The impacts of perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture in sustaining employee voice

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**ABSTRACT**

The effects of organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership integrity on employee voice in organizations are evaluated in this paper. Ten (10) companies in South Africa and Nigeria's financial, service, and manufacturing sectors served as the sample for this research. Intentionally, surveys were disseminated to 200 employees from five workplaces in Nigeria and 200 employees from five workplaces in South Africa. To test the investigation's hypotheses and collect data on participants' opinions on corporate culture, psychological safety, leadership integrity, and employee voice, 400 people were recruited. One hundred eighty-one (181) surveys were discovered in Nigeria, while one hundred eighty-three (183) surveys were found in South Africa. The data was collected and analyzed using SPSS version 29 (Statistical Packages for Social Sciences). According to this study, perceived leadership integrity positively and significantly impacts employee voice in South African and Nigerian organizations. It also showed how employee voice in South African and Nigerian organizations is favorably influenced considerably by perceived leadership integrity. Further, it demonstrated how perceived corporate culture favorably influences employee voice in South African and Nigerian organizations. Additionally, this study showed how employee voice in South Africa and Nigeria is positively impacted by perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture.

**INTRODUCTION**

Experts in organizational behavior view voice as a flexible activity that challenges the status quo while aiming to improve the organization. The perspective of employment relations researchers is substantially different; they view voice as a means of expressing worker rights and interests distinct from those of the company and promoting employee autonomy (Barry & Wilkinson, 2016). However, the literature on human resource management draws from both traditions. It examines other channels through which employees can act as voice actors and directly express their interests, such as through suggestion systems, quality improvement teams, and union or collective forms of voice. Employee voice is now viewed as a discretionary behavior whereby employees may raise ideas, issues, opinions, and concerns to effect change (Morrison 2014) and as an opportunity to voice concerns about employee and employer interests and participate in organizational decision-making (Barry & Wilkinson, 2016). However, employee voice does not simply criticize the status quo but suggests improvements that would benefit the workers, the workplace, or both (Allen et al., 2015).

Furthermore, a leader's behavior is crucial for promoting organizational effectiveness (Adeshipo & Harrison, 2018). Integrity has been more specifically defined as a principled value characterized by openness, consistency, and fairness; it can also be viewed as a value for an individual or an organization. Leadership integrity is the persistent commitment of leaders to moral and ethical standards...
in their relationships, decisions, and behavior. As a result, when faced with morally challenging decisions, leaders with integrity show honesty, openness, and dedication to doing the right thing (Yuki, 2012).

Before speaking up, employees frequently weigh the pros and cons, as doing so can be dangerous and demanding and lead to unfavorable effects on some people. Employees’ perceived psychological safety is the degree to which they feel free to voice their thoughts, opinions, worries, and suggestions without worrying about the repercussions. It is important to encourage open dialogue, teamwork, and creativity inside businesses (Li et al., 2015). Employee participation in conversations, sharing opposing ideas, and challenging the status quo are all encouraged, resulting in a more dynamic and creative workplace environment. According to (Edmondson & Lei, 2014), employees are more motivated to share their ideas when they feel their opinions will be acknowledged and valued. This encourages more problem-solving and better decision-making, eventually leading to organizational success.

According to (Naidoo & Martins, 2014), organizational culture directs organizational actors. It increases moral standards, empowering them to perform their responsibilities and activities skillfully and effectively to achieve common organizational goals and objectives. The culture of a corporation may be seen positively, negatively, supportively, or unsupportively. An organization’s cultural values and conventions can encourage or discourage employee voice. Employees are more likely to feel free to voice their thoughts if they believe their employer promotes innovation and learning. On the other hand, accessible communication may be discouraged in cultures that place a high value on hierarchy and compliance (Ashford et al., 2018). Additionally, the accessibility and efficiency of communication channels are influenced by company culture. Employee voice can be strengthened by a culture that values openness and accessible avenues of communication, such as idea boxes or frequent feedback sessions (Morrison, 2011).

