

## Unleashing The Fire Within: How Harmonious and Obsessive Passion Drive Gen Z Voice

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### Article Info

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### Abstract

Generation Z is increasingly entering the workforce with distinct characteristics, including a strong tendency to express themselves and actively engage within organizations. One form of such engagement is voice behavior, both promotive (offering improvement ideas) and prohibitive (raising concerns about potential risks). This study aims to examine the influence of two forms of work passion—harmonious and obsessive—on both types of voice behavior among Gen Z employees. A total of 400 respondents aged 20 to 30 years, working across various industries in Indonesia, participated in this study. The sample was obtained using incidental sampling, and data were analyzed using simple linear regression to test five direct effect paths. The results showed that all hypotheses were supported. Harmonious passion significantly predicted promotive voice ( $\beta = 0.535$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and prohibitive voice ( $\beta = 0.487$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Obsessive passion also had a significant effect on promotive voice ( $\beta = 0.388$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and prohibitive voice ( $\beta = 0.367$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Furthermore, overall work passion positively influenced voice behavior ( $\beta = 0.544$ ,  $p < .001$ ). These findings suggest that both harmonious and obsessive passions can serve as important drivers of Gen Z's willingness to speak up in the workplace. This study contributes to the growing literature on youth work psychology and offers practical implications for managing cross-generational human resources.

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## INTRODUCTION

Generation Z is increasingly entering the workforce in large numbers, bringing new expectations and challenges for organizations (Sanders, 2019). Unlike previous generations, Gen Z is known to be more vocal, confident in expressing opinions, and highly concerned with meaningful work, self-development, and participation in decision-making processes (Open Knowledge, 2021). One key form of such participation is voice behavior, which refers to individuals' willingness to speak up with suggestions, concerns, or warnings for the betterment of their organization. Liang et al. (2012) distinguished between two types of voice behavior: promotive voice, which involves constructive and innovative suggestions, and prohibitive voice, which involves speaking up to prevent potential harm or inefficiencies. Both types of voice are crucial for organizations striving to remain adaptive, innovative, and sustainable (Morrison, 2023). However, global data shows that 86% of employees feel their organization doesn't listen fairly to them, and 63% say their voice is ignored (Schwabel, 2021). This highlights how promotive and prohibitive voice are not only essential for innovation and adaptability, but also critical to ensuring employees—especially Gen Z—feel heard and valued.

However, not all individuals—Gen Z included—consistently engage in voice behavior. Certain motivational forces are needed to encourage such proactive actions, particularly those that originate internally (Andrea et al., 2016). One of these sources is work passion, defined as a strong inclination toward one's work that becomes a central part of personal identity (Vallerand et al., 2014; Vallerand & Paquette, 2024). Vallerand et al. (2003) introduced two forms of work passion: harmonious and obsessive. Harmonious passion emerges voluntarily and allows individuals to engage in work with balance and flexibility. In contrast, obsessive passion is more rigid and compulsive, often making it difficult for individuals to disengage from their work (Amarnani et al., 2020; Bouhalleg & Haddoud, 2024). Both types reflect distinct dimensions of internal motivation that may influence workplace behavior, including the decision to speak up (Forest et al., 2011).

Previous studies have shown that harmonious passion is positively associated with constructive work behavior such as work engagement and organizational citizenship behavior (Bridekirk et al., 2016; Gao & Jiang, 2019). In the past five years, at least four empirical studies have examined the relationship between work passion and employee voice behavior (De Clercq & Pereira, 2022; Gao & Jiang, 2019; Murillo-Ramos et al., 2024; Rahaman et al., 2023). These studies, conducted across various countries and industries—including the food sector in Portugal, the hospitality sector in Spain and China, and the energy sector in China—consistently found that work passion is positively correlated with voice behavior. However, limited research has explored the relationship between both types of work passion and the dual dimensions of voice behavior—particularly in the context of younger employees in Indonesia. Some findings suggest that obsessive passion may also lead to active work behavior, but its specific impact on voice behavior remains unclear (Astakhova & Ho, 2018; Omorede et al., 2013). Further investigation is thus needed to examine how both forms of passion may differentially contribute to promotive and prohibitive voice, especially among Gen Z employees who are generally characterized by their expressive tendencies (Guan, 2024).

This study aims to examine the influence of harmonious and obsessive work passion on promotive and prohibitive voice behavior among Gen Z employees in Indonesia. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing literature on generational work psychology and offer practical implications for managing young employees' passion and potential for voice in organizational settings. Based on this context, the present study seeks to answer the following research question: How do harmonious and obsessive work passion influence voice behavior among Gen Z workers?. This study aims to examine how different forms of work passion influence employees' willingness to speak up in the workplace. Specifically, it investigates the extent to which harmonious and obsessive passion predict both promotive and prohibitive voice behavior among Gen Z workers. the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Harmonious work passion positively influences promotive voice behavior.
- H2: Harmonious work passion positively influences prohibitive voice behavior.
- H3: Obsessive work passion positively influences promotive voice behavior.
- H4: Obsessive work passion positively influences prohibitive voice behavior.
- H5: Overall work passion positively influences overall voice behavior.

