

On Passion & Sustainable Leadership: Personal & Organizational Outcomes in India

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The study aims to elicit a process model to enhance the understanding of the relationship between work passion and the fourth dimension of burnout i.e. organizational cynicism. It explains the mediating role of perceived sustainable leadership and psychological well-being in the process model. A survey of 232 employees working in diverse industries in India was conducted. Structural equation modeling was performed to test the anticipated process model of work passion. The findings reveal that the hypothesized relationship between work passion and turnover intention was supported. Sustainable leadership partially mediates between passion and cynicism and acts as an inhibitor toward cynicism. On the contrary, cynicism partially mediates between sustainable leadership and turnover intention and acts as a facilitator.

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Introduction

Today's business leaders must know to navigate the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity in a sustainable manner. Moreover with changing environment sustainability has been gaining ground and prominence generating intense emotions (Huy, 2002; Kiefer, 2004) which again require more sustained management practices like corporate social responsibility. This is in conformity with the practice of Indian Government that imposes statutory enforcement on all companies to spend two percent of their average net profit on social responsibilities. Lack of sustainability practices along with poor leadership may even create the cynicism in the environment (Andersson, 1996; Benn et al., 2014). Additionally, it may influence disenchantment within employees leading to increase in intention to quit (Cropanzano et al., 2003). To mitigate such negative outcomes initiative has to be accentuated by right set of leadership approach. The change coincides with vivified passions (Shrivastava et al., 2012) which are reflected in the form of intense emotions. In this pretext passion seems to be more relevant which directly

pertains to the understanding of human sustainability that is thriving at work (Spreitzer et al., 2012). However, association between passion and leadership that is manifested in Sustainable Leadership (SL) form is empirically missing from the extant literature although traces show the manner in which passion can turn the brief into reality indicating the role of sustainability leadership in accentuating the relationship between the passion and cynicism (Davies, 2008). In this paper, we start looking into this apparent gap and develop a process model showing relationship between work passion and the ensued consequence like intention to quit which is further mediated through perceived SL and organizational cynicism.

Passion & Turnover Intention

The dualistic model of passion (DMP) as proposed by Vallerand and his colleague (2003; 2006; 2007; 2008) have defined passion in line with Self-determination Theory (SDT) which says that people may invest considerably in an activity not only to various degrees – a quantifiable aspect – but also in one of two ways – a qualitative aspect in which passion may be either harmonious or obsessive (Deci & Ryan, 1985; 2000). Harmonious Passion (HP) is characterized by intense psychological investment in a passionate activity which autonomously gets internalized, thereby establishing harmony with environment. Contrastingly, obsessive passion (OP) in turn involves a person in an intense activity wherein he is compelled to do so owing to internal and external pressures. This yields

overbearing to be taken on individual's performing the activity, thereby losing balance with the peripheral activities surrounding life (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Vallerand et al., 2003).

Workers who frequently experience depressive symptoms should experience higher levels of turnover intentions

Earlier findings indicate that employees who are experiencing psychological distress consider quitting one's job as a way of coping (Bellavia & Frone, 2005). Thus, workers who frequently experience depressive symptoms should experience higher levels of turnover intentions (TI). As posited, previous findings suggest that OP is related to high psychological distress (Vallerand, 2010), OP should be positively related to TI whereas HP is likely to show negative relation with the latter (Cropanzano et al., 2003). Thus, we arrive at the following hypotheses:

H_{1a}: HP will be negatively related to TI.

H_{1b}: OP will be positively related to TI.

Present Research

The purpose of the present research is to propose and test a model empirically on the role of work passion towards TI with mediating psychological variables like SL and organizational cynicism (OC).