While employee voice is well-documented in Western nations like the United States and Europe (Wilkinson et al., 2020a), less is known about the situation in African countries like Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, Ghana, Kenya, and Rwanda. Consequently, the current investigation explores the crucial influencers capable of ensuring and sustaining employee voice to comprehend and develop employee voice within the organizations of Nigeria and South Africa. The impacts of perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture in promoting and sustaining employee voice, when comparing Nigeria and South Africa, have yet to be investigated, even though the influence of some variables on employee voice has been studied in previous research. This article examines this position in South African and Nigerian business organizations.

The research aims to advance our understanding by examining the effects of organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership integrity on employee voice in businesses to derive a practical model for motivating, enhancing, and sustaining employee voice. Hence, it supports the idea that companies in South Africa and Nigeria may sustainably boost employee voice behaviors if they know the variables that predict them. This will be achieved by looking into the effects of perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture on employee voice to derive a valuable model for promoting and sustaining employee voice.

**Literature Review**

This investigation’s literature review explores psychological safety, organizational culture, perceived leadership integrity, and employee voice.

**Leadership Integrity and Employee Voice**

The advantages of charismatic and transformational leadership philosophies have traditionally been viewed as including integrity in professional leadership. Followers are more receptive to having their attitudes and behaviors molded by leaders (Williams Jr. et al., 2018). Employees may feel a sense of reciprocity when they perceive their leaders to be trustworthy. Employees are more inclined to give their thoughts and feedback if their leaders are concerned about their welfare and acting in the organization’s best interests (Li et al., 2018). Additionally, a leadership style characterized by fairness and integrity helps people feel less threatened by reprisals. Employees are more likely to publicly express their opinions when they believe their leaders will take their advice seriously and relatively (Zheng et al., 2021). Employees are more likely to trust their bosses when they think they have excellent moral character. Employees must feel safe psychologically to openly voice their thoughts without worrying about the repercussions. As a result, employee voice is positively influenced by perceived supervisor honesty (Liang et al., 2012). According to research, employee voice and perceived leadership integrity have a significant beneficial link. Employees are more likely to feel at ease and empowered to speak up when they believe their leaders to be honest, open, and ethical (Zheng et al., 2021). Based on those as mentioned above, it is hypothesized that:

H1: Perceived leadership integrity substantially impacts employee voice in South African and Nigerian enterprises.

**Psychological Safety and Employee Voice**

Teams who display psychological safety in the workplace are more likely to engage in open discussion and helpful criticism, enhancing decision-making and resulting in higher learning outcomes. As a result, a feeling of psychological safety encourages workers to express their ideas freely. According to (Edmondson & Lei, 2014), this leads to a rise in open conversation participation, which fosters a dynamic and creative work atmosphere. Furthermore, studies have found a significant positive association between employee voice behavior and perceived psychological safety. Therefore, employees are more likely to engage in voice activities
when they believe their workplace is psychologically safe. They don’t worry about criticism, embarrassment, or punishment when voicing their opinions and concerns (Edmondson et al., 2016). From those as mentioned above, the following hypothesis was developed:

**H2:** Perceived psychological safety significantly influences employee voice within businesses in Nigeria and South Africa.

**Organizational Culture and Employee Voice**

Organizational culture has an impact on the channels of communication that are open for workers to express their thoughts. Employee voice can, therefore, be encouraged through a culture that provides a variety of formal and informal avenues for expression, including suggestion boxes, meetings, and online platforms (Liang et al., 2012). Also, firms that promote open culture support and encourage employee voice. As a result, they actively seek out and respond to employee feedback; this communicates the value placed on employee input and increases the possibility that employees will speak out (Morrison, 2011). Furthermore, a study found that an inclusive culture that supports variety and many opinions encourages an atmosphere in which employees feel comfortable discussing their perspectives (Nishii, 2013). Moreover, studies showed that organizational cultures facilitate employee voice and offer various formal and informal communication channels. Therefore, employees are more likely to engage in voice activities with multiple channels to express their views and ideas (Morrison, 2014). The following is a hypothesis based on what was previously stated:

**H3:** Perceived organizational culture significantly impacts employee voice in Nigerian and South African firms.

In light of the above literature, the following hypothesis is presented:

**H4:** Perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture significantly and jointly impact employee voice within Nigeria’s and South Africa’s businesses.