## METHOD

This study employed a non-experimental quantitative approach to examine the influence of work passion on voice behavior among Generation Z employees. The research design was correlational, focusing on five simple linear regression models involving two forms of work passion—harmonious and obsessive—and two types of voice behavior—promotive and prohibitive. The independent variable in this study was work passion, which consisted of two dimensions: harmonious passion and obsessive passion. Harmonious passion is defined as a voluntary and balanced engagement with work, whereas obsessive passion is characterized by a compulsive drive to work that interferes with one's overall life balance. Work passion was measured using the Passion Scale developed by Vallerand (2008), adapted and translated into Indonesian. The scale consists of 14 items, with 7 items for harmonious passion and 7 items for obsessive passion. Reliability analysis showed excellent internal consistency for the harmonious passion subscale (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .88$ , 95% CI [.86, .90]), with item-total correlations ranging from .512 to .648. The obsessive passion subscale also demonstrated acceptable reliability, with Cronbach's alpha of .824 and item-total correlations ranging from .40 to .62.

The dependent variable was voice behavior, which included promotive voice behavior and prohibitive voice behavior. Promotive voice refers to the expression of constructive suggestions for improvement, while prohibitive voice refers to raising concerns about potential problems or risks. Voice behavior was measured using the scale developed by (Liang et al., 2012), which includes 5 items for promotive voice and 5 items for prohibitive voice. The internal consistency of the combined scale was high (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .84$ , 95% CI [.81, .87]). Item-total correlations ranged from .46 to .59 for prohibitive voice and from .58 to .59 for promotive voice, indicating acceptable to good levels of reliability across items. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

The participants in this study were Gen Z employees aged 20 to 30 years working across various industrial sectors in Indonesia through Jakpat app in early 2025. A total of 400 participants were recruited using incidental sampling through an online questionnaire platform, well above the G\*Power recommended minimum respondents of 107. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and all respondents met the inclusion criteria based on age and employment status. Data were analyzed using simple linear regression to assess the direct influence of each form of work passion on voice behavior. Five separate regression models were conducted to test the following relationships: (1) harmonious passion → promotive voice, (2) harmonious passion → prohibitive voice, (3) obsessive passion → promotive voice, and (4) obsessive passion → prohibitive voice, and (5) work passion → voice behavior. The results were interpreted based on standardized beta coefficients ( $\beta$ ) and significance values ( $p < .05$ ).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine how harmonious and obsessive passion predict voice behavior—both promotive and prohibitive—among Gen Z employees. Five linear regression analyses were conducted to test each direct relationship between the predictor and outcome variables.

**Table 1.** Linear Regression Results: Harmonious Passion Predicting Promotive Voice Behavior

Predictor	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	p	95% CI	
						Lower	Upper
(Intercept)	10.370	0.767	-	13.524	<.001	8.863	11.878
Harmonious Passion	0.345	0.027	0.535	12.624	<.001	0.291	0.399

**Model Summary:**

$R = 0.535$ ,  $R^2 = 0.286$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.284$ , RMSE = 2.490

$F(1, 398) = 159.375$ ,  $p < .001$

A linear regression analysis revealed that harmonious passion significantly predicted promotive voice behavior ( $R = .535$ ,  $R^2 = .286$ ,  $F(1, 398) = 159.375$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The standardized coefficient ( $\beta = .535$ ,  $p < .001$ ) indicated that employees with higher harmonious passion are more likely to engage in promotive voice behavior, such as suggesting constructive ideas for organizational improvement.

**Table 2.** Linear Regression Results: Harmonious Passion Predicting Prohibitive Voice Behavior

Predictor	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	p	95% CI	
						Lower	Upper
(Intercept)	11.059	0.777	-	14.231	<.001	9.531	12.586
Harmonious Passion	0.308	0.028	0.487	11.123	<.001	0.254	0.363

**Model Summary:**

$R = 0.487$ ,  $R^2 = 0.237$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.235$ , RMSE = 2.523

$F(1, 398) = 123.720$ ,  $p < .001$

The analysis also showed a significant positive effect of harmonious passion on prohibitive voice behavior ( $R = .487$ ,  $R^2 = .237$ ,  $F(1, 398) = 123.720$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The standardized coefficient ( $\beta = .487$ ,  $p < .001$ ) harmoniously passionate employees not only offer ideas but also speak up against harmful practices.