Perceived interpersonal relationship with managers has potential ramifications on affective inferences (Zigarmi & Rob-

erts, 2012). Further, the past research also noted that HP shares a weak relationship with one of the environmental factors i.e. work conflict (Vallerand et al., 2010) which may influence psychological well-being leading to negative affective outcomes. In such pretexts, the role of sustainable leader becomes very essential whose first principle advocates leadership for learning and leadership for caring for and among others (Hargreaves, 2007). Such approach of sustainable leader can intensify their excitement for learning new things solely on the basis of their merit and eventually leading to positive and sustainable psychological well-being and mitigating the effect of mediating variables like role conflict. Conversely, if employees have energy at work but lack opportunities to learn and grow, they are likely to feel stagnated and depleted (Spreitzer et al., 2012) and may experience OP. In such a situation, SL can facilitate by renewing people's energy through growth and development strategy and other enablers too to prevent the occurrence of ill-being as a result of display of OP. Concurrently, psychological devastation can be a probable outcome if the employee's careers live unsustainably through addictive work styles and a failure to find adequate nourishment as far as growth and developments are concerned. This kind of ensued growth and development can be safeguarded by SL without resulting into depletion of energy (Davies, 2007). Further web of relationship i.e. relationship of an individual with superiors, subordinates, co-workers, vendors and society is driven by nature of leadership (Wheatley, 2001). The sustainability in such a web of relation-

ship will ensure sustainability in trust, harmony and ensued commitment thereby mitigating attachment from the workplace manifested in OC (Avery et al., 2008).

The preceding discussion leads the study to offer following propositions:

Hypothesis H_{2a} : SL is directly related to OC.

Hypothesis H_{2b} : SL mediates the relationship between HP and OC

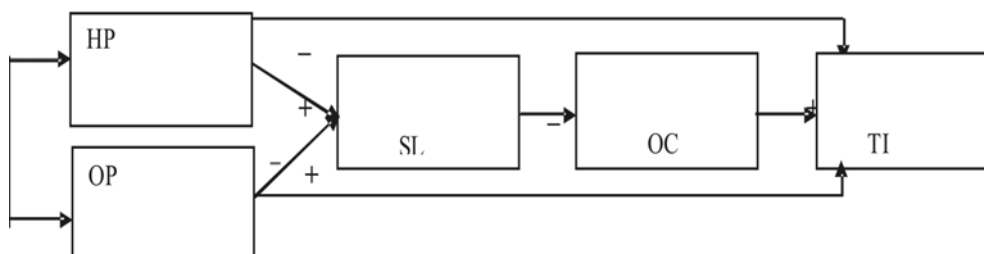
Hypothesis H_{2c} : SL mediates the relationship between OP and OC.

Employees who are cynical feel more disenchanted with their superiors and co-workers and report negative feelings towards their work and their organization. Cynicism has a stronger negative impact on employee through emotional exhaustion and consequently results into fatigue and burnout (Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003). As a result, Cropanzano et al. (2003) states that emotional exhaustion and employee cynicism would lead to decreased job performance and enhanced intentions that eventually yield turnover. Based on the above arguments, we predict that:

H_{3a} : OC is directly and significantly influencing TI.

With such propositions as a part of the conceptual model it provides an intriguing and trivial nature of intervention which may accentuate or mitigate the organization cynicism. The model is described in Fig 1 which involves postulated antecedent's variables to be harmonious, OP and SL respectively and consequent variable to be TI.

Fig 1 A Conceptual Model of Passion and Personal & Organizational Outcome



Sample

A total of 232 employees participated in the study (56 Women). The sample was mainly concentrated around the age group of 46 years which covers 40% of it ($M_{age}=42.31$, $SD=2.18$). Only 7% were in the lower age group while 4% were in the higher age group. Around 40% of the respondents belong to mid-career stage, and more than 50% belong to banking sector and rest were from manufacturing, shipping, insurance and coal field sector. The majority had an organizational tenure of 7 years in the present organization with engineering degree as their basic education (74%). The work titles vary from executives to general manager for the eight organizations chosen for the present study. This multilevel design constituted different contexts like respondents belong to both private and public sectors of India. Participants working in a variety of highly sustainable organizations (HSO) were being approached to understand their views in general and any ongoing change in their organizations. To ensure that participants had sufficient involvement in an organizational setting, almost all of them were full-time employees with 48 hours of working hour in various industries.

