

“From Ethical Awareness to Quality Action: Giving Voice to Values, Ethical Voice and Quality Management in Contemporary Organizations – A Secondary-Data Study”

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary organizations increasingly recognize that organizational quality cannot be sustained exclusively through technical procedures, standards and performance measurement. Quality also depends upon organizational culture, ethical leadership, employee participation, responsible decision-making and the willingness of employees to raise concerns when organizational practices deviate from expected standards. In this context, Mary C. Gentile's Giving Voice to Values (GVV) framework provides an important action-oriented approach for understanding how individuals can translate ethical values into organizational action. The present study examines the relationship between Giving Voice to Values, ethical leadership, employee voice, psychological safety and organizational quality through a systematic analysis of secondary data.

The study adopts a qualitative and integrative secondary-data research design. Evidence is drawn from peer-reviewed academic literature, published empirical studies, quality-management frameworks, institutional reports and contemporary organizational evidence. The analysis particularly connects GVV with the quality-management principles of leadership, engagement of people, process orientation, improvement and evidence-based decision-making. ISO's quality-management principles explicitly recognize leadership, engagement of people, improvement and evidence-based decision-making as foundations of quality management.

The findings indicate that ethical voice can function as an important organizational-quality mechanism. Employees who are willing and able to identify problems, communicate ethical concerns and challenge questionable practices can contribute to improved decision quality, process quality, governance quality, information quality and continuous improvement. Evidence from recent research also indicates that ethical leadership is positively associated with ethical voice and that psychological safety can play an important role in enabling employees to speak up.

The paper proposes an integrated GVV–Quality Action Framework, conceptualizing organizational quality as a process in which values awareness is transformed into ethical voice, corrective action and continuous improvement. The study contributes theoretically by connecting the action-oriented GVV perspective with quality management and organizational behaviour, and practically by proposing mechanisms through which organizations can institutionalize ethical voice as part of their quality systems.

Keywords: Giving Voice to Values; Ethical Voice; Quality Management; Ethical Leadership; Psychological Safety; Employee Voice; Organizational Quality.

INTRODUCTION

Organizations operating in the contemporary business environment face a complex combination of economic, technological, social and ethical pressures. Digital transformation, artificial intelligence, big-data analytics, globalization, sustainability requirements and stakeholder expectations have fundamentally changed the nature of organizational decision-making. Managers and employees increasingly make decisions whose

consequences extend beyond immediate financial performance to issues involving privacy, fairness, transparency, sustainability, human rights, workplace dignity and public trust.

Consequently, organizational effectiveness can no longer be evaluated only through conventional financial indicators. Organizations must increasingly demonstrate that their processes, decisions and relationships meet appropriate standards of quality, responsibility and ethical integrity.

The quality movement has traditionally emphasized customer focus, process control, continuous improvement, employee involvement and evidence-based decision-making. ISO's quality-management principles include customer focus, leadership, engagement of people, process approach, improvement, evidence-based decision-making and relationship management.

This creates an important connection between quality management and organizational ethics.

A process may technically comply with an established procedure while still producing an ethically questionable outcome. Similarly, an employee may recognize that a decision threatens quality or violates organizational values but remain silent because of hierarchical pressure, fear of retaliation, lack of confidence or uncertainty about how to communicate the concern.

This problem provides an important entry point for the Giving Voice to Values (GVV) framework.

Mary C. Gentile's GVV approach shifts attention from the traditional question:

“What is the right thing to do?”

towards the practical question:

“How can I effectively act on my values in this situation?”

GVV therefore focuses on the ability of individuals to express and implement values when confronted with organizational pressure or ethical challenges.

The importance of this approach is supported by empirical evidence. Miller, Shawver and Mintz's study of GVV education found that students became more confident and more likely to act when confronted with unethical workplace practices after exposure to the GVV curriculum.

This finding is significant because ethical knowledge alone does not necessarily produce ethical action.

The same principle can be extended to quality management.

If employees identify defective processes, inaccurate information, unsafe practices, inappropriate AI outputs, fraudulent reporting or violations of organizational values, the quality of the organization depends partly upon whether they are willing and able to give voice to those concerns.

