

BULLETIN OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW

VOL- 2, ISSUE- 2, 2025

[HTTPS://BULLETINOFMANAGEMENT.COM/INDEX.PHP/JOURNAL](https://bulletinofmanagement.com/index.php/journal)

Name of Publisher: INNOVATIVE EDUCATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Area of Publication: Business, Management and Accounting (miscellaneous)

Review Type: Double Blind Peer Review

BULLETIN OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW (BMR)

ONLINE ISSN: 3006-2276

PRINT ISSN: 3006-2268

[HTTPS://THECRSSS.COM/INDEX.PHP/JOURNAL/ISSUE/ARCHIVE](https://thecrsss.com/index.php/journal/issue/archive)

Impact of Team Emotional Intelligence on Promotive and Prohibitive Voice through Underlying Mechanism of Thriving at Work of Employees

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VOL- 2, ISSUE- 2, 2025

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Abstract

The current study is investigating the role of team emotional intelligence (EI) in enhancing employees both promotive (PMV) and prohibitive (PHV) voice behaviors. Further thriving at work (TAW) was proposed as an underlying mechanism between team EI and employee's PMV and PHV. The data of 460 employees of information technology sector of Pakistan's twin cities was collected. Hayes Process Macros was used for testing the mediated relationships. The study's findings indicate that team EI promotes the employee's PMV and PHV. Further, results also support the mediating mechanisms of TAW in between team EI and employee voice behaviors. The findings of this research add to the existing literature on team EI and its implications for employee voice behavior. By highlighting the positive effects of team EI on voice behavior, organizations can gain valuable insights into enhancing team functioning and facilitating employee engagement in term of PMV. The findings also help the practitioner to correct the wrong practices through PHV of employees. Investigating these relationships offers insights into the mechanisms through which EI provides practical implications for organizations striving to enhance team effectiveness and employee engagement. The findings are equally important for practitioner and researchers.

Keywords: Team Emotional Intelligence, Thriving at Work, Promotive Voice, Prohibitive voice

Introduction

In today's business, the importance of voice behavior has been magnified by rapid growth and interrelated work of different departments in organizations due to environmental complexities, innovations, and increasing competition among business units (Narayanan & Nadarajah, 2024). The demands of the innovations and correction of wrong practice require time and force organizations to build an atmosphere that facilitates individuals to express their voice behavior, such as PMV and PHV for organizational developments (Sharif et al., 2024). The increased focus on voice behavior attracts the researcher's interest in checking the role of voice behavior in the overall success of an organization (Aboobaker et al., 2024).

Voice behavior initiatives are not described in the formal job description of employees rather these are the employees' voluntary actions and suggestions for improving working conditions (Yue et al., 2025). Employee voice behavior is an important element for the sustainable development of organizations (Shipton et al., 2024). Employee voice is further categorized into two forms: PMV and PHV. In their study, Liang et al (2012) define PMV as

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positive behavior to improve work practices and procedures, while raising voice to improve or change existing practices effecting the functioning of organization is a PHV. Both PMV and PHV are helpful for decision-making and organizational improvement (Lee et al., 2023). The factors contributing to the voice behaviors need further investigation in order to promote these behaviors in the organization (Wang et al., 2024a). Organizational effectiveness depends upon employees' active contributions; therefore, the importance of employee voice behavior must be sufficiently acknowledged (Nourafkan et al., 2024).

Organizations must know all the elements that may boost employee voice behavior (Dua et al., 2023). Multiple factors are essential in creating the culture of voice behavior within organizations, such as psychological safety, leadership support, and EI (Choeni et al., 2023). Organizations focus on team EI and voice behavior for problem-solving and overall organizational success (Winton & Sabol, 2024). Employee's EI is a good predictor of igniting employees' voice behavior (Winton & Sabol, 2024). However, the collective effort of employees in prompting voice behavior has rarely been studied in the literature. An emerging concept of team EI can be a significant addition to the literature on voice behavior as it is based on individual EI, consists of four dimensions which includes: 'self-awareness which is related to knowing your own emotions as well as emotional awareness of other's, managing your own emotions, and managing of emotions of others according to (Jordan & Lawrence, 2009). Team EI collectively than individual EI can be a significant factor in promoting the voice behaviors of employees.