They had 5 years or more work experience that made them eligible for the present study.

Procedure

The present study was part of a larger study on passion. Letters with information about the study, including a link to our web-based questionnaire, were sent by e-mail to HR-executives in different Indian sectors. Banks, insurance, port, education, consulting, manufacturing and power sectors chose to participate in the study. The data collection for this study was done in several sessions over a four months time frame. The HR-executives sent e-mails to their employees, requesting them to participate in the study. The survey exclusively informed that participation solicited will remain voluntary and anonymous, and that all responses will remain confidential, as they would never be sent to those managers, director, or to anyone in their organization. Indeed, participants were asked to hand over their completed questionnaire in a sealed envelope.

Measures

All the measures included in the survey had adopted the existing measures.

Work Passion: HP and OP were assessed with the Passion Scale developed by Vallerand *et al.* (2003) with two 6-item subscales. Each item was responded on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*do not agree at all*) to 7 (*completely agree*). A sample item for OP was “I have difficulties controlling my urge to do my work”, while a sample item for HP is “My work is in harmony with other activities in my life”. Results from exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses provided strong support for the bifactorial structure of the scale in a number of life contexts including sports (Vallerand *et al.*, 2006,), gambling (Castelda, Mattson, MacKillop, Anderson & Donovan, 2007; Rousseau, Vallerand, Ratelle, Mageau & Provencher, 2002), and work (Carbonneau *et al.*, 2008; Vallerand & Houliort, 2003).

Participants were also asked to complete four items corresponding to Vallerand and colleagues’ passion criteria (2003). These four items assessed the love towards their job profile, time involvement in their job, the importance of the job, and if their profession was a passion for them. A mean score of four and up on these four items would reveal the level of passion for respective jobs (Vallerand *et al.*, 2003). Using these criteria, the participant’s viewpoints were assessed further on other fronts like SL, OC and TI. Cronbach alphas for HP and OP were .84 and .79 respectively.

OC: OC was measured using a scale developed by Dean *et al.* (1998). This measure consisted of fourteen items and

utilized a five-point response format with *strongly disagree* (1) and *strongly agree* (5) as endpoints. Sample survey included items like 1) I often experience anxiety when I think about my organization 2) I see little similarity between what my organizations say it will do and what it actually does, 3) I exchange “knowing” glances with my coworkers. Alpha for the construct OC was .79.

SL: The instrument used for the study was the sustainability questionnaire developed by McCann and Holt (2011). The measures consisting fifteen items used in this study had applied 5-point Likert scale to rate their perception of sustainability behavior of their leader which are 1) Not at all 2) Once in a while 3) Sometimes 4) Fairly often 5) Frequently if not always. Some of the likely sample items are 1) My leader acts in a sustainable socially responsible manner 2) My leader acts in a sustainable environmentally responsible manner 3) My leader is concerned how sustainability affects employees 4) My leader is concerned how sustainability affects employees you think about yourself and the world. The study showed Cronbach alpha for SL to be .93.

TI: TI measure developed by Nissley *et al.*, (2005) was applied in the present study. It was a 4-item scale asking about job choice. Those were: “In the next few months I intend to leave the organizations,” “In the next few years I intend to leave the organization,” “I occasionally think about leaving this organization,” and “I will leave for other job opportunities,”. Respondents were asked to indicate how

accurately each statement described them. Response options range from (1) “extremely disagree” to (5) “extremely agree”. The internal consistency (Cronbach alpha) was 0.86 in the current study.