Thus, this study proposes that:

Giving Voice to Values can be viewed not only as an ethics framework but also as a potential quality-management mechanism.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Giving Voice to Values:

Giving Voice to Values was developed by Mary C. Gentile as an approach to values-driven leadership and ethical action. Its emphasis is distinctive because it does not focus exclusively on identifying ethical principles.

Instead, it emphasizes preparation for action.

GVV encourages individuals to:

- Identify their values;
- Anticipate objections;
- Construct practical responses;
- Identify stakeholders;
- Develop persuasive arguments;
- Rehearse difficult conversations;
- Identify allies;
- Determine appropriate channels; and
- Act in ways that are consistent with their values.

The framework is therefore particularly relevant to organizations in which employees understand that something is wrong but are uncertain about how to respond. Recent empirical evidence provides support for this action-oriented approach. Miller, Shawver and Mintz found that exposure to GVV cases increased students' confidence and likelihood of acting when encountering unethical practices.

A related study by Shawver and Miller examined values change following a GVV intervention and reported stronger perceptions of the importance of professional values and greater willingness to report concerns about fraudulent financial reporting.

These findings suggest that GVV can potentially influence the transition:

Values → Intention → Voice → Action

The Contemporary Quality Challenge

Quality management has evolved considerably from its earlier concentration on inspection and defect elimination.

Contemporary quality management increasingly emphasizes:

- Leadership;
- Employee involvement;
- Process improvement;
- Customer/stakeholder focus;
- Organizational learning;
- Evidence;
- Transparency;
- Continuous improvement; and
- Organizational excellence.

ISO's quality-management principles explicitly include **leadership, engagement of people, improvement and evidence-based decision-making**.

These principles have a strong conceptual relationship with GVV.

For example:

Engagement of people requires employees to participate in organizational improvement.

Evidence-based decision-making requires employees to communicate accurate information.

Leadership requires managers to create conditions in which employees can raise concerns.

Improvement requires organizations to recognize problems rather than conceal them.

Therefore, a quality system that discourages employees from speaking up may suffer from an important information and learning deficit.

Problem Statement

Organizations commonly establish:

- Codes of conduct;
- Quality-management systems;
- Standard operating procedures;
- Whistleblowing mechanisms;
- Grievance systems;
- Ethics policies;
- Audit mechanisms; and
- Compliance programmes.

However, the existence of these mechanisms does not guarantee that employees will use them.

An employee may observe:

- Inaccurate reporting;
- Defective processes;
- Unethical sales practices;
- Discrimination;
- Data misuse;
- Corruption;
- Safety violations;
- Manipulation of performance indicators; or
- Inappropriate use of artificial intelligence.

Yet the employee may remain silent.

The fundamental problem therefore lies not merely in the **absence of rules**, but in the potential gap between **organizational values and organizational action**.

This study investigates whether Giving Voice to Values can help bridge that gap and contribute to organizational quality.

Research Gap

Three important gaps emerge from the existing literature.

Gap 1: GVV and quality management have largely been examined separately

GVV research primarily addresses ethical action, values and moral behaviour, while quality-management research focuses on processes, improvement, customer satisfaction and organizational performance.

The relationship between these perspectives deserves greater attention.

Gap 2: Ethical voice is frequently treated as an ethical outcome rather than a quality mechanism
Employee voice is often examined in relation to leadership, psychological safety and organizational behaviour.

However, ethical voice can also provide organizations with information about process failures, risks and opportunities for improvement.

Gap 3: Contemporary technologies create new opportunities for GVV

Artificial intelligence and digital transformation create new ethical and quality risks involving:

- Inaccurate information;
- Algorithmic bias;
- Privacy;
- Transparency;
- Misinformation;
- Cybersecurity;
- Automated decision-making; and
- Accountability.

The World Economic Forum's 2025 responsible-AI work highlights transparency, reliability, alignment, privacy, security and fairness as important requirements for responsible AI. These developments make the capacity to **speak up about questionable technology-driven decisions** increasingly important.

Research Objectives

Objective 1

To examine the conceptual and empirical relationship between **Giving Voice to Values and ethical voice behaviour** in contemporary organizations.

Objective 2

To analyse how **ethical leadership and psychological safety** facilitate employees' willingness to express values-based concerns.

