

## **The Influence of Work Conflict on Employee Voice Behavior: Self-Efficacy as a Moderator**

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### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh konflik kerja terhadap perilaku suara karyawan (*Employee Voice Behavior/EVB*) dengan efikasi diri sebagai variabel moderator dalam konteks industri manufaktur di Indonesia. Menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain penelitian kausal dan survei kuesioner terhadap 130 karyawan, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi bahwa konflik kerja, baik konflik tugas maupun hubungan, tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap EVB. Hasil analisis menggunakan metode Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) menunjukkan bahwa efikasi diri belum berperan sebagai moderator yang memperkuat hubungan antara konflik kerja dan EVB. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi teoritis melalui penggabungan perspektif teori pertukaran sosial dan teori kognitif sosial, serta memberikan implikasi praktis dalam pengelolaan sumber daya manusia, khususnya dalam meningkatkan partisipasi karyawan dalam pengambilan keputusan organisasi.

**Kata Kunci:** *Konflik kerja, perilaku suara karyawan, efikasi diri, industri manufaktur*

### **Abstract**

This study aims to examine the influence of work conflict on employee voice behavior (EVB), with self-efficacy as a moderating variable, within the context of Indonesia's manufacturing industry. Employing a quantitative approach with a causal research design, data were collected from 130 employees using a structured questionnaire. The findings reveal that both task and relationship conflicts do not significantly impact EVB. Analysis using Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) indicates that self-efficacy do not strengthens the relationship between work conflict and EVB. This research contributes theoretically by integrating social exchange theory and social cognitive theory, while also offering practical implications for human resource management strategies to enhance employee participation in organizational decision-making.

**Keywords:** *Work conflict, employee voice behavior, self-efficacy, manufacturing industry, PLS-SEM*

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## INTRODUCTION

Chaerudin et al.'s 2020 study found that multinational firms' worldwide performance depends on empowering human resources via soft communication. Effective communication is crucial in employee interactions. It also streamlines company processes and accelerates goal achievement. In this context, Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) is crucial to increasing company success. Morrison (2016) defines "Employee Voice Behavior" (EVB) as how employees voice their opinions, recommendations, or complaints to improve corporate performance. (2020, Liu et al.) Communicative workers are more creative, productive, and contented, according to research. However, EVB adoption presents obstacles, particularly in workplace conflict management. Jehn et al. (2012) include task and relational conflict as common forms of conflict. Relational conflict is generated by conflicts between persons, whereas task conflict is created by conflicting views on job demands. Task conflict may lead to good debates and new ideas, according to Jehn (1995). However, interpersonal friction generates emotional strain, which reduces workers' desire to speak out, according to De Dreu and Weingart (2003). Unresolved disagreements might lower employee motivation and performance, according to Arshad and Khan (2020). Liang et al. (2020) found that workers in arguments often stay mute for fear of peer or superior repercussions.

Indonesia's manufacturing sector, a major economic contributor, has several EVB issues while trying to boost employee engagement. Manufacturing differs from education and services due to its high production pressure, hierarchical organizational structures, and formal work environment (Y. Liu et al., 2022; X. Liu, 2021). This explains why manufacturing work conflict is unusual. Due to high-risk jobs and the necessity for collaboration, Filho et al. (2019) say the manufacturing industry struggles to promote employee voice behavior (EVB). This is an industrial problem. Thus, to design successful human resource management techniques, one must understand how work conflict affects manufacturing workers' value behavior. Self-efficacy (SE), an individual's conviction in their capacity to overcome problems and accomplish goals (Qian et al., 2020), is crucial in this environment. According to Bandura's 1997 study, those with higher self-efficacy are more confident in expressing their views and ideas, especially under pressure. Gurcharan et al. (2019) and Ng et al. (2016) found that people with stronger self-efficacy are more likely to actively communicate, including employee voice behavior. However, workers with low self-efficacy are more prone to be reserved and reticent because they believe their contributions are insignificant.

Many research have examined the link between self-efficacy, employee voice behavior, and workplace conflict. Zhang et al. (2018) discovered that interpersonal conflict may limit workplace openness. Zhao et al. (2019) found a negative connection between EVB and interpersonal conflict. SE may mediate the work environment-EVB relationship, according to Liang et al. (2020). Several gaps remain in the research. Liu et al.'s 2020 analysis found that most research has focused on education and services.

