Review based on the Development of New Framework for the Employee Voice, Psychology and Communication of Non-Union Employee Representation (NER) at Workplace in the Malaysia Manufacturing Sector

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Abstract:

Employee voice and communication is an element that needs to be emphasized in creating good working environment. Every employee needs voice to raise out their concerns, dissatisfactions and ideas so that they feel valued at the workplace. Therefore, by having representative of employees can indeed contribute tohigher confidence among the employees especially for non-union employee representation. This study aims to explore and measure the perceptions of employees and management on new concepts and involvement of NER as well as to analyse the gap between non-union employee representation, different forms of structure and the level of NER arrangements within the manufacturing sector in Malaysia. This study applied systematic literature reviewby reviewing literature from past researchers to have more understanding and concept related with this study.

Key Words – employee voice, communication, Non-union Employee Representation, trade union, worker rights

1.0   Introduction

In human existence, the voice in communication is crucial for daily lives. It aids in the exchange of information and knowledge as well as the development of interpersonal connections among each other (Tiwari & Tiwari, 2012). As a result, the practice of voice in communication skills should be improved and cannot be underestimated. Voice term have been widely applied in the context of human resource management (HRM) and industrial relations (IR) (Wilkinson et al., 2014). Essentially, the voice of employee and communication at workplace is necessary especially for employee to express their ideas, concerns, perspectives and suggestions about employee rights or issues without hesitation. International Labour Organization (ILO) is an organization that brings together governments, employers and employees to set labour standards, develop policies and programme in promoting decent work for all women and men. The protection of human rights such as the right to work, the freedom of association, collective negotiations, protection against forced labour, protection against discrimination and others amongthe key functions of the ILO (Douglas, Ferguson & Klett, 2004; International Labour Organization, 2023)

Employee voice is important because it gives potential in making high quality decisions and contributes to the organizational success (Morrison, Wheeler-Smith & Kamdar, 2011). The connection of trust between leaders, employees and managers is also essential in creating good environment among the workforce. Employee wellbeing and organizational performance are positively impacted by employee voice. This shows that there is strong relationship between employee voice and job satisfaction (Alfayad & Arif, 2017). Survey of Skills and Employment (2017) also similarly identified that there is link of employee participation of voice and employee wellbeing. Furthermore, the voice of employee aids in the early discovery of major issues (Detert & Burris, 2007) relating to their working lives.

The early history of employee voice concept started by Hirschman (1970) in economy. The idea of Hisrchman was applied by Farrell (1983) aimed to focus the employee voice in relation to the job dissatisfaction while Freeman and Medoff (1984) introduced the role of union employees in industrial relations. Before World War I, many companies in America not only did not have any voice option but also been rejected (Wilkinson et al., 2014). Then, the forms of employee voice involved individual voice, small-scale collective voice, employee representation plans (ERPs) and independent labor unions existed at that time. Main problems that create conflicts between employer and employee are wages or salaries, flexible working hours, conditions of work and job security protection from the perspective of trade union (Bercu & Vodă, 2017). The issues can be improved through the voice of a trade union movement (Abd Razak, 2020). It is one of the voice channels that have been applied in the organizations which give opportunity for individuals in expressing their issues or opinion to be heard.

Trade union or commonly known as union defined as an organization or industry that responsible to protect the rights of employees and workers in the workplace. Besides, the main purpose of union is improving the environment of employment (Webb & Webb, 2000). Employees join trade union are bound with agreement between employers and workers called collective bargaining process. In United States, the public policy focused on the relationship of union-management and collective bargaining based on common issues (Gollan & Lewin, 2013). During that period also, public policy in Europe not only focused on union-management relationship and collective bargaining but on other forms of employee representation which are work councils and co-determination (Gollan & Lewin, 2013).

Nowadays, the overview trend of trade union and collective bargaining toward workers' voice showed slightly decline in most countries such as UK, Ireland, United States and Australia (Ebbinghaus & Visser, 1999; Western & Rosenfeld, 2011; Katz, Kochan & Colvin 2015;Schnabel, 2020) and therefore there is interest in non-union presence. The percentage of trade union members among UK employees for all sectors is 23.1% in 2021 compared to 2020 which is 23.7%. (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2022). Majority of labor laws covers union rights or issues. All employees deserve a voice in the workplace including non-union employees. Non-union employees on the other hand form a large group of workers in the United States and are entitled to the same workplace protections as their unionized counterparts. An employee who is not a member of a labor union is referred to as a non-union employee. Non-union employees are also protected under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA).