**Methods**

This research adopted a cross-sectional survey methodology and was a comparative analysis. This study assessed how well employee voice is supported and maintained in South African and Nigerian workplaces. Two hundred (200) employees from five work organizations in Nigeria and two hundred (200) from five work organizations in South Africa were purposefully given questionnaires to fill out. In total, 400 people were recruited to test the study’s hypotheses and collect information on participants’ perceptions of organizational culture, psychological safety, perceived leadership integrity, and employee voice. These ten (10) businesses came from Nigeria’s and South Africa’s financial, service, and manufacturing industries. United Bank for Africa Plc, First City Monument Bank Plc, IBFC Alliance Ltd, Nestlé Nigeria Plc, and Friesland Campina Nigeria Plc were the selected work organizations in Nigeria. First National Bank, ABSA Group Limited, Woolworths Food, Tiger Brands, and Sasol from South Africa’s work organizations. Therefore, the current researchers promoted voluntary input and ensured ethical standards were followed. In South Africa, one hundred eighty-three (183) surveys were found, and one hundred eighty (180) surveys were found in Nigeria. Three hundred sixty-three (363) surveys were retrieved from both nations and finished in a way appropriate for use. The retrieved data were compiled and examined using SPSS version 29 of the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences. However, this research carried out factor and reliability tests to develop an appropriate instrument and identify the local dependability of the measure.

The survey for this study is segmented:

**Section A: Demographics**

The respondents’ gender, age, education level, marital status, and work experience (measured in years) are among their demographic details.

**Section B – Perceived Leadership Integrity**

This study used a simplified version of the Perceived Leadership Integrity Scale to gauge the respondents' perceptions of leadership integrity in their workplaces (Whelan et al., 2014). This measurement tool has a scale with nine components from “1 = Never” to “4 = Every Time.” The current inquiry attained a Cronbach's alpha dependability of $\alpha = 0.91$ despite the instrument's developer's need for a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of $\alpha = 0.95$.

**Section C – Psychological Safety**

The subjects’ perceived psychological safety was evaluated using the (Edmondson, 1999) measure. Participants responded to the 7 items on this test using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “1 = Very inaccurate” to “7 = Very accurate.” The consistency coefficient for this measurement was $\alpha = 0.79$. However, this study managed to get a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = 0.81$.

**Section D: Perceived Organizational Culture**

A 24-item scale designed to measure POC was used in this study to gauge employees' perceptions of the organizational culture. A Likert scale was employed for each poll question, with 1 denoting strong opposition and 5 denoting strong agreement. The 24-item scale's initial Cronbach's alpha value was $\alpha = 0.80$. This study determined that this measure's dependability had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of $\alpha = 0.84$. 

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Section E: Employee Voice

In this survey phase, participants’ impressions of the employee voice were measured using a six-item scale adapted from (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Each item on this survey is evaluated using the Likert scale, which runs from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). According to its creator, the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for this scale was $\alpha = 0.95$, even though the present investigation discovered a Cronbach's alpha reliability of $\alpha = 0.90$.

But before making it public, these researchers tested the study instrument for any problems.

Results

The analytical findings from the participant data are shown in the tables below.

**Table 1: Multiple Regression Showing the Joint Effect of Perceived Leadership Integrity, Psychological Safety, And Organizational Culture on Employee Voice in Nigerian Firms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R-squared</th>
<th>Adjusted R-squared</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.988*</td>
<td>.972</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>4778.916</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Leadership Integrity, Psychological Safety, Organizational Culture

**Table 2: Measurements of The Predictors of Employee Voice in Nigerian Businesses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influencers</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>95.0% Confidence Interval for B</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>59.422</td>
<td>.795</td>
<td>205.458</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>58.832 - 59.911</td>
<td>.988*</td>
<td>.972</td>
<td>4778.916</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Leadership Integrity</td>
<td>.879</td>
<td>.795</td>
<td>27.740</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.846 - .911</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Psychological Safety</td>
<td>2.479</td>
<td>.922</td>
<td>38.343</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.298 - 1.435</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Organizational Culture</td>
<td>1.372</td>
<td>.847</td>
<td>32.385</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>2.320 - 2.628</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Employee Voice

Nigeria

Table 1 shows that perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture jointly and significantly impact employee voice in Nigeria’s work organizations ($R = .988$, $R^2 = .972$, $F = 4778.916$, $p < .01$). The p-value is acceptable and demonstrates that organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership integrity significantly contributed to a 98.8% variance in employee voice. The hypothesis that perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture together have a strong joint impact on gaining employee voice in Nigerian businesses is thus proven.

