

# **Linking Passion to Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Employee Performance: The Mediating Role of Work Engagement**

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## **Abstract**

Although a good deal of attention has been focused in understanding the impact of passion in non-work related activities (e.g. sports, romance etc), but little research examines its impact in the organizational work context. This study plugs these knowledge gaps; specifically our purpose is to empirically investigate the impact of harmonious passion on employee performance via work engagement. Through a questionnaire based survey from 210 full time permanent employees and 27 managers of a large commercial bank of Pakistan and statistical analysis utilizing SPSS and AMOS, the paper reveals that the employees, who are harmoniously passionate about their work, are more effective in both task and non-task related performance and in creating a conducive environment for efficient and effective functioning of the organization. Moreover, these relationships are mediated by work engagement. The paper contributes to the literature by advancing the role of passion and the intervening mechanism in work related activities.

**Keywords:** harmonious passion, OCB, work engagement, employee performance.

## **1. Introduction**

The improvement in employees' performance has been a vital issue for managers and organizations. Along with task performance, scholars regularly take interest in a meticulous behavior (care prompted by conscience) of employees, which yields the maximum productivity for them, commonly recognized as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) - a behavior of individuals, which is optional and not admitted for prescribed reward

structure as a whole. OCB prop up the effective and efficient operations of the organization (Organ, 1988). There is an implied understanding in the prior literature that job passion is a precious quality that organizations should build within employees which, in turn, is vital for the employee performance (Ho et al., 2011). They also noted that impact of passion with performance has been studied in a few studies but other individual behaviors e.g. OCB, absenteeism, and turnover etc. have largely been ignored. Overall, we still believe that we need much more research to link job passion directly or indirectly with performance in organizational context.

Passion has been a subject of interest for researchers but its main focus remains on the non-work activities, e.g. romance, sports, gambling, etc. and only few studies investigated the impact of passion towards work. Harmonious passion (a facet of passion) relates with better work performance, and cognitive absorption (i.e. the experience of immersion and intensity of focus while performing job) primarily mediates this relationship (Ho et al., 2011). Previous studies only examined that the passion is transformed through the cognition of the individual and, therefore, lacks the link through which this cognition is actually related to and recognized as performance. This raises the question that whether employee's passion links to his/her work engagement which in turn is predictor of both OCB and task related performance.

The concept of *work engagement* is a condition, whereby, employees make investment of their personal self, emotional connections and energies during performance of their work role (Kahn, 1990). It is a motivational concept, which encompasses the lively investment of personal resources towards the tasks related with role of the job (Kanfer, 1990; Rich et al. 2010). Engagement relates to performance of the job and exhibits augmented strength over other job attitudes in the performance forecast. It also aligns with task-specific motivation, and equally relates with task as well as contextual performance. The employees who are connected to work, experience greater association with the work tasks. They go extra mile for the task-related objectives, which are entangled with their job description, showing way to elevated task performance.

Passion is a strong tendency towards an activity, which is the task to whom the individual is passionate about. In work context, it is a job attitude related with the physical, emotional and cognitive aspects of work engagement - a motivational mechanism for allocating personal resources towards the task. The individuals who are more focused on the three aspects of their work task, their work engagement is also likely to be positively related with job performance. Individuals who invest their personal selves into their work role are presumed to conceive a broader idea of that role and resultantly cross the prescribed limits to facilitate people as well as the organization at large (Kahn, 1990). The prior research, though informs that passion relates to the employee work performance, however it does not explain the mechanism of how the passion is transformed into work performance. Further examination on how the impact of passion helps in creating a conducive work environment is warranted. Therefore, this study aims at explaining the direct roles of harmonious passion and work engagement in predicting employee's OCB and performance. Further, it also contributes by offering a mechanism through which the harmonious passion is translated into work place, OCB as well as task performance.

## 2. Theory and Hypotheses

### 2.1 Passion in Work Context

The concept of passion towards activities is derived partially from the *theory of self-determination* (Deci & Ryan, 1985). This theory describes motivational role of psychological needs in development and growth of a person. It further elaborates that for the purpose of psychological growth people require to satiate their basic psychological requirements of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In this manner, people interact with the surroundings and engage in events to fulfill these needs and develop a sense of self i.e. central human inclination towards upper-order organization. As a result of this interaction with environment, the elements from the environment are internalized and the self becomes composite with the passage of time. In pursuance of the idea of internalization, Vallerand and Houlfort (2003) proposed a *dualistic model of passion* in the work context and defined *passion* as a strong inclination towards an activity that individuals like (or even love), that they find important, in which they invest time and energy. They extend the self-determination theory by suggesting that an enjoyable activity and to which they are connected regularly internalizes in a manner that they value it high. The dualistic model of passion further envisages two different kinds of passion that includes obsessive passion and harmonious passion.