**Table 3.** Linear Regression Results: Obsessive Passion Predicting Promotive Voice Behavior

Predictor	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	p	95% CI	
						Lower	Upper
(Intercept)	15.198	0.579	-	26.247	<.001	14.055	16.336
Obsessive Passion	0.212	0.025	0.388	8.394	<.001	0.162	0.261

**Model Summary:**

$R = 0.388$ ,  $R^2 = 0.150$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.148$ , RMSE = 2.716

$F(1, 398) = 70.458$ ,  $p < .001$

Obsessive passion also significantly predicted promotive voice behavior, although the strength of the relationship was weaker than that of harmonious passion ( $R = .388$ ,  $R^2 = .150$ ,  $F(1, 398) = 70.458$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The standardized coefficient ( $\beta = .388$ ,  $p < .001$ ) indicates that employees driven by obsessive passion may still engage in promotive voice.

**Table 4.** Linear Regression Results: Obsessive Passion Predicting Prohibitive Voice Behavior

Predictor	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	p	95% CI	
						Lower	Upper
(Intercept)	15.263	0.614	-	24.873	<.001	14.057	16.468
Obsessive Passion	0.196	0.025	0.367	7.877	<.001	0.146	0.245

**Model Summary:**

$R = 0.367$ ,  $R^2 = 0.135$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.132$ , RMSE = 2.750

$F(1, 398) = 62.046$ ,  $p < .001$

The next regression showed that obsessive passion significantly predicted prohibitive voice behavior ( $R = .367$ ,  $R^2 = .135$ ,  $F(1, 398) = 62.046$ ,  $p < .001$ ) with a standardized  $\beta$  of .367. Although the effect was significant, it was smaller in magnitude. These findings imply that even under the influence of obsessive passion, Gen Z employees may voice concerns.

**Table 5.** Linear Regression Results: Total Work Passion Predicting Total Voice Behavior

Predictor	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	p	95% CI	
						Lower	Upper
(Intercept)	25.190	1.181	-	21.336	<.001	22.870	27.510
Work Passion	0.544	0.043	0.544	12.757	<.001	0.460	0.628

**Model Summary:**

$R = 0.544$ ,  $R^2 = 0.296$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.294$ , RMSE = 3.475

$F(1, 398) = 162.761$ ,  $p < .001$

The final regression indicated that the overall voice behavior (promotive and prohibitive combined) also showed a significant correlation with the overall passion (harmonious and obsessive combined) ( $R = .544$ ,  $R^2 = .295$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that both forms of passion, when combined, have a robust association with the tendency to speak up in the workplace. These results clearly answer the research question: How do harmonious and obsessive passion influence voice behavior among Gen Z employees? The findings show that both forms of passion significantly contribute to voice behavior, but harmonious passion exerts a stronger and more consistent influence. These findings suggested that Gen Z was more likely to pursue work as a self-directed, meaningful endeavor rather than one driven by pressure or identity attachment (Soerjoatmodjo, 2025). This is in line with recent findings that emphasize Gen Z's preference for autonomy, purpose, and value alignment in the workplace (Francis & Hoefel, 2018).

This study adds to the growing body of research on Gen Z workers by clarifying the motivational dynamics behind their willingness to voice. This study contributes to the advancement of psychological theory, particularly within Industrial and Organizational Psychology and Emerging Adulthood studies. It highlights the dual role of passion and offers a fresh perspective on how both autonomous and controlled motivational states influence proactive and protective workplace behavior. The study is not without limitations. First, the use of self-reported measures may introduce social desirability bias. However, since the study focused on internal work motivation and perception—constructs that are inherently subjective—self-report was deemed appropriate and

justified. Hence, potential response bias was minimized by ensuring anonymity. Second, although linear regression allows for inference about directional influence, the cross-sectional design limits causal interpretations. Future research could benefit from employing longitudinal or experimental designs to better capture the causal dynamics and temporal development of work passion and voice behavior, especially across different career stages in Gen Z.

## CONCLUSION

The results confirmed all proposed hypotheses, thereby fulfilling the main objective of this study to examine how harmonious and obsessive work passion influence voice behavior among Gen Z workers. This study concludes that harmonious and obsessive work passion significantly influence promotive and prohibitive voice behavior among Gen Z employees in Indonesia. Harmonious passion emerged as a stronger and more consistent predictor across both voice dimensions, indicating that intrinsic, balanced motivation leads to more proactive and constructive workplace expression. Obsessive passion also showed a significant relationship, although with smaller effect sizes, suggesting that a more controlled and rigid drive can still lead to speaking up. These findings affirm the dualistic nature of work passion and its relevance in understanding the voice behavior of younger generations. The findings reinforce the role of autonomous motivation—represented by harmonious passion—in enabling proactive work behaviors such as voice, thereby extending Self-Determination Theory to the context of generational workforce dynamics.

Given these results, future research on Gen Z and organizational behavior should further explore the mechanisms through which different types of work passion operate, particularly in varying cultural contexts and organizational climates. Longitudinal or experimental studies are recommended to establish causal relationships and to examine whether the effects of obsessive passion are sustainable or potentially detrimental over time. Additionally, organizations and leaders are encouraged to cultivate passion through meaningful work design and autonomy-supportive environments, to encourage healthy, consistent voice behavior that benefits both individuals and institutions.

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