The form of influence when focusing on non-union voice encompasses numerous efforts that have been led by management in direct and indirect forms includes the channels of non-union employee representation (NER) (Benson, 2000; Bryson et al., 2013; Gollan & Wilkinson, 2007; McCloskey & McDonnell, 2018). NER can be defined as the participation of employees in decision-making for non-union employee voice within firms through representative agencies (Donaghey et al., 2012). The role of NER is important in many West European countries such as United States, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom and other countries (Rogers & Streeck, 1995). The findings from Charlwood & Terry, (2007) shows that more than 80 percent of workplaces have no form of representative voice in the UK. Workplaces with representation are more efficient that gives benefits for both employers and employees compared to the workplaces without representation. One of the role of NER is improving the communication flow between employees and managers with various forms of voice (Dundon et al., 2004). Leaders especially need to have the courage to address the issues in a way that is appropriate. They can be role model not only in listening but also proactively raised issues from employee's feedback.

In Malaysia, trade unionism does not seem interested by the younger generation (Mohamad Nor *et al.*, 2018) and it can be seen only 9.6% or 960,000 employees from 10 million employees in 2022 have been registered with the Department of Trade Union Affairs (DTU) that linked under Ministry of Human Resources (MoHR). Based on the Figure 1.1, it shows slightly increasing trend of trade union membership from 2016 until 2020. This is because the level of awareness is still low regarding the importance of joining union.
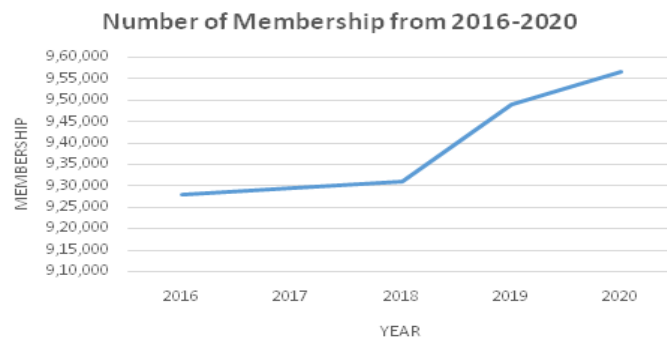
Figure 1.1: The Number of Trade Union Membership from 2016-2020
(Department of Trade Union Affairs, Ministry of Human Resources Malaysia, 2020)

The concept of employee voice and NER are not clear as there are very limited studies on this topic especially in Malaysia compared to other developed western countries. The issues have been little widespread from the understanding of employees and management. Furthermore, the research of non-union voice is seriously neglected compared to the research on union (Dundon & Gollan, 2007). One challenge is that there are few studies of non-union voice that directly inquire about employee's opinion in terms depth, level or influence (Dundon *et al.*, 2005). According to the research, non-union voice might be perceived as optimistic in nature and therefore less extensive than union voice because it is lack independent from management. The study of CheRose, Kumar & Ramasamy (2011) conclude that employers do not show positive view toward unions from the majority of non-union employees. Most of the organizations are giving up employee unions to accept the notion of NER and hence this is a topic that is very significant and relevant issues today. At all levels of an organization, effective employee voice and communication is critical in attaining productivity and sustaining great working relationships among all employees either union or non-union employees. It is important to form non-union employee representation in Malaysia to have the right in voicing out their issues to the management since union employee representation have their own channel through their associations (Abd Razak & Mahmod, 2021).

The main contributor to the economic sectors in Malaysia is manufacturing. The number of employees in Malaysia manufacturing sector in fourth quarter 2021 have been increased to 2.7% (2,259,610 persons) based on Monthly Manufacturing Statistics, Malaysia December 2021 (DOSM, 2021). Therefore, this research focused on the manufacturing sector where most of the issues of employee voice and communication related with the area. Employee voice and communication among non-union employees are not taken seriously as the form of voice have been changed from collective union to individual communication. The organizations are encouraging individual means of communication rather than collective communication of feedback from the employees to the organization (Kos, 2015). With the heavy reliance on individual communication by the employees to the management, there can be many cases in which the employees may not share feedback or may feel under-represented in the organization. Employee satisfaction rely a lot on their voice and how employer can listen to them.Therefore, the main goal of this research is to explore and measure the perceptions of employees and management on new concepts and involvement of NER as well as to analyse the gap between non-union employee representation, different forms of structure and the level of NER arrangements within the manufacturing sector in Malaysia.