Objective 3

To examine how ethical voice contributes to different dimensions of **organizational quality**, including decision quality, process quality, governance quality and continuous improvement.

Objective 4

To develop an integrated **Giving Voice to Values–Quality Management framework** for responsible and sustainable organizational management.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following questions:

- How does Giving Voice to Values influence ethical voice behaviour?
- What role does ethical leadership play in encouraging employees to speak up?
- How does psychological safety affect employees' willingness to give voice to values?
- How can ethical voice contribute to organizational quality?
- How can GVV principles be integrated into contemporary quality-management systems?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study uses a **secondary-data-based qualitative research design**.

No primary questionnaire survey has been conducted for this paper. Therefore, the paper does not claim to generate new respondent-level statistical results.

Instead, it synthesizes existing evidence to develop an integrated theoretical and practical framework.

Sources of Secondary Data

Secondary evidence was obtained from four broad categories.

Category 1: Academic Literature

Peer-reviewed research on:

- Giving Voice to Values;
- Ethical leadership;
- Employee voice;
- Ethical voice;
- Psychological safety;
- Moral courage;
- Organizational ethics; and
- Quality management.

Category 2: Institutional sources

Relevant evidence was drawn from:

- ISO;
- OECD;
- World Economic Forum;
- United Nations Global Compact; and
- quality/excellence organizations.

Category 3: Organizational evidence

Published corporate ethics, sustainability and speak-up disclosures were considered to understand how organizations operationalize employee voice.

For example, United Nations Global Compact reporting provides evidence of organizations using formal and informal mechanisms through which employees can raise concerns, including management, HR, ethics and compliance functions, internal audit and dedicated speak-up channels.

Category 4: Published empirical studies

Recent empirical studies examining:

- Ethical voice;
 - Psychological safety;
 - Ethical leadership;
 - Moral agency; and
-

- Quality/excellence

were incorporated into the synthesis.

Data Analysis Method

The secondary literature was analysed using **thematic content analysis**.

Five major themes were identified:

- Values awareness
- Ethical capability and courage
- Organizational psychological safety
- Ethical voice and action
- Quality and continuous improvement

The relationship between these themes was then examined conceptually.

The resulting analytical chain is:

Values Awareness → Ethical Self-Efficacy → Moral Courage → Ethical Voice → Corrective Action → Quality Improvement

LITERATURE REVIEW

Giving Voice to Values

GVV represents an important development in business ethics education because it emphasizes practical implementation rather than ethical analysis alone.

The empirical study by Miller, Shawver and Mintz is particularly relevant. Their research examined students who encountered workplace ethical dilemmas before and after exposure to GVV cases. The authors found increased confidence and a greater likelihood of acting when confronted with unethical workplace practices.

This evidence suggests that ethical action can be developed through structured preparation and practice.

Ethical Leadership and Ethical Voice

Leadership has a major influence on whether employees believe that speaking up is appropriate and safe.

Recent research examining ethical leadership and ethical voice found a significant relationship between ethical leadership and ethical voice, with psychological safety and other psychological mechanisms playing mediating roles.

This finding has direct relevance to quality management.

If leaders respond positively to employee concerns, employees may be more willing to identify:

- Process failures;
- Quality defects;
- Ethical risks;
- Customer complaints;
- Inaccurate information; and
- Compliance weaknesses.

Thus: Ethical leadership creates the social conditions in which quality-related voice can emerge.

Psychological Safety

Psychological safety refers broadly to an environment in which individuals feel able to express concerns, questions and ideas without fear of interpersonal punishment or humiliation.

It is particularly relevant to GVV because ethical voice inherently involves some degree of interpersonal risk.

Research published in *Frontiers in Public Health* examined psychological safety, employee voice behaviour and safety practices and identified meaningful relationships among these variables.

Similarly, research published in the *Journal of Business Ethics* has examined the roles of ethical leadership, moral potency and psychological safety in generating employees' willingness to report counterproductive behaviour.

These studies support the proposition that ethical courage alone may not be sufficient.

An employee can possess strong ethical values but remain silent if the organizational environment is perceived as threatening.

Therefore:

Moral Courage + Psychological Safety = Greater Potential for Ethical Voice

Ethical Voice as a Quality Mechanism

This study proposes a broader interpretation of employee voice.