Results

The study conducted preliminary analyses to investigate the frequency distributions of the scales. Normality was assessed by kurtosis and skewness tests. Both tests showed distributional normality for the variables used in the SEM analysis, within the range of -1.5 to +1.5. Means, standard deviations, and correlations between the variables are reported in Table 1. Cronbach’s alpha values of all constructs were either equal to or exceeded 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978) meeting the threshold values. In order to find out the mediation effect hypothesized path analysis was performed to assess it. AMOS 20.0 was used to estimate path coefficients and model fit indices. Due to the large

number of items in the model the study created parcels for the passion construct by aggregating the item with largest loading on a factor with the item with the lowest loading (Little, Cunningham, Shahar & Widaman, 2002). The data did not fit the measurement model well whereas the alternative model was suggested and the path analysis revealed best fit of the model to the data: χ^2 (df =170) = 1267.0: NFI > .94, CFI > .95, RMSEA > .07 (Hu & Bentler, 1998). The main benefit of path analyses was that the relations between data become clearer than those obtained by applying regression analyses, since the former takes consideration of the residual variables and the interrelated correlations between endogenous and exogenous variables (Kline, 1998). HP and OP were defined as exogenous variables, while SL, OC and TI were defined as endogenous variables. The OC was placed as an intermediate variable between passion and SL. This made it possible to test for their mediation impact on the effect from passion toward TI at work.

Table 1 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations & Inter-correlations between the Study Variables

Sl. No.	Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1.	HP	5.46	.36	.84				
2.	OP	2.79	.59	.26**	.79			
3.	SL	5.36	.49	.33**	.28*	.93		
4.	OC	2.96	.22	-.24**	.23**	-.26*	.79	
5.	TI	3.85	.48	-.15**	.18***	-.18	.27**	.86

Note. Alpha coefficients on the diagonal. N= 237
 * p < .05. ** p < .01, p***=<.001

Fit indices showed that alternate model had acceptable fit with the data, χ^2 (df = 170) =1267.0: NFI = .94, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .07. Whereas the proposed model showed poor fit χ^2 (df = 168) =324.7: NFI = .87, CFI = .89,

RMSEA = .09, indicating marked decrement in model fit. Inspection of the direct effects in the model showed that HP had a direct negative effect on OC (β = -.14, p < .001). HP had a direct positive effect on SL (β =.43, p < .001). OP, on

the other hand, had no significant effects on the endogenous variable SL. On the contrary it had direct and negative effect on OC ($\beta = .18, p = .002$).

Table 2 Path Coefficients & Hypotheses Decision

Sl. No	Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient (Beta Coefficient)	t-Value	Decision
1.	H_{1a}	HP TI	_____	-3.074	Rejected
2.	H_{1b}	OP TI	_____	4.620	Rejected
3.	H_{2a}	SL OC	-.18***	-2.492	Supported
4.	H_{2b}	HP SL	.39***	5.317	
		SL OC	-.18***	-4.235	Supported
5.	H_{2c}	OP SL	.09	4.027	
		SL OC	-.18**	-4.235	Rejected
6.	H_{3a}	OC TI	.23*	-2.271	Supported

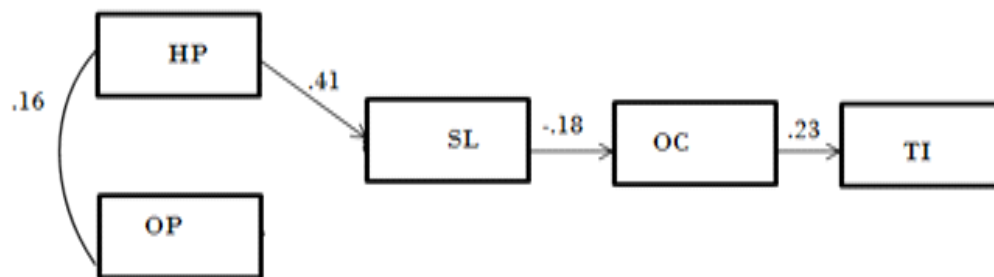
Note: * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The mediation impact of SL and OC in the model was then tested (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Since the path analysis showed that there was an indirect effect of HP and OP towards TI beyond the SL measure, a partial mediation role of SL and OC could be obtained. More pertinently, when the SL construct was eliminated from the model, the direct effect from HP towards TI was $-.15 (p < .000)$. On the contrary, the direct effect from OP towards TI was $.18 (p < .000)$. When SL and OC were added to the process model the effect of DMP on TI turned insignificant, thereby indicating complete mediation from the intermediate variables