2.0   Literature Review

2.1   Employee voice and communication
Systematic literature studies of the employee voice concept in different areas including organizational behavior (OB), human resource management (HRM) and industrial relations (IR) by Hosseini & Sabokro (2022). In the scope of HRM, voice and communication concept has been widely used and become attraction from

management especially at workplace. There are different views or perspectives by past researcher on employee voice and communication based on its application. Employee voice in general can be understand as speaking out their opinions, suggestions, problems or ideas related to the working issues. The concept of employee voice can be divided into four categories that gives different mechanisms which are employee dissatisfaction, collective organization expression, decision-making for management and demonstration (Dundon *et al.*, 2004). A broad definition of IR is the collection of rules and organisations that governing the relationships of employers and employees (Dunlop, 1958; Kaufman, 2004). These rules and organisations cover aspects of employment, disciplinary actions, grievance procedure, worker involvement and participation in the decision-making processes, a system of renumeration and rewards and other workplace regulations. The practices of good IR involve the protection of workers' rights and interests in times of corporate stress and also providing training and re-training on good industrial relations practices, social dialogue, core labour standards, labour laws and regulations. The Association of Southeast Asean Nations or ASEAN strongly supports good industrial relations practices by establishing ASEAN Labour Ministers' (ALM) Work Programme 2010-2015 that have four strategic priorities (legal foundation; institutional capacity; social partners; labour markets and workforce development) meanwhile the outcome level of ASEAN Labour Ministers' (ALM) Work Programme 2016-2020 ASEAN Labour Ministers' (ALM) Work Programme 2020-2025 involved skilled and adaptable workforce; productive employment; harmonious, safe and progressive workplace; and expanded social protection.

Furthermore, research by Wilkinson *et al.* (2014) defined voice of employee as the involvement of union or non-union employee based on any issues that can affect their daily work in organization. Involvement and participation are the key elements of employee voice (Marchington *et al.*, 2001; Marchington & Suter, 2013). From the study by Marchington *et al.* (2001), they have modelled the framework of employee voice shown in Figure 2.1 and two aspects of voice are identified based on the framework. First the voice form (direct and indirect) while the second aspect is voice agenda (shared and contested). This can be formed by employee involvement, partnership agreements, grievance procedures and traditional collective bargaining to create environment free from any discrimination or matters that occurs in every workplace of all sectors. The existing literature discovered that it does not adequately explain how employee voice is initially raised, the potential mechanisms or pathways that it may take, the variety of factors that may influence those mechanisms and how problems are resolved to achieve the satisfaction of the involved parties. Researchers in IR, HRM and managers in companies have all shown interest in the topic of employee participation and employee involvement in decision making as well especially in promoting partnership among employer-employee work relationships.
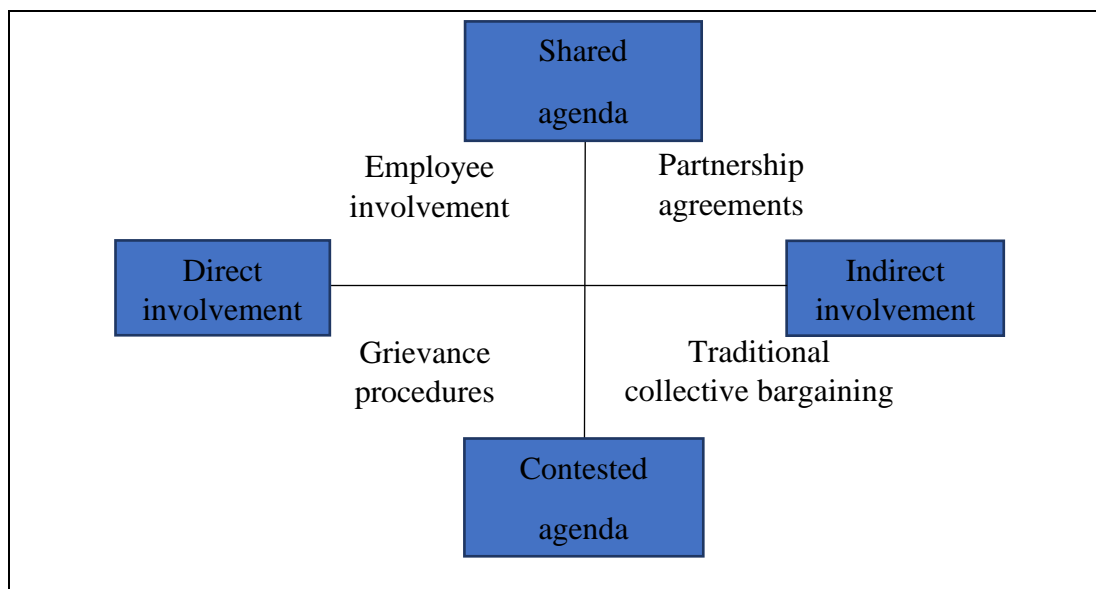

Figure 2.1: The framework of employee voice
(Marchington *et al.*, 2001)

Prihatsanti, Handoyo & Ardi (2021) applied the concept of employee voice in their research as the ability to communicate through formal or informal channel based on the ideas, suggestions, issues or opinions relating to the interests of the organization or employees. From the findings, most of the employees like to communicate in an informal way such as gathering events, face to face interactions with leaders and casual meetings outside of working hours. Ideas and concerns can be presented through established structures or regulations which is a formal channel (Marchington & Suter, 2013) while in informal channel the ideas and concerns are direct or unstructured for voice expression (Klaas, Olson-Buchanan & Ward, 2012). Both channels should be managed well in maximizing the voice delivery that can be important for both managements and employees at workplace. Hence, employees can prefer which channel that they feel comfortable in voicing out their issues or problems. Hatipoglu & Inelmen (2018) suggests HR managers to form the aspects of employee voice mechanisms and apply it to wider industries instead focusing in service industry.