EI is essential in enhancing voice behavior among team members compared to other factors (Awan, 2024). Team EI helps build stronger relationships with co-team workers to create a positive environment by providing cognitive trust to team members (Barczak et al., 2010). Team enables team members to build adaptability and empathy toward the group and increase understanding among colleagues (Wang et al., 2024b). Team EI contributes to socio-emotional information and controls and manages interpersonal links over time (Ayeni et al., 2024). There is enormous amount of literature on the importance of teamwork. However, there needs to be more knowledge about team members' quality of EI and their ability to learn from one another and create an environment of trust (Shafique & Naz, 2023).

Team EI helps team members work together productively through empathy-based understandings, understand and share others' problems (Michinov & Michinov, 2022). EI plays a vital role in developing characteristics in team members that are important for

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organizations to achieve desirable outcomes like cohesiveness and collaboration (Biswas et al., 2022). EI has the characteristics that influence the culture of knowledge sharing and voice behavior (Jamshed & Majeed, 2023). EI is a vital team characteristic that helps manage team diversity and increase productivity (Jegerson et al., 2024). Team EI may enhance the team members' voice behavior because it is helpful for team members to manage their own emotions and others' emotions better and be mindful of them (Xie, 2022).

Previous literature shows a well-established influence of EI in encouraging voice behavior. Surprisingly, the role of team EI has not received attention from the researcher. Therefore, seeing how team EI can promote employees' voice behavior is interesting. The association between team EI and voice behavior may depend on some underlying mechanism. This study considers TAW as an important underlying mechanism for the association among team EI and voice behavior.

Spreitzer et al. (2005), in their study, define thriving as a positive mental state in which individuals show a positive attitude and energy for learning. As a concept, thriving has gained significant attention in positive organizational behavior. TAW of employees is essential for any organization to get a competitive advantage and sustainable performance (Durrah et al., 2024). Literature shows that TAW is connected with many positive outcomes like job satisfaction, positive attitude, and positive work behavior and task performance of employees, which brings positive change to organizations (Zhai et al., 2023). Most previous research studies studied TAW to reduce burnout, disengagement, and stress (Salmela-Aro, 2017). However, the role of TAW as an explanatory mechanism for promoting positive behavioral outcomes like voice behavior needs more exploration (Sheng & Zhou, 2021). The association between team EI and TAW plays an important role in enhancing the outcomes of employees (Shaari et al., 2023). Team EI improves emotional regulation and communication, enhancing the supportive and psychologically safe environment for employees, encouraging employees to flourish, perform better, and achieve great job satisfaction (A'yuninnisa et al., 2024). Moreover, team EI plays an important role in building strong interactive associations and finding the best ways to address disagreements, which is essential for thriving in the workplace (Maguire et al., 2017). Therefore, Employees are better positioned to show voice behavior through TAW, as active learning and vitality help employees look forward to positive outcomes and become more autonomous. So, this study explains the relationship between how team EI enhances employees' voice behavior through TAW.

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According to social cognitive theory, team members learn from society or their surroundings (Such as Team EI); based on this learning, they build cognitive perceptions like TAW. Based on this cognitive knowledge, they show positive behavior, such as a PMV and PHV (Torre & Durning, 2015). Thus, by focusing on social cognitive theory, the current study examines the relationship of team EI with different behavioral outcomes of the employees, such as PMV and PHV, through TAW.

Hypothesis Development

Team EI and Employees' Voice Behavior

Team EI is a team's ability or characteristic that shapes members' understandings and reactions to emotional issues (Moriarty & Buckley, 2003). EI is an important element that organizations need to consider to achieve better performance (Blazquez et al., 2022). EI is a characteristic of individuals that helps them manage emotions and evaluate not only their own emotions but also the emotions of others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). According to recent literature, it is also observed that EI is fundamental to team effectiveness (Huang et al., 2022). EI at the team level provides the base to work collectively for a common purpose by increasing a shared feeling of compassion and ensuring that team members understand one another (Murmu & Neelam, 2022). Recent research shows that EI is a source for organizations in today's competitive environment to get a competitive advantage because, as a resource, it should lead to a great understanding of each other's actions and ultimately increase the team's productivity (Nanayakkara et al., 2023).