Like Table 2, the model shows that employee voice is positively and significantly impacted by perceived leadership integrity at $\beta = .795$, $t = 27.740$; $p < .01$. The p-value is appropriate. As a result, this study suggests that the variation in employee voice was influenced by perceived leadership integrity by about 79.5%. Additionally, Table 2 states at $\beta = .922$, $t = 38.343$; $p < .01$ that perceived psychological safety positively and significantly impacts employee voice. The p-value is appropriate. This study demonstrates that employees' perceived psychological safety has a 92.2% impact on employee voice. Moreover, Table 2 states that the perceived corporate culture positively and strongly affects employee voice at $\beta = .847$, $t = 32.385$; $p < .01$. The p-value is suitable. Consequently, this study indicates that employee voice was influenced by perceived organizational culture by 81.7%. Thus, the hypothesis that perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture jointly impact employee voice in enterprises in South Africa and Nigeria is partially supported.

**Table 3: Multiple Regression Showing the Combined Effect of Perceived Leadership Integrity, Psychological Safety, And Organizational Culture on Employee Voice in South African Work Organizations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R-squared</th>
<th>Adjusted R-squared</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.989*</td>
<td>.981</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>5179.827</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Leadership Integrity, Psychological Safety, Organizational Culture
Table 4: Measurements of The Predictors of Employee Voice in South African Businesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influencers</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>95.0% Confidence Interval for B</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>60.632</td>
<td>216.567</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.989a</td>
<td>.981</td>
<td>5179.827</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Leadership Integrity</td>
<td>1.451</td>
<td>.886</td>
<td>33.276</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.297 - 1.312</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Psychological Safety</td>
<td>2.268</td>
<td>.934</td>
<td>39.424</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>2.331 - 2.525</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Organizational Culture</td>
<td>1.251</td>
<td>.835</td>
<td>32.785</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.185 - 1.328</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Employee Voice

South Africa

According to Table 3 (R = .989, R² = .981, F = 5179.827, p < .01), organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership integrity jointly and substantially impact employee voice in South African enterprises. The p-value is satisfactory and shows how 98.9% of the variance in employee voice was caused by organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership integrity. Thus, it is established that organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership integrity have a significant joint effect on increasing employee voice in South African businesses.

Like Table 4, the model shows that employee voice is positively and significantly impacted by perceived leadership integrity at β = .886, t = 33.276; p < .01. The p-value is appropriate. As a result, this study suggests that the variation in employee voice was influenced by perceived leadership integrity by about 88.6%. Additionally, Table 4 states at β = .934, t = 39.424; p < .01 that perceived psychological safety positively and significantly impacts employee voice. The p-value is appropriate. This investigation indicates that the perceived psychological safety of employees has a 93.4% impact on employee voice. Moreover, Table 4 states that the perceived organizational culture positively and strongly affects employee voice at β = .835, t = 32.785; p < .01. The p-value is appropriate.

The model demonstrates that perceived leadership integrity positively and strongly impacts employee voice at β = .886, t = 33.276; p < .01, similar to Table 4. It makes sense for the p-value. In light of these findings, perceived leadership integrity accounted for around 88.6% of the variation in employee voice. Additionally, Table 4 reveals that employee voice is positively and strongly impacted by perceived psychological safety at β = .934, t = 39.424; p < .01. It fits the p-value. According to this study, employee voice is affected by their perception of their psychological safety to 93.4%. Furthermore, Table 4 shows employee voice is favorably and significantly influenced by the perceived corporate culture (β = .835, t = 32.785; p < .01). The p-value is sufficient.

Consequently, this research indicates that employee voice was influenced by perceived organizational culture by 83.5%. Thus, the hypothesis that perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture jointly impact employee voice in enterprises in South Africa and Nigeria is partially supported.