The *obsessive passion* is a controlled internalization of the activity into one's identity. It results from internal or external pressures like sense of social recognition or self-respect. The individual feels a wild urge to connect with the passionate activity; therefore it ultimately acquires out of proportion space in the individual's personality and creates conflict with other life activities. Subsequently at the conclusion of that particular job the individual's feelings are negative. The rigid persistence arises not only in absence of affirmative feelings, but also at the personal costs of damaged relationship and failed work commitments (Vallerand et al., 2007).

*Harmonious passion* on the other hand is an independent internalization of the activity into the person's identity. It crop ups where the individuals accept activity as significant to them with no contingency annexed. They engage in the job with a motivational force and create a feeling of preference and own approval for tracking the activity. They also find it important and significant to them. In the state of harmonious passion the individual incorporates authentic self to play, which leads to his or her full contribution in the passionate activity as well as other obligations of life with a candidness and favorable positive experiences (Hodgins & Knee, 2002).

In comparison with obsessive passion, the harmonious passion has greater positive affect instead of negative affect and guides the individual to connect with the activity in a flexible way with improved attention, assimilation, flow and with a feeling of immersion in the activity. Harmonious passion contributes positive affect even where the individual is stopped from connecting in the passionate activity (Vallerand et al., 2007). The cognitive state of absorption and attention are the consequences of passion (Mageau et al., 2005; Vallerand & Houlfort, 2003).

### 2.2 Harmonious Passion and Work Engagement

Passion is the tendency of an individual to do a job that is interesting, loveable, and important, thereby feeling attached with that job (Vallerand et al., 2003). Harmonious passion, "results from an autonomous internalization of the activity into the person's

identity". This autonomous internalization stems from freedom with which individuals choose an activity that is important for them without any associated contingency (Vallerand et al., 2007). Such internalization originates from individuals' inherent inclination of the self and motivates them to engage with the activity willingly (Ryan & Deci, 2003).

Harmonious passion positively relates with improved attention, assimilation, flow and with a feeling of immersion in the activity (Ho et al., 2011). It provides energy to have extensive and tiresome practice sessions, which in turn results in greater level of achievements. A strong input of harmonious passion in an activity is manifested in the committed involvement of the individual in a skilled way and it positively relates to absorption, stream, and positive affect during task execution (Vallerand et al., 2007). Work engagement measures vary in the amount of energy and dedication towards the job across individuals. It is a condition, whereby employees make an investment of their personal self, emotional connections and energies during performance of their work role (Kahn, 1990). It implies that job roles encompass prospects for individuals and they can express themselves energetically and behaviorally in a comprehensive and concurrent manner. Therefore, work engagement envisages emotional, cognitive and physical dimensions and represents more than a single aspect of the self, so that the experience is concurrent and comprehensive (Kahn, 1992; Rich et al., 2010). Forest et al., (2011) argued that harmonious passion satisfies employees' psychological needs that foster affective commitment, psychological well-being and relatedness.

Employees with harmonious passion are expected to engage themselves grossly in the task; they find passionate about. Therefore, transformation of their passion into work engagement (Trépanier et al., 2014) is very likely. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

- **H<sub>1a</sub>**: Harmonious passion positively relates to work engagement.

### *2.3 Harmonious Passion and OCB*

*OCB* refers to a class of pro-organizational behaviors that can neither be enforced on the basis of formal role obligations nor pulled out by conventional agreements of recompense (Organ, 1988). It is the work that goes beyond the formal job description and includes behaviors such as working more than expectations, helping others and getting involved in organizational activities (Organ et al., 2006; Podsakoff et al., 2009). The citizenship behaviors of employees are vital for organizational operations as all managers are unable to foresee the prospects for employee contribution, monitor behavior of all employees, or force employees to go the extra mile for the organization (Burriss et al., 2008).