Organizational effectiveness depends significantly on the participation of employees, yet the role of employee voice behavior needs to be appropriately acknowledged (Um-e-Rubbab & Naqvi, 2020). Liang et al. (2012) "define the PMV and PHV as a behavior in which individuals show interest in the betterment of the organization by giving suggestions to improve the work environment and processes, and show concerns about the current practices or behaviors within the organization that may harm the organization." In their study, Liang et al. (2012) explain that voice behavior initiatives are not described in the job description of employees; these are the actions and suggestions from employees for improving working conditions.

Based on previous knowledge, voice behavior is communication without compulsion by employees to give new ideas, suggestions, information, and opinions related to work and the organization to the right person to take action to bring positive change. Due to rapid

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business growth, the business environment is continuously changing. In this change process, the importance of voice behavior is significantly increased (Jiang et al., 2022). Voice behavior may be implicit, as stimulating the existing work settings, which is helpful for innovation and growth (Kee et al., 2021). Therefore, several individuals may be careless about voice behavior, reticent, or likely to reflect before proposing suggestions. As an outcome, several scholars are focusing on research on actively engaging employees' voice behavior. Both types of employee voice behavior, PMV and PHV, are helpful for decision-making and improvement in organizations (Gabriel & Aguinis, 2022).

PMV and PHV behavior is the capability of workers to easily communicate their inventive thoughts and recommendations to enhance organizational effectiveness (Liang et al., 2012). When workers present their concerns and doubts about problems of their organization due to the status quo and endorse correlated suggestions, "They are experiencing PHV (Rani et al., 2024). In a current extremely competitive business environment, organizations cannot avoid changes and new ideas from employees.

Previous research shows that individuals can learn behaviors from the contextual environment and then show those behaviors in the workplace (Yin et al., 2020). Contextual factors make it easy for employees to bring change, appreciate new ideas and suggestions, and assist them in implementing those (Aboramadan et al., 2022). The constructive impact of EI on cognitive and affective trust shows the prominence of emotions in creating team trust (Shafique & Naz, 2023). Team EI is a source of positive change in different variables associated with team behaviors (Gerbeth et al., 2022).

Literature shows the significance of EI as a means of team effectiveness by increasing team performance through voice behavior and innovation (Zhang & Hao, 2022). Team EI has been primarily less explored because most of the previous research studied employees EI, and there are fewer studies on Team EI. Emotionally intelligent group members feel more strongly committed to the group's objectives; therefore, they show their voice behavior to improve their group or team performance. Literature shows that factors that motivate individuals to speak up and bring new ideas highly depend on motivational support from Leadership (Roberson & Perry, 2022). When human resources feel active and have opportunities to learn within their organization, they are primarily engaged in voice behavior for the betterment of their organizations (Lee et al., 2023). Hence, the current research examines the association between Team EI and voice behaviors.

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H1: A positive association exists between Team EI and PMV.

H2: A positive association exists between Team EI and PHV.

Mediating Role of TAW

TAW is a positive mental state in which individuals feel energetic and show a positive attitude towards learning at work (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Thriving correlates to many constructive results, such as job engagement and creative ideas (Christensen-Salem et al., 2021). TAW is essential for employee development because this is the learning process to enhance their energy; thus, it is helpful for them in career development (Yang et al., 2021).

The association between Team EI and TAW has gained significant attention in organizational research in recent years. High Team EI correlates to positive outcomes like team cohesion, contributing to TAW (Mindeguia et al., 2021). Team EI is a source of organizational well-being because it helps create a positive work climate, leading to a TAW environment (Tesi, 2021). There is a strong theoretical association between Team EI and TAW. However, there is a need for further research to understand the mechanism of their association (Drigas et al., 2023).

Thriving enables people to create positivity regarding behavior and actions, ultimately increasing productivity (Kim et al., 2024). TAW is a significant antecedent that provides detailed and comprehensive knowledge to enhance learning at the workplace, providing a road map to employees for positive behavior and building a positive environment for work (Iqbal et al., 2024). Thriving is a critical mechanism in the creative extra-role behavior process, and there is a need for more research to uncover the potential of thriving for workers and organizations (Farid et al., 2024). Thriving individuals show great interest in learning to obtain new and unique skills, and their positive energy is helpful for them to apply their skills productively (Rai et al., 2024). Past studies show that TAW has different positive outcomes, but there is not much research on the association of Team EI and TAW; hence, the current study checks the association of TAW as a mediator with voice behavior.

H3: TAW mediates the relationship between Team EI and employees PMV.