in the model. The indirect effect of SL at work on the effect from HP and towards OC was $-.16 (p < .02)$. That is, due to the indirect (mediated) effect of SL and OC, when SL goes up by 1 standard deviation, OC goes down by $-.16$ standard deviation. This is in addition to any direct (unmediated) effect in the model. To further validate the results of the present study, another alternative path within the model was tested. The results of path analysis revealed poor fit of the proposed model to the data as output measured in χ^2 marked as insignificant with degree of freedom 168, hence indicating a worst fit model than for the proposed model.

Fig 2 Structural Equation Model Involving HP, OP, SL, OC and TI.

All shown paths significant on the .01-level. Non-significant paths are omitted from the figure.



Discussion

The primary purpose of the present research was to examine the postulated model on the role of passion in explaining TI through a process mediated by variables like SL and OC. Secondly, mediated role played by SL and OC in the process of passion was supposed to be investigated. Majority of the findings in the present study were in line with the assumptions held in the present study. Firstly, and in accordance with previous studies (Carbonneau et al., 2009; Vallerand et al., 2010; Stoeberl et al., 2011) the study found that work passion had a dual repercussion towards the TI. The proposed model as represented in fig. 2 posited that OP facilitated burnout while HP prevented its occurrence when mediated by SL between work and OC. Secondly, the leadership approach which was supposedly sustainable and ethical in nature mediated the relationship between HP and POC partially. Thirdly, while HP was positively related to SL, OP was negatively related to the matter. Even-

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Passion & TI Relationship

Consistent with the earlier research (Houlihan et al., 2012) and as hypothesized, the relationship between HP and TI is negative whereas the relationship between OP and TI is positive as illustrated in Table 3. The path coefficients represented by SEM confirm that there exists an indirect path between passion and TI when mediated through OC. It implies that the employees with OP will demonstrate persistent negative feelings and disenchantment that may create additional harmful consequence like intention to quit. On the contrary, the employees with HP will constantly show positive feelings that reduce the opportunity to quit. Moreover, the relationship between HP and TI gets fortified with the intervention of SL and OC.

Table 3: Test Results of Mediation Effect

Sl. No.	Direct Path without Mediation	Path with Mediation	Coefficients**	Std. Err	Confirmed (Effect)
1.	HP OC(-.244***) OP OC(.228**)	HP SL	.28***	.081	Yes (Partial)
		SL OC	-.26**	.044	
		HP OC	-.16*	.059	Yes (Partial)
		OP SL	-.12*	.061	
		SL OC	.26**	.045	
2.	HP TI(-.15**) OP TI(.18***)	OP OC	.21**	.044	Yes (Full)
		OC TI	.27***	.032	
		HP TI	-.06	.067	
		OP TI	.03	.048	

Note: * p = < .05. ** p = < .01, p***=<.001

Mediating Role of SL in Process Model

Employees driven by passion were consistently seen to have tendency to thrive at work (Schaufeli, 2013) instead of showing overt negative feelings which supposedly orient towards burnout syndrome. Instead of inflicting controlled motivation the leadership style which is sustainable promoting triple bottom line measuring economic, social and environmental contribution can generate autonomous intrinsic motivation of employees thereby facilitating internal autonomous orientation as posited by Spehar et al. (2016). The continued intense effort of an employee is renewed and released through an edifice of confidence, trust, and happiness facilitated by sustainable leader (Hargreaves & Fink, 2008). Thus occurrence of OC can be prevented with the support of SL style as they either add learning to vitality of passionate employees or help them to design and implement the perpetual change to renew themselves. Otherwise, their health and performance are likely to suffer (Spreitzer et al, 2012). Furthermore, the sustainable leader created an environment for employees where they can be retrained to undergo through OP which has much debilitating effect on employees' psycho-