The empirical research on direct relationship of work passion and OCB is few and far. Recent research attempts to advance and empirically support the relationship between passion and OCB in different contexts. A recent cross cultural study by Burke et al. (2015) exhibited that harmonious passion is positively related with OCB in China, but it has negative relationship with OCB in Russia. In another study, Astakhova (2015) examined the curvilinear relationship between harmonious passion and OCB. She found that harmonious passion and OCB are positively associated up to a certain point, after that high level of harmonious passion is related with decline in OCB. These mix findings explicate that the relationship between harmonious passion and OCB is at early stages and needs further investigation.

None the less, scholars also clearly suggest that harmonious passion could be related with high level of OCB (Ho et al., 2011; Robertson & Barling, 2013). The motivators of OCB

are either traditional i.e. a true desire of an individual to help the organization and his fellow workers (Organ & Ryan, 1995) or the individual's desire to be perceived as good worker and good citizen, which is a feature of impression management motivators (Rosenfeld et al., 1995). Therefore, the performance of OCB may be an attempt on the part of those individuals to influence the interpersonal relationships and create a good image of them. Individuals with high harmonious passion possess strong interpersonal relationships with their colleagues (Philippe et al. 2010), and are better able to assess their needs and ultimately willing to help them. Individuals with such type of passion have higher self-esteem (Birkeland & Buch, 2015) and they show extra role behavior to fulfill this need. According to Philippe et al. (2010) harmoniously passionate employees should have strong interpersonal relations with co-workers and should be able to help their fellows and organization. In other words, harmoniously passionate employees plow their own satisfaction and enjoyment through their participation in organizational decisions and helping others. Therefore, we expect that employees with harmonious passion may have surplus resources to reinvest and have more time and spirit to involve in extra role behaviors.

➤ **H1b:** Harmonious passion positively relates to employee's OCB.

#### *2.4 Harmonious Passion and Employee Performance*

*Employee performance* is defined as actions specified and required by an employee's job description and subsequently commended, evaluated, and rewarded by the employing organization. It is the adeptness of the employees to perform their work activities and their work roles which becomes an essential basis of variation in job performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994). An employee performance can be gauged from the efficiency and effectiveness with which the individual performs obligations of the job (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997).

The individuals who have, passion for an activity are driven to devote themselves completely to that activity, and they keep on striving despite of obstacles in their way, and ultimately they achieve excellence (Vallerand et al., 2007). The true integrating self is at play with harmonious passion, which allows the person to contribute fully towards the passionate activity as well as other activities of life in an honest and beneficial manner to enjoy good experiences (Hodgins & Knee, 2002). Harmonious passion provides energy to have extensive and tiresome practice sessions, which in turn attain high levels of performance. Further, passion creates energy and provides goals for engagement and also influence performance (Vallerand et al., 2007). Research highlights the need to investigate the relationship between work passion and employee performance (Ho et al., 2011).

Harmonious passion induces a process, which is obviously focused on task attainment (Dweck, 1986). It also positively relates to attention, flow, and affirmative affect during execution of the task. Harmonious passion directs the process of adaptive achievement described by absorption and flow during task execution (Mageau et al., 2005; Vallerand et al., 2003). Recently, Burke et al. (2015) found that harmonious passion is positively related with job performance. Similarly, Astakhova and Porter (2015) found a positive relationship between both types of work passion and job performance.

Harmonious passion, being an internalized activity, derives from inner motivation and personal endorsement that one obtains from an action. According to Deci and Ryan (2000, p. 227) "most contemporary theories of motivation assume that people initiate and persist

at behaviors to the extent that they believe the behaviors will lead to desired outcomes or goals'. Self-determination theory can help us explain the relationship between harmonious passion and employee performance. Individual's level of internalization for an activity is self-determined and independent of external contingencies (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Employees with harmonious passion persevere as long as their task remains pleasurable which results in enhanced performance (Astakhova & Porter, 2015). Pursuing a task with passion makes people devoted fully to perform their activities, therefore allowing them to resist obstacles and finally gain excellence (Vellerand, 2007). Thus, we propose that when employees are harmoniously passionate about their work, their performance is likely to be enhanced.

- **H1c:** Harmonious passion positively relates to employee's performance.