The additional aspect of voice influence have been suggested by Dundon *et al*., (2004) and it concludes that there are three aspects of voice (voice form, voice agenda and voice influence) in the research. The voice influence (communication or influence) focused to the suggestion and the actions to be taken. In the study of Lavelle, Gunnigle & McDonnell (2010), the indirect approach is the suitable and common approach to employee voice with 31.8%, followed by dualistic approach, direct approach and minimalist approach. The study applied the Tuselmann, McDonald & Thorpe (2006) model to examine the four mechanisms of employee relation ranging from low to high voice in multinational companies (MNCs) by using analytical framework shown in Figure 2.2. Past research (Anyango, Ojera & Ochieng, 2015) stated that different managers have different concepts and understanding of employee voice based on its definition and application. Therefore, further research required to give guidance to the managers in planning better voice mechanisms among employees.
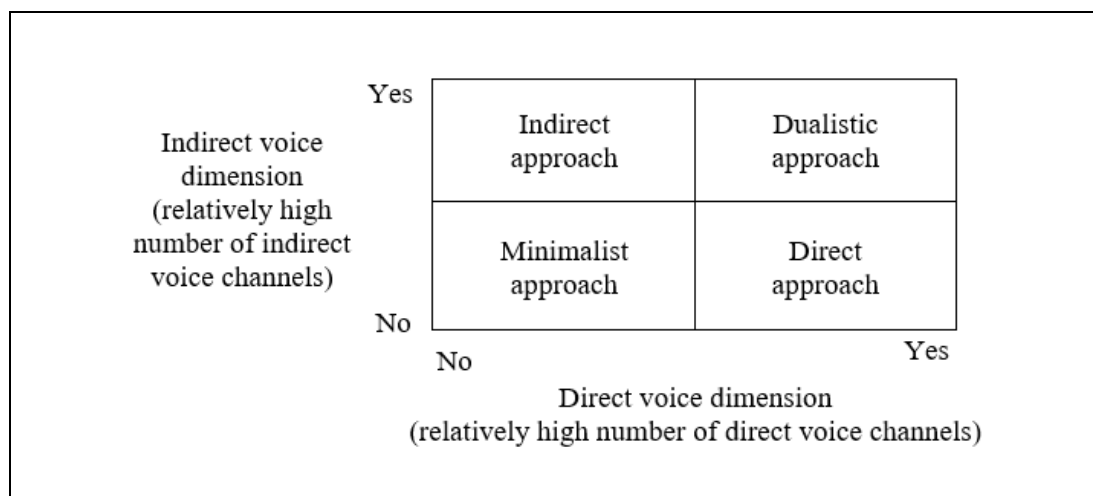

Figure 2.2: The approaches of employee voice
(Tuselmann, McDonald & Thorpe, 2006)

The study of Constantin & Baias (2015) aimed to identify the function of employee voice in an organization. The findings showed that one of the keys that everyone should have in communication is employee voice where it can help to build the trust in the organization and strengthen the relationship between team management and employee itself. Similarly, the relationship between supervisors and their subordinates is the key to the employee voice according to Davidson, Van Dyne & Lin (2017). The authors applied Guanxi Theory to build a model of the distinct implications of two aspects between supervisor and subordinate Guanxi on voice in the Chinese context. Guanxi defines as networks or connection of relationship not just to the existence of relationships but to its nature (Chen & Chen, 2004). Voice, efficiency and equity are the objectives of employment relationship from the viewpoint of Budd (2004). It further focuses on the union strategies,

workplace governance options and comparative in the systems of industrial relations. The study of Budd & Colvin (2005) argued that the voice, efficiency and equity should be balanced in the context of dispute resolution system since each three elements frequently in conflict with each other.

Su Yee, Shanti & Abd Razak (2018) reviewed case study voice of employee in an organisation but the study focus in Malaysia. The expression of dissatisfaction from staff in having different opinions to the upper management are restricted. This shows that there is a lack of culture that allows employees to voice out their dissatisfaction at the workplace due to no proper channels available for them to speak. Moreover, the employee voice has a significant effect toward organizational commitment (Prasadika & Nishanthi, 2018). There is a relationship between employee line manager and employee trust of senior management on organizational commitment. Therefore, to increase the commitment of an organization it is necessary to strengthen the relationship between staff and management via the right channel. The research has limitation in the scope of population as it only focused on one organization and limited time that can impact the quality of research study.