There are very few research on SE as a mediator of workplace conflict and EVB. This is especially true in emerging nations like Indonesia's industrial sectors. This research uses human viewpoints (SE) and organizational perspectives (work conflict) to examine how work conflict affects employee value proposition (EVB) in Indonesian manufacturing organizations. This study combines social exchange theory (work conflict) and social cognitive theory (SE), contextualizes Indonesian manufacturing companies' collectivist work culture, and uses Partial Least Square (PLS) in a novel way to quantify SE's moderating effect. This work is expected to advance conflict management and human resource management ideas. Additionally, the research will offer ways to boost manufacturing company employee participation in decision-making.

According to Shrestha and Singh (2023), employee disputes based on different viewpoints and assessments often lead to conflicts that may lead to arguments or bad interactions. Honicke and Broadbent (2016) define self-efficacy as a person's belief in their capacity to manage and complete tasks. Detert and Burris (2016) define Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) as proactive workplace improvements. These treatments include effective supervisor or peer communication, initiative in problem-solving, feedback, seeking external support, and reporting organizational transgressions (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2019). Workplace conflict affects EVB. Workplace dispute reduces constructive communication and increases inefficient work habits. Since individuals have varied degrees of SE, firms must understand these variances to create an environment where employees feel empowered to share ideas and thoughts that might enhance the company.

This study is expected to contribute to the body of information on how work conflict affects self-efficacy-governed EVB. This is expected and anticipated. Additionally, it will serve as a reference for academics and those studying similar themes. The research also aims to show companies how employee confidence affects company feedback. The study focused on this. These findings may be used to design conflict management approaches and inspire self-efficacy-rich individuals to generate employee value propositions via their work environment.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Type of Research**

This causal research study uses a quantitative, cross-sectional methodology. Sekaran and Bougie (2019) define quantitative research as numerical data analysis utilizing mathematical and statistical methods. Cause-and-effect research begins with identifying dependent and independent variables. This research examines workplace conflict and employee voice behavior using self-efficacy as a moderating variable. The independent variable in this study is work conflict, the dependent variable is employee voice behavior, and the moderating variable is self-efficacy, according to Sekaran and Bougie (2016). Vocal employee behavior is reliant.

### Research Data Sources and Data Collection Methods

This study uses first-hand information acquired by the researcher to achieve its aims. Interviews, observations, surveys, and experiments are the main data collecting techniques. Surveys were utilized to collect data for this study. Sekaran and Bougie (2016) define a questionnaire as a pre-written set of questions for responders. It may be delivered in person, via mail, or online, making it a valuable data collecting tool. This study project's questionnaire asks about work conflict, employee voice behavior (EVB), and self-efficacy (SE). Likert scale answers are analyzed. Sekaran and Bougie (2016) call it non-probability purposive sampling. This strategy uses criteria to choose respondents, especially industrial workers who have experienced work-related violence.

### Sample Population and Sample Size

Sekaran and Bougie (2019) define a population as a collective of persons, events, or entities pertinent to the researcher. This study's population consists of workers inside Indonesia's industrial sector. The manufacturing sector is selected for its distinct features of work conflict, including those stemming from elevated production demands, hierarchical structures, and formal work settings (Liu et al., 2021). Furthermore, the manufacturing sector is crucial to the economy and often participates in innovation processes that need active employee input (Rojas et al., 2020). Hair et al. (2019) recommend that the sample size should correspond to the quantity of questionnaire questions. For this research, including 26 questions, the sample size is determined to be 130 respondents ( $5 \times 26$ ). This figure surpasses the advised minimum of 100 participants (Hair et al., 2019).

### Operational Definition of Variables

**Independent workplace conflict:** Internal workplace conflicts are disputes between employees (Olekalns & Rees, 2020). Task conflict and relational conflict may apply to this issue. The employee voice behavior dependent variable is: Dedahanov et al. (2016) define employee voice behavior as workers sharing their thoughts, critiques, and suggestions to improve the company. Promotive speech promotes improvements, whereas prohibitive speech conveys concerns. An individual's conviction that they can achieve particular objectives or results is called "self-efficacy" (Kristen et al., 2020). Its three characteristics are level (difficulty), breadth (task variety), and strength (confidence in solving difficulties). Each component is rated on a Likert scale. The employee voice behavior dependent variable is: Dedahanov et al. (2016) define employee voice behavior as workers sharing their thoughts, critiques, and suggestions to improve the company. Promotive speech promotes improvements, whereas prohibitive speech conveys concerns. An individual's conviction that they can achieve particular objectives or results is called "self-efficacy" (Kristen et al., 2020). Its three characteristics are level (difficulty), breadth (task variety), and strength (confidence in solving difficulties). Each component is rated on a Likert scale.

### Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this research used the PLS-SEM methodology with SmartPLS 4 software. The first phase of the investigation was evaluating the measurement model by examining convergent validity using factor loadings. An indication is deemed legitimate if its loading factor above 0.7. Construct dependability was assessed by Composite dependability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha, with a CR above 0.7 and a Cronbach's Alpha beyond 0.6 signifying reliability. Furthermore, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used to assess construct validity, with a threshold of larger than 0.5 considered acceptable. Subsequently, the structural model was evaluated to examine the interrelationships among variables using R-Square ( $R^2$ ), which quantifies the explanatory capacity of independent variables concerning dependent variables.

The subsequent phase was hypothesis testing, whereby preliminary assumptions were evaluated via the bootstrapping approach in SmartPLS 4. Path coefficients were analyzed to ascertain the direction and magnitude of correlations among variables. Hypotheses were deemed accepted if the T-Statistic surpassed 1.96 (at a 5% significance level) or if the P-Value was equal to or higher than 0.05. These approaches enabled a thorough assessment of the hypothesized linkages inside the model, substantiating the study hypotheses and affirming the robustness of the findings.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Respondent Characteristics

The respondent characteristics in this study include gender, generation, education level, and work experience. The sample consisted of 130 manufacturing employees. Among the respondents, 48.46% were male, and 51.54% were female, indicating a nearly balanced gender distribution. The majority of respondents belonged to Generation Z (58.46%), with 30.77% from Generation Y (millennials), reflecting a younger workforce. In terms of education, 43.85% had completed high school, 36.15% held a bachelor's degree, 13.85% had a diploma, and 6.15% possessed a master's degree, demonstrating a diverse educational background.

Regarding work experience, the largest group of respondents (56.15%) had 2 to 10 years of experience, followed by 23.08% with less than 2 years of work experience. A smaller proportion had 11 to 19 years (16.15%), while only 3.85% had between 20 and 28 years of experience, and 0.77% had more than 28 years. These characteristics indicate a workforce that is relatively young, well-educated, and moderately experienced, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of manufacturing employees in this study.

### Descriptive Statistics

Table below presents the descriptive statistics for the research variables, including work conflict, employee voice behavior, and self-efficacy.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics**

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
Work Conflict	10	40	33,52	0,87
Employee Voice Behaviour	14	50	41,55	0,76
Self-Efficacy	11	40	33,64	0,82

The work conflict variable has a minimum score of 10, a maximum score of 40, an average of 33.52, and a standard deviation of 0.87. This suggests that, on average, people experienced significant work conflict, but with little variation in reactions. The employee voice behavior has a minimum value of 14, a maximum of 50, a mean of 41.55, and a standard deviation of 0.76. The data indicate that most employees engage in expressing ideas or suggestions inside the workplace. The self-efficacy measure ranges from 11 to 40, with a mean of 33.64 and a standard deviation of 0.82. This suggests that participants generally exhibit strong confidence in their talents, with just slight differences across individuals.

#### Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>)

The coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) for employee voice behavior (EVB) is 0.876, while the modified R<sup>2</sup> is 0.873. This signifies that 87.6% of the variance in EVB is elucidated by the model. Hair et al. (2019) assert that an R<sup>2</sup> value over 0.75 is deemed robust, indicating that the model has exceptional predictive capability in elucidating EVB. The elevated R<sup>2</sup> value substantiates the model's efficacy in elucidating the determinants of employee voice behavior within the study's environment.

#### Hypothesis Test (Path Coefficients & Significance)

In hypothesis H1, the path coefficient between work conflict and employee voice behavior (EVB) is 0.066, accompanied by a p-value of 0.345, over 0.05, so showing an absence of a significant influence. This contradicts earlier study by De Dreu and Weingart (2003), which indicates that job conflict diminishes EVB. Within Indonesian manufacturing, work conflict may be seen as an aspect of team dynamics, perhaps not impeding employee voice if well handled.

Table 2. Hypothesis Test Result

Hypothesis	Path Coefficients	T-statistics	P-value	Decision
Work Conflict → EVB (H1)	0.066	0.400	0.345	Not Supported
SE x Work Conflict → EVB (H2)	-0.128	1.354	0.088	Not Supported

In hypothesis H2, the interaction coefficient between self-efficacy (SE) and work conflict is -0.128, with a p-value of 0.088, suggesting that SE does not substantially modify the association between work conflict and EVB ( $p > 0.05$ ). Although the negative coefficient indicates a moderating impact, this outcome implies that other variables, such as managerial support or organizational culture, may have a more

significant influence (Hair et al., 2019). The table below displays the outcomes of hypothesis testing, including path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values.