Comparative Results (Nigeria-South Africa)

The findings proved that organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership integrity contribute significantly and positively to maintaining employee voice in South African and Nigerian businesses.

However, further research reveals that perceived psychological safety is more important in promoting and maintaining employee voice in Nigerian workplaces. The second predictor significantly affecting employee voice is perceived organizational culture, followed by perceived leadership integrity. Employee voice is more greatly influenced by perceived psychological safety inside South African workplaces. Still, perceived leadership integrity had the second most significant impact, and perceived organizational culture had the least (Figures 1 and 2).
This study found that in South African and Nigerian firms, perceived leadership integrity had a favorable and significant impact on the persistence of employee voice. The current findings show that among the predictors in Nigerian businesses, perceived leadership integrity had the least effect on employee voice. At the same time, it is the second most impactful factor in South African businesses. Also, the current results show that the influence of perceived leadership integrity on sustaining employee voice in South African businesses was more substantial than in Nigerian businesses. This finding implies that demonstrating leadership integrity increases employee voice in business organizations in Nigeria and South Africa, but more significantly in South African work organizations. This result aligns with earlier pragmatic results suggesting that when leaders show concern for their subordinates’ well-being while acting in the organization’s best interests, subordinates are more likely to share their opinions and feedback (Li et al., 2018). It also supports (Zheng et al., 2021) that people are less afraid of reprisal when their leaders are fair and honest. Employees are, therefore, more ready to share their opinions in public when they believe their managers will do it respectfully and thoughtfully. This study also supports Zheng et al.’s (2021) claim that employees are more likely to feel at ease and empowered to speak up when they view their leaders as honest, open, and ethical. It also backs up the assertion (Liang et al., 2012) that perceptions of leadership integrity increase employee voice.

Moreover, this study found that psychological safety had a significant and advantageous effect on maintaining employee voice in the workplaces of South Africa and Nigeria. The current findings demonstrate that perceived psychological safety had the most significant influence on employee voice among the predictors in South African and Nigerian organizations. Additionally, the present results show that in South African organizations, as opposed to Nigerian businesses, perceived psychological safety had a more significant impact on sustaining employee voice. According to the current study, the more employees feel free to voice their opinions, worries, and suggestions without worrying about the consequences, the more likely they are to raise ideas, issues, beliefs, and concerns to bring about change and the opportunity to have a say over employee and employer interests and participate in organizational decision-making within Nigerian and South African work organizations, but particularly within South Africa. These findings support the hypothesis put forth by some researchers (Edmondson & Lei, 2014) that teams that exhibit psychological safety at work are more likely to engage in open debate and constructive criticism, which improves decision-making and leads to better learning outcomes. Consequently, psychological safety allows employees to share their thoughts openly. This outcome is consistent with Edmondson et al. (2016). Their findings show a strong positive correlation between employee voice behavior and perceived psychological safety. They observed that when workers feel their workplace is psychologically safe, they are more likely to engage in voice activities because they are less likely to fear criticism, embarrassment, or punishment when they express their ideas and concerns.
This study also shows that in South African and Nigerian firms, perceived organizational culture has a favorable and significant impact on the persistence of employee voice. It demonstrates that perceived organizational culture is the second most important element in South African and Nigerian businesses. At the same time, it indicates that the perceived organizational culture had a more significant impact on sustaining employee voice in Nigerian organizations than in South African ones. This result suggests that employees from Nigeria and South Africa who work in an organization with a voice-encouraging culture are more likely to express ideas, issues, opinions, and concerns to bring about change and have the chance to speak up for employee and employer interests and participate in organizational decision-making, but more so in Nigerian work organizations. This conclusion follows an earlier pragmatic finding that suggests that employee voice can be promoted by a culture that offers a variety of formal and informal channels for expression, including suggestion boxes, meetings, and online forums (Liang et al., 2012). It also backs up the Nishii (2013) claim that an inclusive culture that values diversity and a range of viewpoints fosters an environment where staff members feel at ease sharing their thoughts. This study also supports Morrison (2014)'s assertion that organizational cultures encourage employee voice and provide a variety of formal and informal communication channels. Employees are, therefore, more inclined to use voice activities and numerous channels to communicate their opinions.