Hosseini *et al.* (2022) formed the knowledge pattern of employee voice in Iran due to there is no information of effective and holistic voice processes. The researchers applied semi-structured interview and identified few themes or components that can build the pattern of voice in describing the process of employee voice knowledge shown in Figure 2.3. The process started with the causal conditions, intervention conditions and context conditions that create the factors of voice among employees followed with the strategies used to manage the issues thru communications and networking. This was also parallel to the recommendation by Rubbab & Naqvi (2020) in forming the voice behaviour. Then, the consequences from the level of individual, unit and organisational results the outcomes of the knowledge employee voice. The findings showed that by expanding the employee voice in knowledge-based firms can contribute to the future growth and development especially in critical issues or situations at workplace. The researchers suggested that the voice should be applied in replacing the silence based on the knowledge or concept in Figure 2.3. Within the research by Zaumane (2018), the authors also identified that organizational structure and organizational culture were among the factors of the internal communication in the 21st century organization.
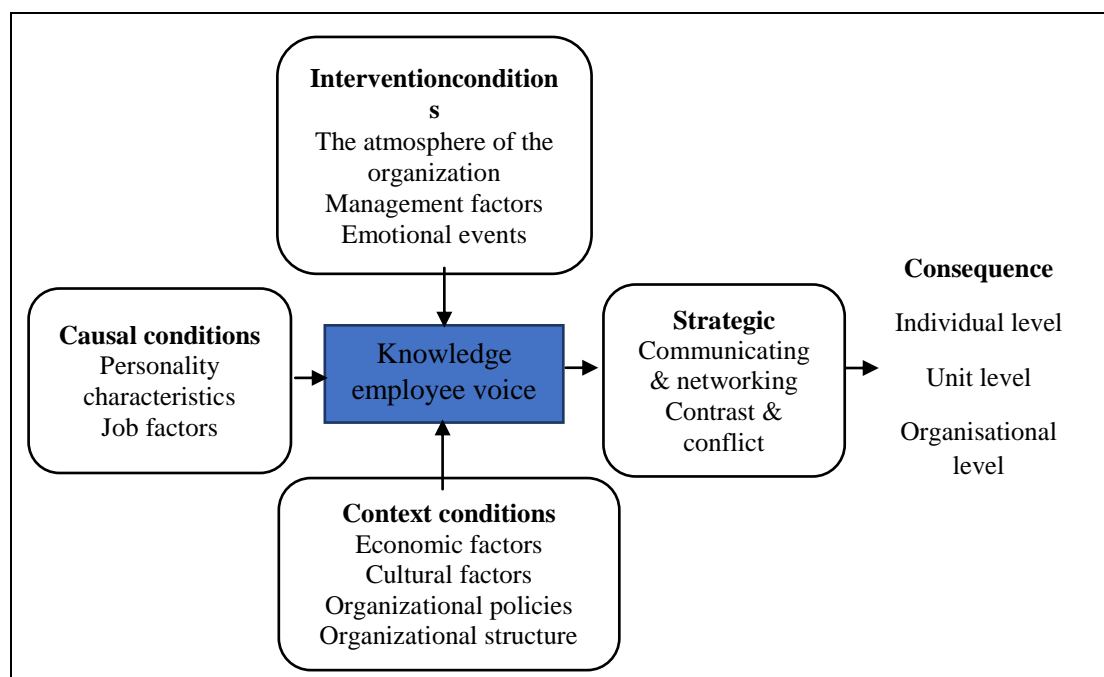

Figure 2.3: The process model of knowledge employee voice
(Hosseini *et al.*, 2022)

One of the guidelines in preventing employee burnout from work-related stress is by providing channel of employee voice (Gabriel & Aguinis, 2022). Apart from common causes of burnout such as overload task, unfair treatment at work, workplace bullying and lack of communication and support from managers (Oyewunmi, Akinnusi & Oyewunmi, 2018; Soelton *et al*., 2020), the current situation of global COVID-19 pandemic for the past two years also have led to the cause of stress including employee burnout (Kloutsiniotis *et al*., 2022). Employee burnout will give influence to the job satisfaction, employee performance and health and later affect the productivity of employee at workplace (Altaf & Awan, 2011). Majority of employees will quit their job due to the emotional exhaustion. The findings of study by Kim & Lee (2021) showed the need of strategic employee voice and communication can prevent the emotional exhaustion. According to the Van Gramberg *et al*. (2020), the employees' intentions to resign can be reduced with the voice of the employees and indirectly can assist in the resolution of workplace issues. For example, the issues of service quality are a major priority between management and employees toward customer expectations in hospitality industry (Proctor & Doukakis, 2003; Ross, 1995). Thus, by applying the practices of employment relations, it is potential for managements and employees to enhance productivity, organizational success and organizational commitment (Nadarajah *et al*., 2012). It can also be effective thru the positive relationship between both parties by having better communication. The contribution of study by Morrison (2011) showed the choices of employee voice that are available in the company can be understand and later be implemented by employees as one of the key area for future research.