H4: TAW mediates the relationship between Team EI and employees PHV.

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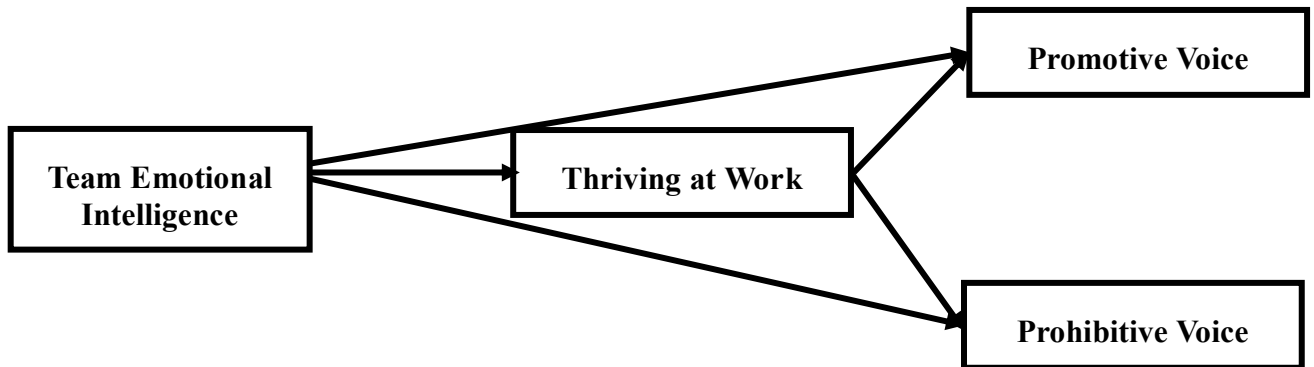


Figure 1: Proposed Theoretical Framework

Methodology

Sample and Process

The present research is based on a quantitative approach. Questionnaires were distributed to IT organizations of Pakistan's twin cities. This approach is suitable, as it is beneficial when inspecting relationships and describing and determining cause-and-effect interactions between variables. The participants in the data collection process are individuals working in IT organizations in the twin cities of Pakistan following the lead of previous studies on voice behavior (e.g., Um-e-Rubbab & Naqvi, 2020). Data was collected in 3-time lags over four months. Other studies have also used the similar approach (Amin et al., 2022; Rubbab et al., 2024). In the first lag of the study, 800 questionnaires were distributed and 653 workers responded about their team's EI along with their demographics like age, gender, education, and experience. The 653 employees of T1 were contacted after two weeks, and 583 employees provided data about their TAW. After 15 days of lag two those 583 employees were contacted and 471 employees provided data for their PMV and PHV. After data screening, 460 filled responses were kept for final analysis. The response rate was 57.5%.

Respondent Characteristics

In the current study, 460 respondents were included, of which 314 were male and 146 were female. The age distribution was as follows: 252 respondents were between 20 and 30 years, 142 were between 31 and 40 years, 41 were between 41 and 50, and 25 were over 50. Regarding education, 118 respondents had an intermediate degree, 220 held a bachelor's degree, and 122 had completed graduate or postgraduate studies. One hundred forty-three respondents had less than or equal to five years' experience, 157 respondents had 6-10 years of experience, 121 respondents had 11-15 years of experience, and 39 respondents had 16-20 years of experience.

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Measures

A combination of instruments was adapted from the previous studies to measure the study's variables. The survey was distributed in English and other studies have also used English language facing no issue of understanding in the respondents (e.g., Khattak et al., 2024; Rubbab et al., 2024).

Team EI

A scale consisting on 16-items which is developed by Jordan and Lawrence (2009) was adapted for the measurement of Team EI. The value of Cronbach's Alpha is .95, which shows that the scale is reliable.

TAW

To measure TAW in current research, we adapted the scale of TAW created by Porath et al. (2012). This scale has five items related to learning and five related to vitality. The value of Cronbach's Alpha is .89, which shows that the scale is reliable.

Promotive and Prohibitive Voice Behavior

To measure PMV and PHV behavior, we adapted a scale created by Liang et al. (2012). This scale contains 10 items. PMV was evaluated using five items related to suggestions for improvement. The value of Cronbach's Alpha is .82, which shows that the scale is reliable. PHV was evaluated using five items related to improvement or showing concern about undesirable things for the organization. The value of Cronbach's Alpha is .86, which shows that the scale is reliable.