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logical well-being. With SL the sustainable job is ensured enthusing employees to work for organization which can survive through volatile business cycles with reduced employment anxiety (McCann & Holt, 2010). Subsequently, the reduced cynicism can be realized. With the intervention of SL the relationship between work passion and OC did not become insignificant which imparted understanding of a partial mediation. The R2 was twenty five percent which indicated that psychological contract could be envisaged as the other mediating variables in order to strengthen the explanatory power of independent variables towards the dependent variable. The test has unfolded the reasonable understanding that the symbolic value that could outweigh the instrumental value is capable enough to reduce the reciprocal behavior i.e. cynicism thereby mitigating its considerable effect on TI (Ducheyene, 2017).

The Mediating Role of OC in Process Model

The study is in harmony with the earlier research showing positive relationship between OC and TI (Bedeian, 2007) and complements the research studies unearthed by Vallerand et al., (2010a or 2010b) in defining the process model of passion wherein they ignored the significance of the fourth dimension of burnout i.e. OC. As per the SEM's result it can be inferred that there exists a direct path showing profound effect of cynicism over intention. As hypothesized the results eventually have supported the relationship between the former and latter showing unprecedented and unexplored meta-

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analysis of cynicism. It reveals that potential antecedent's of cynicism can be SL and work passion and the consequent's variable to be TI which is envisaged to be potential indicator of turnover. Thus it becomes a prerequisite to exhibit HP towards one's work in order to un-thwart the process towards OC. The latter may become inevitable due to the overwhelming presence of OP.

Implications

The findings tremendously contribute to the four bodies of knowledge: WP, OC, SL and TI. The entire integrated model of passion and TI with partial mediating effects of SL and OC make crystal inroads into positive psychology that believes in well-being and happiness. The higher mean value of SL in the present study indicates that the existence is not far ahead to the expectation in the Indian context which is quite contrary to the earlier research (Kalkavan, 2015; McCann & Holt, 2011) thereby plugging the research gap in the earlier research. Besides that, operationalization of SL has been apparent in this study unlike the scarcity of the previous study in this discipline. The psychological contract should be another dimension to be explored in the process model which is not only emphasized by sustainable leader covertly (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2016), however it ensures psychological well-being also.

Consequently, the potential explanatory power of the duo towards OC can be increased and it may prevent the latter's occurrence remarkably.

Candidates showing disposable behavior like HP should be given preference over candidates having overwhelming scores of OP during hiring process. This may avoid persistent negative feeling arising due to negative disposable behavior that further pose debiting effect on the performance of the organization.

This research has opened up new set of meta-analysis of cynicism which was never tested earlier although the consequence of cynicism has been tested enormously in different contexts compounded with results across different control measures. The counter-productive behavior like cynicism will increase the likelihood of greater intention to quit if HP is exerted frequently and mediated by relatively higher SL.

Limitations & Future Research

Similar to any other studies, the effort towards this study should be considered in the light of its limitations. The noticeable limitations can be illustrated. Firstly, although the study has outlined some causal relationships based on theoretical elaborations, the cross-sectional nature of our study restricts the conclusions regarding the generalization of the causes and outcomes as well as to a specific industry. Additional longitudinal and experimental designs are necessary to draw any inferences regarding the causality suggested in the model. Moreover,

given that cynicism is assumed to be dynamic, diachronic studies, in particular, will be necessary to determine how levels of cynicism vary from day to day and are linked to specific precipitating events. Secondly, self-reported survey questionnaires, as employed in our study, make it difficult to rule out numerous alternative explanations for the results (i.e., priming, consistency, reverse causality). Future research would benefit from other methods of data collection (e.g., qualitative interviews) to confirm the pattern of relationships observed in the current study and should test by collecting sample across various nations and cross-culture. It provides a leeway to future research in terms of meta-analysis involving the antecedents and consequences of cynicism to be different from previous research.

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