Also, this study's authors have demonstrated how organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership integrity all work together to significantly and favourably affect the persistence of employee voice in South African and Nigerian companies. Due to these independent variables, employee voice varied by 98.8% in Nigerian enterprises and 98.9% in South African businesses. The remaining 1.2% and 1.1% differences in employee voice within the Nigerian and South African enterprises result from factors not considered in the current study. This result demonstrates that in South African and Nigerian organizations, employee voice is strongly and jointly impacted by perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture. As a result, when organizations in South Africa and Nigeria appropriately address these elements in promoting and preserving employee voice, employee voice is substantially more sustained. The observed combined impacts of perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture on employee voice inside corporate organizations in Nigeria and South Africa have made significant and innovative contributions to this study.

The primary aim of this research was to deduce a usable model to promote and maintain employee voice. The model in Figure 3 is a result.

![Figure 3: A Practical Example of Encouraging and Sustaining Employee Voice Within Nigeria’s And South Africa’s Businesses; Source: Author’s Results](image)

**Applied Implications**

The study findings have several implications for future work and the proper systematic and intentional intervention needed to promote integrity in leadership, improved psychological safety, a culture of openness and inclusion, and long-term employee voice inside organizations. The findings of this paper suggest that when organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership integrity are taken into account, there will be a significant increase in employee voice inside workplaces. The management of organizations in South Africa and Nigeria could use the findings of this study to improve and sustain employee voice.

The results of this study also have consequences for South African and Nigerian businesses. Thus, the study's findings provide a framework for fostering and maintaining employee voice through ethical leadership, fostering and supporting a culture of openness and participation, and assuring high psychological safety.
Contribution

This publication has added to the knowledge of leadership, organizational culture, psychological safety, and organizational behavior, particularly in Nigeria and South Africa. As new information on how companies may foster and sustain employee voice, the effects of organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership integrity are also offered.

Conclusions

This paper aims to promote and sustain employee voice in Nigeria and South Africa by examining organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership integrity as predictors. According to this study, organizational culture, psychological safety, and perceived leadership significantly influence employee voice in South African and Nigerian enterprises. Therefore, the aforementioned independent variables in Nigerian and South African organizations predict employee voice behaviors. However, the following suggestions are beneficial:

In their behaviors and decisions, leaders in the workplace should continually display moral character, honesty, and transparency. Employees should be actively listened to without interruption or dismissal so that it is evident that their opinions are respected. Additionally, executives in enterprises should be open and honest about the organization’s objectives, plans, and difficulties because doing so fosters trust and aids in employees understanding the broader picture. Also, they should ensure that leadership integrity is consistently applied across the board, regardless of department or level. Furthermore, leaders in the workplace must create procedures for amicably and constructively resolving conflicts or disagreements so that staff members feel comfortable expressing divergent views.

Management within businesses should see that the standards for polite and honest communication are clearly stated. They should set up anonymous channels so workers can express their worries, thoughts, or comments without worrying about punishment. Additionally, management of workplace organizations should regularly perform one-on-one check-ins between supervisors and employees to foster a conversation-safe environment. They should encourage staff members to speak up during these sessions about their ideas, worries, and career goals. By establishing a zero-tolerance policy for bullying, harassment, and discrimination, management should also put HR procedures that shield workers from reprisals when they speak up.

Organizational leaders should develop a culture of constant feedback where negative and positive feedback are welcomed and acknowledged. The practice of honoring and rewarding people or groups who actively support a psychologically safe environment and promote employee voice should also be adopted. Additionally, by including positive and negative comments, they should encourage an environment where workers feel free to express their ideas, thoughts, and concerns. Businesses should promote a culture that enables executives to be approachable and available. An open-door policy will encourage employees to feel more comfortable giving their opinions. They should also regularly do one-on-one check-ins for managers and staff to discuss issues, career aspirations, and feedback.

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Institutional Review Board Statement: Ethical review and approval were waived for this study, due to that the research does not deal with vulnerable groups or sensitive issues.

Data Availability Statement: The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy.

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