Results

Correlation

Table 1 shows the association's summary statistics, reliability, and analysis. The correlation of Team EI is positive and significant with TAW ($r=.34, p < .01$), PMV ($r=.45, p < .01$), and PHV ($r=.37, p < .01$). TAW shows significantly positive correlation with PMV ($r=.35, p < .01$), and PHV ($r=.47, p < .01$). A positive and significant association exist between PMV and PHV ($r=.21, p < .01$). For all the variables the value of "Cronbach alpha" is greater than 0.70 which shows that all the measures are reliable.

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Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation, Reliability, and Correlation

S.No	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1	TEI	3.22	.88	(0.95)				
2	TAW	3.27	.77	.34**	(0.89)			
3	PMV	3.40	.85	.45**	.35**	(0.82)		
4	PHV	3.25	.94	.37**	.47**	.21**	(0.86)	

N=460, *P<.05 ,**P<.01; SD= Standard deviation α = Cronbach alpha, TEI= Team Emotional Intelligence

Direct and Indirect Effects

Hayes' process macros model 4 was used to check the direct effect and TAW's mediating effect between Team EI, PHV, and PMV. The results of Table 2 indicate the direct and indirect effects. The outcomes of the direct effect show that there is a significant relationship between Team EI and PHV ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.001$) and PMV ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, these results supported hypotheses H1 and H2, which state that Team EI positively relates to PMV and PHV.

The relationship between TAW is significant with PHV ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.001$) and PMV ($\beta = 0.24$, $p < 0.001$), respectively. The indirect effect of Team EI on PHV and PMV is also significant through the mediator TAW, as the results show that ($\beta = 0.14$, $p < 0.001$) and ($\beta = 0.07$, $p < 0.001$), correspondingly. So, the results suggest that TAW mediates the relationship between Team EI, PHV and PMV. So, the results support the hypotheses H3 and H4.

Table 2. Bootstrapping Results for Direct and Indirect Effects

Direct effect	Effect	S.E	t
Control variables			
TEI → PHV	.25**	.045	5.51
TEI → PMV	.36**	.041	8.83
TEI → TAW	.30**	.038	7.88
TAW → PHV	.47**	.052	9.18
TAW → PMV	.24**	.047	5.25
(95% Bias Corrected Confidence Interval method)			

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Indirect effect	<i>Effect</i>	<i>S.E</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
TEI → TAW → PHV	.14	.03	.09	.21
TEI → TAW → PMV	.07	.02	.03	.12

N= 460, *p<.05, **p<.01, LL= Lower limit, UL= Upper limit, S.E= Standard error, TEI= Team Emotional Intelligence

Discussion

Despite the potential benefits of team EI, there is little research on its positive outcomes, particularly associated with individuals' voice behavior (Winton & Sabol, 2024). The basic purpose of this research is to extend research on the association among team EI and employee voice behavior by testing a mediation of TAW. Checking the relationship between team EI and employees' voice behavior is the first main objective of the study. The findings supported the first and second hypotheses because results show that team EI is accompanied by increased employees' PMV and PHV. The study's second objective is to check the mediating effect of TAW in the relationship among team EI and employee voice behavior. The results supported our hypothesis that TAW mediates the association between team EI and PMV and PHV.

Earlier research studies also support these results. For instance, numerous studies establish a narrative that team EI has many positive outcomes (Jordan & Troth, 2021; Karimi et al., 2021). Moreover, team members with high EI are more engaged in voice behavior. In their study, Xie et al. (2021) found that emotionally intelligent teams encourage individual voice behavior through constructive suggestions. Prior research studies also found that team EI increases voice behavior by fostering thriving through psychological safety and trust (Lee, 2022). Team EI helps individuals manage conflicts best by reducing stress and enhancing energy, which further contributes to thriving (Ali et al, 2024). Similarly, TAW is also linked to many positive outcomes related to voice behavior (Wang et al., 2022).

The current study tried to better understand the advantages of team EI and its impact on PMV and PHV, as well as mediation variable explain this relation. The research findings show that team EI helps employees control their emotions and helps them to increase their positive energy and motivation towards taking action. Individuals can utilize this constructive energy in a PMV and PHV and become helpful long-term resources for the organization's forthcoming growth. The outcomes of the current study support the social cognitive theory by

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supporting the notion that individuals learn from their surroundings. Based on this learning, they build cognition, and then this cognition provides individuals with input to show a behavior.