#### The Effect of Work Conflict on Employee Voice Behavior of Manufacturing Employees

The results of the bootstrap testing using SmartPLS 4 indicate that work conflict does not have a significant negative effect on employee voice behavior (EVB) ( $\beta = 0.066$ ;  $p = 0.345$ ), contrary to the initial hypothesis (H1), based on De Dreu & Weingart (2003) and Arshad & Khan (2020), which suggest that work conflict, especially relational conflict, typically reduces employees' motivation to voice their opinions. This finding contradicts most prior studies, as summarized in the table below:

Table 2. Prior Research

Researcher	Sector	Conflict Type	Impact on EVB	Mechanism	Cultural Context
Zhang et al. (2018)	Services (China)	Interpersonal	Negative	Psychological Threat	High Power Distance
Li et al. (2020)	Technology (US)	Task	Positive	Cognitive Stimulation	Low Power Distance
Y. Liu et al. (2022)	Manufacturing (Japan)	Mixed	Neutral	SE Mediation	Collectivist-Modern
Dedahanov (2019)	Multi-sector (Korea)	Relational	Negative	Trust Decline	Hierarchical

The divergence between this study's results and the majority of the current literature may be ascribed to the distinctive characteristics of the sample. Significantly, 58.4% of the participants belonged to Generation Z. According to Kristen et al. (2020), Generation Z is inclined to express their viewpoints even during conflicts, since they prioritize transparency and equality. Furthermore, the industrial sector has distinct labor dynamics—characterized by intense production demands, hierarchical frameworks, and a focus on operational efficiency—that can institutionalize conflict as an integral aspect of the workflow. Liu et al. (2021) found that under some conditions, task-related dissent may foster productive discussions aimed at improving efficiency. This aligns with the functional conflict approach, which views disputes—especially about production methods—as opportunities for productive dialogue (Jehn, 1995). In Indonesia's collectivist culture, disagreement is often seen as a joint effort rather than a threat. This study challenges the dominant notion that conflict always adversely affects employee voice behavior.

#### The Role of Self Efficacy as a Moderator in the Effect of Work Conflict on Employee Voice Behavior of Manufacturing Employees

The hypothesis testing showed that self-efficacy (SE) did not significantly affect work conflict and employee voice behavior. This finding contradicts H2 and Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory as well as Gurcharan et al. (2019), who claim that self-efficacy reduces conflict's negative effects via employee confidence. This theory holds

that self-efficacy (SE)—an individual's confidence in overcoming challenges—motivates workers to speak out, particularly in conflict (Ng et al., 2016). Socially intelligent employees regard disagreement as a manageable task rather than a threat, making them more likely to speak out. Gururan et al. (2019) found that self-efficacy (SE) moderated the negative relationship between relational conflict and employee voice behavior (EVB), while Ng et al. (2016) and Dedahanov et al. (2019) found that SE improves work environments and autonomy. This research's SE's low moderating effect may be due to the organizational context. In hierarchical, power-distanced organizations like factories, organizational norms rather than self-confidence impact employee behavior. Botero and Van Dyne (2016) found that self-efficacy did not reduce conflict and employee voice conduct when supervisors were inadequate. Without psychological safety, even self-confident professionals may not speak out for fear of penalties (Detert & Burris, 2016). These findings show that SE is advantageous but not enough to increase verbal behavior in cultural and structural situations. Organizational climate and leadership response are critical for employee expression during conflict.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the data analysis and discussion, this study yields several key findings. Work conflict does not substantially influence employee voice behavior (EVB) among manufacturing workers in Indonesia. This conclusion contrasts with several research in Western settings but is consistent with those done in Asian cultures, which see conflict as an element of collaborative dynamics. The distinctive characteristics of the industrial sector—such as intense production demands, a hierarchical framework, and an emphasis on operational efficiency—result in conflict being seen as a typical element of the workplace rather than an obstacle to voicing concerns. In some instances, task-related conflict may stimulate technical debates that enhance performance, enabling workers to articulate their viewpoints despite interpersonal friction. Moreover, self-efficacy did not substantially influence the association between conflict and EVB. The negative coefficient indicates a possible buffering effect; nevertheless, the finding was statistically negligible, likely owing to the predominant influence of organizational norms and management support in high power distance situations, where individual confidence is less impactful. Based on these data, numerous suggestions are suggested. To resolve interpersonal conflict, organizations should encourage transparent communication via HR-facilitated meetings and foster team-building initiatives. Facilitating anonymous internet forums may also empower workers to report disputes without apprehension. To improve employee voice behavior (EVB), firms may use anonymous suggestion platforms, since workers tend to express themselves more honestly in these environments. In relation to self-efficacy, techniques such as task restructuring,



mentorship, and discussing leaders' prior failures might assist workers in developing resilience and confidence while confronting work-related obstacles.

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