and positively correlated with independent variable OBSE, hence corroborating findings from previous research suggesting as employees with high organization-based self-esteem believe that they are valuable and influential among their colleagues (Pierce et al., 1989) and they tend to infer that they have the necessary resources to perform voice behavior successfully (Liang et al., 2012). The direct effect of OBSE on voice behavior has rarely been studied. Organization-based self-esteem has previously also been found to enhance the relationship between psychological safety and voice through a mediation model in one of the few studies empirically investigating the direct relationship between OBSE and voice (Liang et al, 2012). In their study, Liang (2012) examined mediating roles that authentic leadership and organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) play in predicting employee voice behavior. It was found that authentic leadership influence subordinates' voice behavior through the subordinates' perceptions of OBSE. Therefore, this study provides support for direct relationship.

### *Moderation Analysis: Organizational Identification*

It was expected that organizational identification would have an effect on the relation from OBSE to voice, such that identifying strongly with the organization would work particularly for employees who are low in OBSE in pushing them voice their opinion. However, the moderating effect of OI was non-significant in this study. Perhaps the non-significant results could be due to short tenure or part-time employment of undergraduate students at their respective organizations. Hall, Schneider and Nygren (1970) explicated in their research that organizational identification increased as the function of time and commitment to a pivotal organizational goal, public service but in the present study, post-hoc tests controlling for the effects of tenure failed to find a significant moderation effect. However, there were several restrictions of range for tenure in the present sample (the vast majority of students had been with their employer for only a few months). There was not any evidence suggesting a moderating effect. Instead, results pointed out a direct relationship between OI and voice that is, as OI increases, voice increases. This implies that OI may actually be an antecedent to voice rather than a moderator influencing OBSE to voice relationship, regardless of the restricted sample of the study.

### *Moderation Analysis: Perceived Organizational Support*

Results also showed that POS and OBSE produced insignificant interaction, i.e. the two constructs do not interact. It was hypothesized that POS is another such factor that helps employees express their opinions more effectively in their organization, especially employees with low OBSE. These results could be due to extraneous factors such as how long they have been at their job or maybe current sample did not have much of a direct contact with supervisors/managers, as most of them were either involved in a summer job or were present at

their job for a shorter duration. Not having direct contact with the supervisors might make it hard for employees to gauge or even feel their organization would support them so they might not feel motivated to speak up to improve organization's functioning. Thus, there is no evidence that POS moderates the relationship between OBSE and voice; rather POS has a positive (direct) relationship with voice. Therefore, as POS increases voice behavior also increases and thus POS can be treated as one of the primary determinants of voice behavior. Since the relationship between POS and voice behavior is not that widely researched, future researchers could explore this relationship in more depth with a larger sample size and longer tenure employees.

As it was anticipated that may be tenure could be a covariate, suppressing any significant relationship between voice behavior and both the moderators (POS and OI) in the original analyses, post hoc analysis was conducted controlling for tenure in the current sample. However, results showed insignificant effects. Similar research on the related behavior of whistle-blowing also suggests that demographics might be important in predicting voice (Van Dyne et al, 1998). Whistle-blowers tend to be older, male, more tenured, more educated, and hold supervisory or professional jobs (Near & Miceli, 1996). Thus, there is certainly empirical support for the linkage between demographics and voice behavior. However, participants of current study comprised of only undergraduate college students who did not hold a lot work experience. Due to the lack of significant moderation results, future efforts at exploring voice behavior should include demographics covering a wide range of population, unlike the present study which used only undergraduate student sample based at one university with limited organizational exposure. Also, researchers should explore other factors such as gender, tenure, personality traits etc. and see if controlling for any such factor leads to interpretable results.

*Implications and Suggestions for Research*

Considering the multitude of factors that are linked to voice behavior, the present research offers several implications for future research. First, results of this study point out that there exist strong correlations amongst all the study variables. Also, looking at results from hierarchical regression analyses, it can be implied that OBSE, POS and OI are in fact predictors of voice behavior thus, future researchers might want to follow a rather simple model by adding these three variables as independently predicting voice behavior. Secondly, this research adds to the limited literature available by establishing a link between OBSE and voice behavior.

Although, these constructs have been studied for a while, there has not been, to the best of my knowledge, much research to directly establish a link between OBSE and voice behavior. The study does provide supporting evidence of such a relationship, as there was a significant positive correlation between the two constructs. Future researchers should explore the relationship with a different sample and a larger size. It might be useful to know if employees working at different hierarchical level (managers versus lower level employees) and varied tenure differ on their level of OBSE and consequent voice behavior.

Second, future researchers can assess if cultural differences such as power-distance, uncertainty avoidance etc. influence the relationship between OBSE and voice behavior. In this regard, Hofstede (1980) explicated that in societies like that of China, cultural values may influence employees drive to engage in voice behavior at work. People in China score low on uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 1980), indicating they are tolerant of ambiguity and have greater patience regarding change. Thus, employees in this type of culture may not feel a need to voice their thoughts irrespective of their OBSE. This could be helpful as this study was conducted in a restrained setting with a sample of only undergraduate students with minimum of 3 months of work experience. If future research studies include a longitudinal research design

and find significant results, it might aid to address workplace diversity related issues in enhancing employees' promotive voice behavior. Thirdly, given that voice is considered as an enabler for employee engagement, exploring this potential field could be fruitful both for researchers as well as practitioners. There has been growing interest in augmenting employee engagement at organizations as business leaders recognize that a highly engaged workforce can increase innovation, productivity, and bottom-line performance while reducing costs related to hiring and retention in highly competitive talent markets (HBR, 2013). Lastly, future research may investigate how voice behavior is associated with the big five personality traits and could possibly assess if any of the personality traits moderate the relationship between OBSE and voice behavior.