These findings significantly impact the literature on Team EI, TAW, voice behavior, and social cognitive theory. As the findings show, team EI has a substantial progressive association with TAW and voice behavior, so organizations need to consider the steps that are helpful for individuals to learn EI and how they can implement this EI for showing voice behavior. In today's business environment, most organizations are focusing on the voice of employees. Suppose they design a training system for employees where they not only enhance their physical capabilities but also increase psychological well-being. In that case, it will help them to increase the overall success level of the organization. The psychological condition of employees these days is a serious concern for many organizations. The current research provides insight into knowledge related to mental health.

Theoretical Contributions

This research adds knowledge to the existing literature on the team's EI and voice behavior in several ways. In order to investigate the effect of team EI on voice behavior, this study uses the comparatively direct argument from social cognitive theory to examine the effect of team EI on voice behavior. The focus on employees' voice behavior has risen in the current business setting, where change and diversity are important for growth, and this study showed that team EI is associated with many positive behavioral outcomes. Therefore, the current research responds to the need for research on the different aspects of team EI. It also adds valuable knowledge to an ongoing scholarly debate that TAW is linked to voice behavior by studying its relationship with voice behavior. Another contribution of this study is that it highlights how social cognitive factors are linked to learning and influence behavioral outcomes.

Practical Implications

The current research study also describes significant insights that may have implications for practitioners. The current research outcomes offer insights into the mechanisms for practical implications for organizations. Organizations are concerned about their employees' psychological or cognitive states, which are significant assets of any organization. The results of the current research are helpful for organizations in creating a new paradigm for team EI. This study is helpful for enterprises to improve the voice behavior of employees and conclude

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team EI to achieve higher performance. The outcomes of the current study provide insights to organizations that they should consider team EI as an important antecedent and design training programs to improve it. The results of the current research could also provide suggestions for policymakers. This study is beneficial for practitioners to analyze the feelings of their employees and reduce such practices that promote negative feelings among members based on social cognitive theory; team members learn from their surroundings, thrive during work, and enhance performance and show interest towards their work. Therefore, this study is helpful for organizations and policymakers to achieve a competitive advantage by managing the behaviors of team members and by utilizing their cognitive assets in a better way.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

Despite having so many benefits, the current study also has some limitations. First data was collected from small teams employed in the IT sector of twin cities, due to which we cannot generalize the study findings to other settings because data analyses in this study were limited to testing hypotheses. In order to generalize our findings to other settings, more evidence is needed. Replicating the study in different industries and organizational settings can provide more robust results with enhanced external validity.

Replication in other sectors is recommended because this study is potentially the first study on the proposed model, so we cannot generalize the results. This study considers voice behavior a productive outcome, considering its practical implications and worth to an organization. In the future, researchers may bring other extra-role behaviors as potential outcome variables for novel theoretical implications. In the future, another potential area for research is to check how other leadership styles moderate the effect of variables to increase the capability of employees to speak up. As it is the era of digital work, it is recommended that future research shows how different virtual platforms impact the willingness of individuals to show voice behavior. Furthermore, future studies may focus on virtual teams.

To avoid common method bias, the data for this study were gathered at three different time lags, but this may also have some drawbacks. Respondents' EI, TAW, and voice behavior may differ over time. To overcome this drawback in future, it is recommended that future studies consider collecting data for all the variables at all three time lags to compare variations in EI and voice behavior at different time points. Moreover, this study discussed voice behaviors to team EI and TAW. It is recommended in future studies might also consider the relationship between team EI and other extra-role behavioral outcomes. Lastly, in this

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study, data were only collected from the individuals working in the IT sector. It is recommended that future studies also consider data collection from individuals working in other organizations and from other cities.

Conclusion

The current study found a constructive effect of team EI on employees' voice behavior and that TAW mediates such impact. The current research emphasizes the importance of the employee's mental peace and positivity. Suppose individuals can control their emotions. In that case, they are in a better position to show positive energy toward learning and work for the betterment of their organization by showing voice behavior and helping their colleagues. They are also in the best position to perform well and play their part in the success of their organization in the best possible way. The research findings suggest that organizations providing opportunities for learning and supportive team environment and developing team intelligence that can encourage employees to make discretionary efforts.

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