Table 2.1: The overview definition of employee voice from past researcher

Author & Date	Definition
Dundon *et al*., 2004	Concept of employee voice can be divided into four categories that gives different mechanisms which are employee dissatisfaction, collective organization expression, decision-making for management and demonstration.
Wilkinson *et al.* (2014)	Voice of employee as the involvement of union or non-union employee based on any issues that can affect their daily work in organization.
Marchington *et al*. (2001)	Employee voice can be formed by employee involvement, partnership agreements, grievance procedures and traditional collective bargaining to create environment free from any discrimination or matters that occurs in every workplace of all sectors.
Prihatsanti, Handoyo & Ardi (2021)	The ability to communicate through formal or informal channel based on the ideas, suggestions, issues or opinions relating to the interests of the organization or employees.

2.2 Non-union Employee Representation

The variety views of employee voice have contributed to the extensive literature that promotes representative participation (Alsos & Trygstad, 2022; Bryson & Bellmann, 2019; Dundon *et al.*, 2004; Kwon & Farndale, 2020). The structure and form of employee representation in the Asia Pacific are not as developed as in Europe based on the past history, different cultures and practices. The study by Alas & Edwards (2011) showed that institutional environment and cultural background both have an impact on how people in Asia and Europe view the society, organizations and work differently. The right of an employee to seek individual in representing them for the purpose of negotiating with management on common issues faced by employees refer to the employee representation. For example, the benefit of employee representation can enable both parties (employers and employees) to interact, discuss and negotiate with each other efficiently. Representatives should be clear about

their roles in assuring that worker's opinion remained heard by management on suggestions and not only in decision making. Some studies also indicate that if employees do not have exposure in collective voice mechanisms, then they are less likely to voice out about workplace issues. Based on the survey of Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development 2022 (CIPD) on Good Work Index indicated that majority of the employees have experience that the employee representatives were good at listening to their concerns, expressing employee opinions to the management and keeping employees aware of management discussions and decisions.

Employees can voice their views and thoughts freely by the presence of representatives mostly through non-union representation. Non-union employee representation (NER) was include in the employee representation plans (ERPs) for worker voice from the ideas of US and Canadian in resolving grievances and making suggestions (Patmore, 2006;2013). The topic of NER and non-union voice have become interest by some researchers because of the declining trend in trade union (Dobbins & Dundon, 2014; Donaghey *et al.*, 2012). Non-union voice can be direct such as employer-led team briefings and problem-solving groups or thru representation that consists of staff associations, work councils, non-union partnership, joint consultative committee (JCC), health and safety committees, quality and productivity groups and employee board representation. The crucial element of the partnership working is the relationship between management and employee representatives (Johnstone, Ackers & Wilkinson, 2010). The case study by Dietz, Cullen & Coad (2005) also highlighted that working effectively can be existed thru non-union partnership.

Generally, NER bodies is defined as the act of employees in the agency which represents other employees that relates with management issues at the workplace including employee voice (Taras & Kaufman, 2006). The authors concluded that the future path of NER is uncertain due to variety different dimensions' concept (forms, functions, shapes and sizes) of NER from the employer's views. Similarly, Jirjahn & Smith (2018) defined NER as the participation of employee in decision making through representative in the organizations. Gollan & Lewin (2013) give the overview of main issues related to non-union employee representation in Industrial Relations. The main issues in North America about NER are whether the voice of union and non-union forms as alternative or complements for employees in decision making and is NER enhance or reduce the demand of employee in conventional union representation? The findings suggested to imply the NER as conflicting substitution and complementing forces to unionization at work as most of the union members desire to be non-union. Union and non-union voice systems in Canada may be utilized as alternatives to each other despite that they operate under completely separate legal frameworks (Taras, 2006). However, the study of Campolieti, Gomez & Gunderson (2013) showed that the role of NER forms of voice in Canada and United States as a substitute and not as complement for unionized workers. Joint Labor-Management Committee (JLMC) and the association of voice-oriented employees under NER mechanisms in Japan are viewed as effective substitutes to the enterprise unions in encouraging employee voice among workers (Tsuru & Morishima, 1999). The systems of NER voice may be complement, substitute or add value to the trade union representation structures and also as the platforms for employee engagement. Also, the development system of NER and the goals of trade unions have been planned to be balanced based on LeRoy's findings.