Employee voice should not be understood exclusively as an HR or behavioural phenomenon.

It can also be viewed as a **quality-information mechanism**.

Consider an employee who identifies:

- A manufacturing defect;
- An unsafe procedure;
- An inaccurate financial report;
- Misleading advertising;
- Poor customer service;
- Defective software;
- Biased AI output;
- Incorrect data;
- Unethical supplier practices.

If that employee speaks up, the organization obtains information that can potentially prevent:

- Defects;
- Financial loss;
- Reputational damage;
- Legal exposure;
- Customer dissatisfaction;
- Safety incidents; and
- Ethical failures.

Thus, ethical voice can create a form of **early-warning quality system**.

Relationship Between GVV and Quality Management

The connection becomes particularly visible when GVV is compared with ISO quality-management principles.

Quality-management principle	GVV connection
Leadership	Leaders create conditions for values-based action
Engagement of people	Employees participate in identifying problems
Process approach	Employees identify process-level ethical and quality weaknesses
Improvement	Voice generates information for corrective action
Evidence-based decisions	Employees communicate relevant information
Relationship management	Ethical communication builds trust
Customer focus	Speaking up can prevent harm to customers

ISO explicitly identifies these principles as foundations of quality management.

The relationship is therefore not superficial. GVV can potentially strengthen the **human and behavioural infrastructure** of a quality-management system.

Quality Dimensions Emerging from GVV

This study proposes six dimensions of organizational quality.

Decision Quality

Ethical voice enables employees to question assumptions and provide information that decision-makers may not otherwise receive.

Therefore:

More relevant information → better deliberation → better decisions.

Process Quality

Employees often have direct knowledge of operational problems.

GVV can encourage them to identify:

- Inefficient processes;
- Procedural contradictions;
- Quality defects;
- Safety risks; and
- Unethical workarounds.

This can support continuous improvement.

Information Quality

Contemporary organizations increasingly depend on data.

If employees are afraid to challenge inaccurate information, poor data may move through the organizational hierarchy unchecked.

Ethical voice therefore contributes to:

- Accuracy;
- Transparency;
- Completeness;
- Reliability; and
- Accountability of information.

Governance Quality

Ethical voice strengthens organizational accountability.

Employees can act as internal sources of information regarding:

- Misconduct;
- Conflicts of interest;
- Corruption;
- Policy violations;
- Reporting manipulation; and
- Governance weaknesses.

Workplace Quality

A psychologically safe organization may create a better working environment because employees can communicate concerns constructively.

Thus GVV can contribute indirectly to:

- Trust;
- Engagement;
- Inclusion;
- Organizational learning; and
- Employee participation.

Sustainability Quality

Modern organizational quality increasingly involves sustainability.

Ethical voice can help employees challenge decisions that create:

- Environmental harm;
- Social risks;
- Supply-chain abuses;
- Misleading sustainability claims; or
- Stakeholder harm.

Secondary Evidence from Organizational Practice

Institutional and organizational disclosures provide practical evidence that speak-up mechanisms are becoming part of organizational ethics and governance.

United Nations Global Compact reporting describes organizations establishing multiple channels through which employees can raise concerns, including management, HR, ethics and compliance, internal audit and employee representatives. Some organizations also use external confidential reporting systems and non-retaliation policies.

More recent UN Global Compact case material illustrates how ethics training, awareness initiatives, enterprise risk management and institutionalized whistleblowing mechanisms can operate together. One reported case describes ethics and anti-corruption training, risk matrices, internal audits and confidential speak-up mechanisms supported by non-retaliation policies.

These examples demonstrate that values-based voice is not merely an abstract academic concept.

It can become part of:

Ethics + Risk Management + Governance + Quality Improvement.

Giving Voice to Values and Artificial Intelligence

The contemporary relevance of GVV becomes particularly strong in the context of artificial intelligence.

AI systems may create problems involving:

- Biased outputs;
- Hallucinated information;
- Privacy;
- Surveillance;
- Discrimination;
- Lack of transparency;
- Accountability;
- Inappropriate automation;
- Misinformation; and
- Inaccurate decision-making.

The World Economic Forum's recent responsible-AI work emphasizes the importance of transparency, reliability, alignment, privacy, security and fairness.