#### *Implications and Suggestions for Practice*

The present research offers several implications and suggestions for practitioners in organizational setting. Voice is particularly important today given the emphasis on flexibility, innovation, and continuous improvement (Howard, 1995). One example of voice as it is defined is when a group member makes an innovative suggestion for change to a standard operating procedure in order to improve work flow, even when such a suggestion might upset others (Lepine & Van Dyne, 1998).

Therefore, practitioners may wish to focus on encouraging voice behavior amongst employees to augment creativity and innovation at work. Making an effort to increase voice behavior may contribute to organizational development in this sense. It could be argued that enhancing creativity in form of voice behavior may be possible if there exists a supportive organizational environment. Keeping in mind role of POS as an antecedent of voice and devising ways to strengthen this relationship can be a key to encouraging creativity at work. Previous

research has shown that leadership styles might also predict this relationship. A recent research study provided evidence that there is a positive relationship between employee perceptions of ethical leadership and employees' voice behavior, and further this research established that an indirect effect of ethical leadership on individual creativity (via voice behavior) is stronger when the employee works in a more innovative climate (Chen & Hou, 2015). Thus, managers must follow ethical leadership style to appropriately manifest support for speaking up amongst employees along with focusing on improving perceptions of organizational support for higher performance outcomes.

Further, research supports the idea that voice behavior is related to justice outcomes, specifically procedural justice and inter-personal justice, and OBSE may play a role in influencing this relationship (Folger, 1977; Folger, Rosenfield, Grove, & Corkran, 1979). The present research already established that OBSE is directly and positively related to voice behavior. Exploring further, it is observed that perceptions of procedural justice are also enhanced if employees have high level of OBSE as they feel more valued and perceived a greater sense of control when they are given the opportunity to express their views prior to a decision (Folger 1977, Folger & Cropanzano 1998, Lind & Tyler 1988). Cawley, Keeping, and Levy (1998) meta-analyzed 27 field studies, each of which examined employee participation in performance appraisal. They found that when employees had a voice, they were more satisfied, saw the process as fairer, and were more motivated to do better. Simply being able to speak one's mind caused employees to be more favorable toward the performance appraisal system (Cropanzano, Bowen & Gilliland, 2007). Thus, management may try communicating openly and often about business goals, objectives, priorities and challenges and try to involve employees on an ongoing basis (*towerswatson.com*, 2014). A clear cascade of results from senior management

should initiate an ongoing dialogue between managers and employees, leading to continuous improvement and a sense of shared success (*towerswatson.com*, 2014).

Since the interaction results of this study were not significant, it is extremely crucial for future researchers to test varied hypotheses that would unfold potential use of enhancing voice behavior in applied setting. Van Dyne et al (1998) showed that individuals who are highly satisfied with their group should be more likely to engage in proactive behavior (e.g., voice) in the interest of group viability; therefore, when an organization wants to increase voice, group members could be selected on traits known to be associated with satisfaction (e.g., positive affectivity). Also, research shows that expressing one's feelings, rather than keeping them inside, has both physical and mental health benefits (Pennebaker, 1997). Hence, managers must practice open communication and set up a climate for freedom of expression within their teams.

#### *Limitations*

The findings of this study should be interpreted with caution. Firstly, sample size (N= 482) only consisted of undergraduate students enrolled in one university; therefore, results may not generalize. Future researchers should replicate this study using a more diverse as well as bigger sample size. This limitation could be one of the main reason for not having significant interaction effects as all the students participating in study were working in an organization for minimum of 3 months. Henrich, Heine and Norenzayan (2010) in their research showed that 68 percent of research subjects in a sample of hundreds of studies in leading psychology journals came from the United States, and 96 percent from Western industrialized nations. The study found that American undergraduates may be particularly unsuitable — as a class — for studies about human behavior, because they are so often outliers in their behavior (Grohol, 2010). Thus, having a specific group of students as participants limits the representativeness of the sample.



Having employees with longer tenure and those working at a large organization might provide with more insightful results.

Also, data was collected using self-report questionnaire which might reflect common method variance. The influence of common methods variance (CMV) has been a pervasively cited concern in organizational research (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003). Therefore, future researchers should attempt to use multiple raters and multiple method to gauge the effect of OBSE on voice behavior. This might explain why there was not any significant interaction since the data might have biases such as social desirability and consistency motif may curtail true responses from getting recorded.

Thirdly, the design of the current research was cross-sectional, implying the data was collected at one specific point in time only. Therefore, it is not possible to establish a cause and effect relationship. As the data is not longitudinal in nature, any temporal change might influence the findings. Therefore, this limitation must especially be kept in mind.

### *Conclusion*

In sum, the present study extends our knowledge about factors that might have an influence on employee's voice behavior. In any context, individual's views about self, guide his or her behavior and actions. Therefore, it is crucial to gauge into the factors that guide a person's images of self and what are the different ways a person could act in accordance with the perceived self. The present research specifically focused on organizational context and thereby assesses organization based self-esteem (OBSE) and resulting voice behavior amongst employees. Identification with the organization and perceived organizational support were included as factors moderating the relationship between OBSE and voice behavior. Due to insignificant interaction effects found in the research, there could not be a solid conclusion.

However, the strong correlations between the constructs included in the study provides an impetus to dig deeper and figure out potential avenues to explore what kind of relationship exists between these factors and voice behavior.

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