In some instances, NER forms in Asia are less common and weak than unions itself (Markey, 2006). This can be seen especially in the context discussion toward employee voice and communication. The objective of research by Che Rose, Kumar & Ramasamy (2010) is to study the challenges of trade unionism in Malaysia by analyzing the view of employees from unionized companies. Most of the non-union employees have a perception that their unions are not effective which may cause employee worries about the potential of representatives to take care of the workplace problems. From the findings, it showed that there is lack of knowledge about trade unions among employees. Survey conducted by Workplace Employment Relation Study (WERS) in 2011 of both union and non-union members to identify who they believe better represents them at the workplace especially based on work issues. The common issues that have been faced by employees are pay, complaint related to the work and disciplinary matters. Surprisingly, only some of union members believed that their union representatives or leaders were effective and capable in representing them. This concludes that even trade union members are

uncertain about their representatives' efficacy. Additionally, the findings from New Zealand Worker Representation and Participation Survey suggested that the channels of non-union voice within NER filled the gap in employee voice due to the fall in union membership. The voice channels are highly associated with how New Zealand employees feel they can influence decisions at work.

Non-union collective agreement (NUCA) have been discussed in the study by Bray, McCrystal & Spiess (2020) where it focused on four key subjects and one of the subjects is employee representation. Due to the lack of Fair Work Act to specify the form of employee representation in collective bargaining, the parties involved must settle the issue. The role of representative bodies that have been managed by management are for consultation and communication instead of as bargaining or negotiating agents have been suggested by some studies (Gollan & Campling, 1999). In Australia and other developed countries, the collective bargaining between trade unions and employers has been considered as the suitable mechanism in determining salaries and working conditions. The study also explored the aspects of why NUCA is usually ignored. One of the aspects is NUCA was only briefly explained in the reform programmes. The obscurity of NUCA after the implementation of Fair Work Act because of combination with union agreement into single stream. Furthermore, trade unions and employers thought NUCA is operating well as it is part of the Fair Work Act and thus there is no need to discuss it in general.

Industrial Relations Act 1967 (Act 177) introduced to promote and maintain industrial harmony and to provide the rights especially for the employee and employers. Besides, the act applied to all employees in Malaysia including union and non-union employees. The customary procedure in resolving conflicts among non-union employees is by approaching their employer or supervisor directly as interactions of non-unionized establishments. The complaint or issues can also be made by an employee to the Ministry of Human Resources (MoHR), who will then look into it (MIDA, 2019).

Table 2.2: The overview definition of non-union employee representation from past researcher

Author & Date	Definition
Taras & Kaufman (2006)	The act of employees in the agency which represents other employees that relates with management issues at the workplace including employee voice.
Jirjahn & Smith (2018)	The participation of employee in decision making through representative in the organizations.

2.3 Factors influencing non-union employee voice

Many factors contribute to the non-union employee voice based on previous studies. The performance of workplace, market situations, worker diversity and structural workplace characteristics like management and scale were more significant in influencing non-union employee voice. Dundon & Gollan (2007) explored the conceptual understanding on the factors that effect the non-union employee voice. The factors consist of macro environmental (external) factors and micro organizational (internal) factors shown in Figure 2.4. These factors give influence on how the organization decides to manage the employee voice. Managerial strategies, occupational identity and group solidarity of employees within the organization, power and influence of the employees, the trust between management and employee and the level of autonomy are examples under micro-organizational factors. The elements will aid in providing background information of each factors that effect employee voice in non-union organizations can be controlled, managed and changed unlike the macro-environmental factors (market influence, structural influence and regulatory environment). From the study, further research and critical analysis should be more understanding whether the form of non-union voice based on strategic employer choice or new way of liberating workers. The possibility that workers may express a different viewpoint depends on a variety of circumstances. The decision of employee's voice includes non-union

are assumed to be influenced by their expectations of whether the use of voice would be effective or they may face disciplinary action for it, besides to the factors of individual.