The organization therefore needs employees who can say:

“This AI-generated result should not be accepted without verification.”

or:

“This automated decision may create an unfair outcome.”

Such behaviour represents a contemporary form of **Giving Voice to Values**.

It is also a form of **quality control**.

Therefore:

Responsible AI requires ethical voice + quality assurance + human oversight.**Proposed GVV–Quality Action Framework**

Based on the secondary evidence, this study proposes the following framework:

Stage 1: Values Awareness

Employees recognize:

- Ethical issues;
- Stakeholder consequences;
- Quality risks;
- Inconsistencies between stated and actual organizational values.

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Stage 2: Ethical Self-Efficacy

Employees develop confidence that they can respond constructively.

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Stage 3: Moral Courage

Employees become willing to act despite potential discomfort or resistance.

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Stage 4: Psychological Safety

The organizational environment reduces perceived interpersonal risk.

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Stage 5: Ethical Voice

Employees communicate concerns, alternatives and recommendations.

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Stage 6: Corrective Action

Managers investigate, respond and implement appropriate changes.

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Stage 7: Quality Improvement

The organization improves:

- Processes;
- Decisions;
- Governance;
- Information;
- Customer outcomes; and

- Organizational learning.

The GVV-Quality Model

The proposed model can therefore be represented as:

Ethical Awareness

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Ethical Self-Efficacy

↓

Moral Courage

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Ethical Voice

↑

Psychological Safety

↑

Ethical Leadership

↓

Corrective/Responsible Action

↓

Organizational Quality

↓

Continuous Improvement & Sustainable Performance

This model integrates the individual, interpersonal and organizational levels of analysis.

Propositions Derived from Secondary Evidence

Because this paper uses secondary data rather than primary survey data, the relationships are presented as **research propositions**, rather than fabricated statistical hypotheses.

Proposition 1

Higher ethical awareness is likely to increase the potential for values-based voice.

Proposition 2

Ethical self-efficacy is likely to facilitate the transition from ethical awareness to ethical action.

Proposition 3

Moral courage is likely to strengthen employees' willingness to express ethical concerns.

Proposition 4

Psychological safety is likely to strengthen the relationship between ethical capability and ethical voice.

Proposition 5

Ethical leadership is likely to create organizational conditions favourable to ethical voice.

Proposition 6

Ethical voice can contribute to organizational quality by identifying problems, improving information flows and supporting corrective action.

Proposition 7

GVV-based organizational practices can potentially strengthen continuous improvement by institutionalizing employee participation in identifying ethical and quality-related problems.

DECISION

The secondary evidence indicates that GVV should not be restricted to traditional business-ethics education.

Its principles have implications for organizational quality.

Traditional quality management often asks:

“How can we reduce defects?”

GVV introduces another question:

“Will employees speak up when they see a defect or ethical problem?”

This distinction is important.

An organization may possess sophisticated quality systems but still experience failures if employees conceal problems.

Therefore, quality is partly dependent upon the organization's ability to obtain **truthful upward information**.

The relationship can be expressed as:

Quality System + Employee Voice = Stronger Organizational Learning

Whereas:

Quality System – Employee Voice = Risk of Hidden Problems

Ethical Voice and Continuous Improvement Continuous improvement depends upon identifying deviations from desired performance.

Employees are often closest to organizational processes and may therefore be among the first to identify emerging problems.

However, identifying a problem is not sufficient.

The employee must:

- Recognize it;
- Consider its significance;
- Decide to speak;
- Determine how to speak;
- Communicate effectively;
- Receive an appropriate response; and
- Participate in corrective action where appropriate.

GVV directly addresses several of these steps.

Consequently, GVV may be viewed as a **behavioural complement to quality-management systems**.

Implications for Total Quality Management

The relationship between GVV and TQM is particularly significant.

TQM emphasizes:

- Customer focus;
- Employee involvement;
- Continuous improvement;
- Process orientation;
- Leadership;
- Fact-based management; and
- Organizational learning.

GVV complements these principles by adding:

- Ethical awareness;
- Moral courage;
- Values-based communication;
- Preparation for difficult conversations;
- Constructive dissent; and
- Responsible action.

Thus, this study proposes:

TQM provides the organizational architecture for quality, while GVV can strengthen the behavioural capacity to speak about quality and ethical problems within that architecture.

Implications for Managers

Managers should not treat employee voice solely as a complaint-management issue.

Instead, it should be incorporated into organizational quality systems.

Recommendation 1: Introduce GVV-based ethics training

Employees should practice realistic scenarios involving:

- Fraud;
- Quality failures;
- Customer harm;
- AI misuse;
- Data problems;
- Discrimination;
- Conflicts of interest.

Recommendation 2: Develop psychological safety

Managers should explicitly communicate:

“Raising a legitimate concern will not itself be treated as disloyal behaviour.”

Recommendation 3: Integrate ethical voice with quality systems

Speak-up mechanisms should be connected to:

- Internal audit;
- Quality assurance;
- Risk management;
- Compliance;
- Governance; and
- Continuous improvement.

Recommendation 4: Protect employees from retaliation

A speak-up mechanism will be ineffective if employees believe that reporting problems will damage their careers.

Recommendation 5: Close the feedback loop

Employees should receive information about what happened after a legitimate concern was raised.

This increases trust in the system.

Implications for Higher Education and MBA Education

The findings are particularly relevant for management education.

Business schools traditionally teach: strategic management;

- Finance;
- Marketing;
- Operations;
- HR;
- Quality management; and
- Business ethics.

GVV provides an opportunity to integrate these subjects.

MBA students can be presented with scenarios such as:

“You discover that your company's quality report has been deliberately altered before submission to a major customer. What would you do?”

Rather than simply asking whether the behaviour is ethical, students can be asked:

- Who should you approach?
- What objections might you face?
- What evidence do you need?
- How can you communicate your concern?
- Who could support you?
- What alternative solution can you propose?
- How can you protect the customer and the organization?

This is the practical strength of GVV.

Empirical research on GVV education has already found increased confidence and willingness to act after students were exposed to GVV cases.

Implications for Indian Organizations

The proposed framework has particular relevance for Indian organizations because many organizations operate within hierarchical structures where employees may hesitate to challenge senior decision-makers.

The framework can be applied in:

- Public-sector organizations;
- Universities;
- Banks;
- Manufacturing companies;
- Healthcare institutions;
- IT companies;
- Start-ups;
- Government organizations; and
- Multinational corporations.

The focus should not simply be on creating whistleblowing policies.

Organizations should create a broader culture of:

“Speak up to improve.”

This changes the perception of employee voice from an act of disloyalty to an act of organizational responsibility.

Quality as an Ethical Outcome

A major theoretical contribution of this paper is the proposition that **quality itself has an ethical dimension**.

Poor quality can cause:

- Customer harm;
- Financial loss;
- Safety problems;
- Misinformation;
- Reputational damage;
- Environmental consequences; and
- Social harm.

Therefore:

Ethical behaviour is not external to quality management; ethical behaviour can be one of the conditions through which quality is produced and sustained.

This is consistent with the broader quality literature's emphasis on leadership, employee engagement and continuous improvement. ISO identifies leadership and engagement of people as central quality-management principles.

Organizational Excellence

The relationship also extends to organizational excellence.

Contemporary excellence frameworks emphasize leadership, organizational culture, stakeholder orientation, transformation and sustainable results.

EFQM-related quality literature similarly emphasizes leadership, values, ethics, strategy, stakeholder expectations and organizational improvement.

This reinforces the argument that values and quality should not be treated as separate organizational systems.

Instead:

Values → Behaviour → Processes → Quality → Stakeholder Outcomes

Proposed Management Framework

Organizations can operationalize the framework through seven institutional mechanisms:

Mechanism	Purpose
GVV training	Develop ethical action capability
Speak-up channels	Provide communication mechanisms
Psychological safety	Reduce fear of speaking
Ethical leadership	Model desired behaviour
Non-retaliation policy	Protect employees
Quality integration	Convert voice into improvement
Feedback mechanism	Demonstrate organizational responsiveness

The objective should be to move from:

“We have an ethics policy.” to:

“Our employees know how to act when organizational values and practices conflict.”