The study of Haynes (2005) applied the framework of Marchington *et al*. (2001) by pinpoint the desire to encourage employee participation in management decision-making, the expression of personal dissatisfaction and the view of trust and cooperative relations as key drivers to implement voice mechanisms in hotel industry. The management of hotel faced major issues where there is poor communication and low levels of management trust between management and operative staff. In creating non-union voice channels, management has increasingly been motivated by an understanding of the contribution played by employee toward quality improvement as well as a desire to give better customer service. As mentioned before, the approach of non-union employee voice within MNCs that operating in Ireland prefer indirect approach. Country of origin and sectoral differences are the range indicators which affect the voice approaches (Lavelle, Gunnigle & McDonnell, 2010). MNCs from Ireland, UK, Germany and rest of Europe are more significant to the indirect approach as it is considered that the originates of MNC can affect how worldwide companies handle its labor force (Ferner, 1997). The sector of MNCs in traditional manufacturing also contribute to the employee voice approach because the recognition levels of trade union likely higher in the manufacturing sector. It is commonly believed that MNCs with origins in various nations have varying preferences for the existence of employee representative organizations and the structure that employee voice regarding management decisions takes (Belizón, 2019; Marginson *et al.*, 2010). Studies by Prouska *et al.* (2021) focused in comparing the key factors of employee voice in non-unionised small and medium enterprises (SME) of UK, Thailand and Nigeria. The key factors of voice based on the analysis of interview includes the external environment, governance structure, organizational configuration and internal contingencies in the employment relationship. The study was conducted from the perspective of the employee and not from the management standpoint. Therefore, the additional potential factors such as the product market, labor market and strategy direction was unable to include.
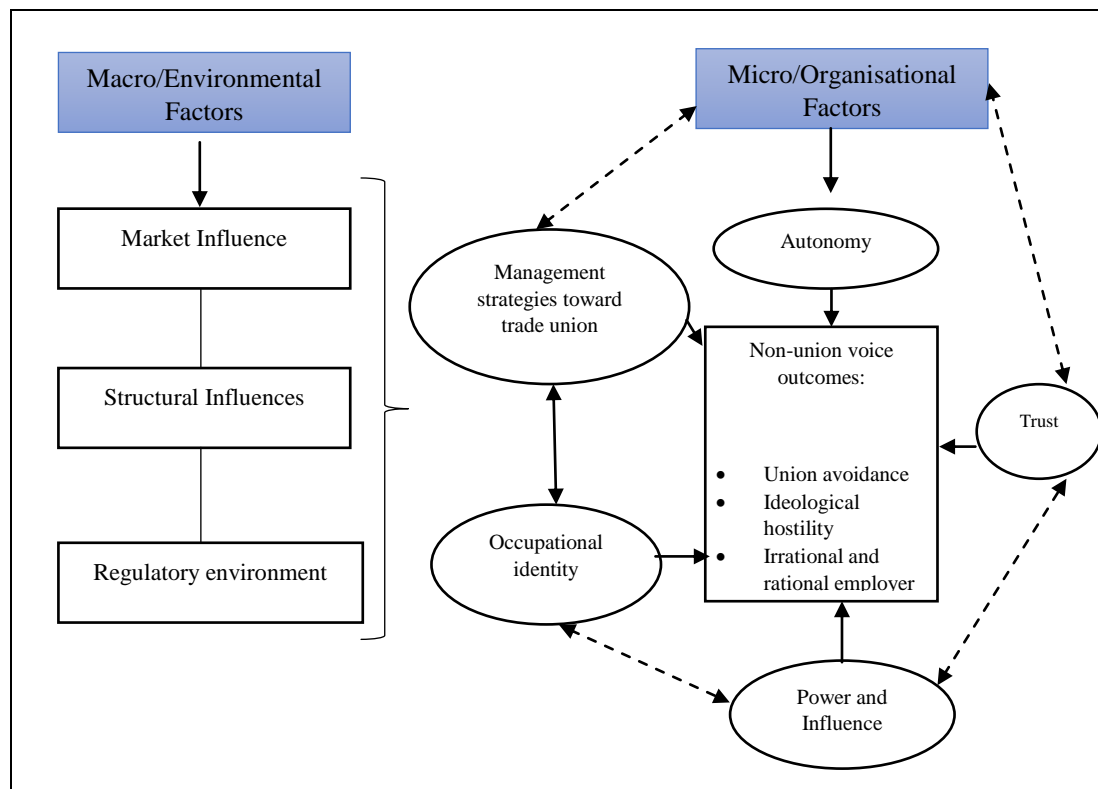

Figure 2.4: The factors influencing non-union employee voice outcomes
(Dundon & Gollan, 2007)

Mowbray, Wilkinson, & Herman (2020) have developed voice behavior interaction model within high performance work system by focusing on how the ability, motivation and opportunity (AMO) practices can influence the behavior of voice. The main factors that contribute to the effectiveness of employee voice include mutual gains employment relations, management to apply the practices, and employees in expressing their voice through the high-performance work system. The necessity practices of ability, motivation and opportunity toward employment relation and then employee voice especially in NER should be encouraged by offering training, job stability and gainsharing to the employees (Gollan *et al.*, 2014; Kaufman, 2015; Upchurch *et al.*, 2006). The effectiveness of voice will increase if there is training in communication skills such as the use of assertive language and criticism that may give employees confidence and capability to speak out and bring up issues or topics at workplace (Okuyama, Wagner & Bijnen, 2014).

3.0 Conclusion

This study showed that various definition along with the concept have been explained by past researcher in general. They have made significant contributions to the understanding of employee voice and its implications for organization, managements and workers. However, there are few limitations where the concept of employee voice among non-union employee representation (NER) and the exposure of the knowledge in this area are quite limited. Therefore, the structure of framework related to the employee voice and communication of non-union employee representation (NER) should be introduced to produce better analysis and future prospects for employee voice in heading towards better sustainable development growth. Besides, it is important to recognize these limitations and give suggestion that can provide individual support and also address employee concerns by having partnership or collaboration in making sure that the voice of employees being heard.

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