Contemporary Relevance: AI, Digitalization and Quality

The importance of the proposed model will increase as organizations rely more heavily on AI and digital

systems. **Contemporary Relevance: AI, Digitalization and Quality**

The World Economic Forum has highlighted the immaturity of responsible-AI implementation and the need for organizations to operationalize responsible AI rather than merely articulate principles.

This creates a new role for employees:

The Ethical Digital Voice

Employees should be able to challenge:

- Questionable algorithms;
- Unreliable AI outputs;
- Privacy risks;
- Biased datasets;
- Inappropriate automation;
- Poor data quality; and
- Misleading digital communications.

GVV can therefore be extended into a framework for **responsible digital quality management**.

Proposed New Concept: Ethical Quality Voice

Based on the literature reviewed, this paper proposes the concept of **Ethical Quality Voice (EQV)**.

Definition

Ethical Quality Voice refers to employees' constructive willingness and capability to communicate concerns, information, alternatives or recommendations when organizational decisions, processes, products or technologies may conflict with ethical values or expected quality standards.

EQV combines two previously related but often separately considered domains:

Ethical Voice + Quality Improvement

Its objective is not simply to expose wrongdoing.

It is also to prevent defects, improve processes and protect stakeholders.

Theoretical Contribution

The study makes four principal theoretical contributions.

First

It extends GVV beyond conventional ethics education into **organizational quality management**.

Second

It conceptualizes ethical voice as an organizational information mechanism.

Third

It connects psychological safety and ethical leadership with quality improvement.

Fourth

It introduces the concept of **Ethical Quality Voice** as a potential future research construct.

Practical Contribution

The proposed framework provides managers with a practical sequence:

Recognize → Prepare → Speak → Act → Improve

This sequence can be incorporated into:

- Ethics training;
- Quality training;
- Leadership development;
- Internal audit;
- Risk management;
- Corporate governance;
- AI governance; and
- MBA curriculum.

LIMITATIONS

The study has several limitations.

First, it relies on secondary evidence and therefore does not generate new respondent-level empirical data.

Second, the studies reviewed use different samples, sectors and methodological approaches.

Third, the proposed GVV–Quality relationships require further empirical testing.

Fourth, organizational culture and national culture may influence employee willingness to speak up.

Fifth, ethical voice does not automatically produce quality improvement. Management must respond constructively to employee concerns.

Therefore:

Voice without response does not guarantee quality improvement.

Future Research Agenda

Future research should empirically test the proposed framework.

A quantitative study could examine:

Ethical Awareness → Ethical Self-Efficacy → Ethical Voice → Quality Performance

with:

Psychological Safety

as a moderator.

A second study could investigate:

Ethical Leadership → Ethical Quality Voice → Continuous Improvement

A third could investigate:

GVV Training → Ethical Self-Efficacy → Ethical Voice → Quality Outcomes

A fourth could investigate:

GVV + AI Governance → Responsible AI Quality

These studies could use primary survey data, longitudinal designs, experimental interventions or multi-source organizational data.

CONCLUSION

The present secondary-data study argues that Giving Voice to Values should be understood not merely as an ethics framework but as a potentially important component of organizational quality management.

Contemporary organizations require employees who can identify ethical and quality-related problems, communicate concerns and participate constructively in corrective action.

The reviewed evidence indicates that ethical leadership and psychological safety can facilitate ethical voice, while GVV provides an action-oriented framework for developing employees' confidence and capability to act on their values.

At the same time, quality-management principles emphasize leadership, engagement of people, improvement and evidence-based decision-making.

These perspectives are therefore complementary.

The principal argument of this paper can be summarized as:

Organizational quality improves when employees are empowered not only to perform their assigned tasks but also to speak when values, quality standards or stakeholder interests are at risk.

The proposed **GVV–Quality Action Framework** provides a pathway:

Ethical Awareness → Ethical Self-Efficacy → Moral Courage → Psychological Safety → Ethical Voice → Corrective Action → Quality Improvement → Sustainable Organizational Performance.

In an environment increasingly shaped by AI, digital transformation, ESG expectations and stakeholder scrutiny, organizations need more than compliance systems. They need people who are willing and capable of **giving voice to values**.

Consequently, the future of quality management may depend not only on better processes and technologies but also on creating organizational cultures in which employees can confidently say:

“I see a problem, I understand why it matters, I know how to raise it, and I am prepared to act constructively.”

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