### *2.5 Work Engagement and OCB*

The role of work engagement in explaining OCB is broadly acknowledged (Babcock-Roberson & Strickland, 2010; Chughtai & Buckley, 2009). The existing research consistently reports positive relationship between work engagement and OCB (Babcock-Roberson & Strickland, 2010; Halbesleben et al., 2009; Sulea et al., 2012; Wat & Shaffer, 2005;) at both levels of OCB, towards individual colleagues and towards organization (Runhaar et al., 2013). According to Schaufeli and Salanova (2008) engaged employees not only perform better, they also express favorable behavior towards the organization, such as commitment to achieve goals and low turnover intention. Engaged employees, according to Kahn (1990), invest more energy in their jobs and work more enthusiastically, thus show superior in role and extra role performance. Putting energy into job related tasks also enhances employees' contextual performance that is related to the tendency of employees to behave in such ways that help organization's psychological and social perspective (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). Employees' work engagement gives a signal that they are willing to show discretionary behavior to facilitate their employer (Erickson, 2005). Employees who are engaged with their work are more dedicated and are likely to perform duties beyond their formal defined jobs (Rich et al., 2010). Engaged employees can enhance the occurrence of behaviors, such as OCB (Organ, 1988) that are helpful in promoting efficient and effective organizational functioning. Hence, we also expect that when employees are more engaged in their work, their OCB will subsequently increase.

- **H2a:** Work engagement positively relates to OCB.

### *2.6 Work Engagement and Employee Performance*

In order to achieve a superior level of performance, the personal traits and contextual factors impact the individuals in making the investment of their personal self in the work role (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Work engagement, as a motivational concept, is supposed to impact the perseverance and strength with which individuals pursue the job performance (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Rich et al., 2010). Since engaged employees are more alert and attentive on the job tasks, which in turn leads to the notion that engagement positively relates to task performance. Work engagement serves as an antecedent of task performance. An engaged workforce deploy all of their energies (i.e. cognitive, physical and emotional) into work activities (Kahn, 1990). This creates a psychological link with performance of various tasks (Maslach et al., 2001). Several researchers have found empirical support for this relationship (Bakker & Leiter, 2010; Leiter, 2010; Christian et al., 2011). Likewise, Karatepe (2013) suggests that employee's work engagement leads to higher job

performance. Engaged employees exert their physical, emotional and cognitive energies to execute their job tasks, and, therefore demonstrate higher work performance (Rich et al., 2010). Similarly, engaged employees work with more concentration, for long hours and with greater intensity (Rich et al., 2010), thus enhancing their job performance. Work engagement relates to job performance and it not only expresses additional validity over job attitudes in forecasting employees' performance but also improves their effectiveness and efficiency while doing a job (Christian et al., 2011). Therefore in line with the existing literature and above arguments we hypothesize that:

- **H<sub>2b</sub>**: Work engagement positively relates to employee performance.

### *2.7 Harmonious Passion and Employee Outcomes*

The job attitude models such as attitude-engagement model (Harrison et al., 2006) and attitude-behavior relationship model (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977) demonstrate that job attitudes, like job passion compel work behaviors, thereby directing us to expect a positive relationship between job passion and employees' work performance. However, the relationship between job attitudes and work behaviors is somewhat weak due to the distal link between these two (Wilson et al., 1984). Researchers in the field of cognitive psychology advocate that contrary to general attitudes, the cognitive state would be more contiguous predictor of employees' performance outputs (Ackerman & Beier, 2003).

The framework that engagement mediates between distal antecedents and employee outcomes is grounded in this idea that job attributes, leadership, and temperamental characters influence proximal motivational factors in order to affect job performance (Kanfer, 1990; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). The individual and organizational aspects impact the psychological work experience, which onward drives work behavior (Kahn, 1990). From this notion, Macey and Schneider (2008) identify various distant antecedents, which may impact the degree to which an individual feels a desire to make investment of his personal energies for performance. Likewise, Christian et al., (2011) suggest that engagement mediates the relations between individual level antecedents and job performance arguing that employees who are connected to their work are likely to be extra attentive and centric on their job tasks, which in turn is presumed to relate positively to employee performance. The employees who are well connected to their work tasks are also presumed to be associated to the extra role behaviors that are entangled with their job description, which in turn, guides them to elevated task performance.

Harmonious passion activates the process of mastering the achievement related activities (Dweck, 1986). Their autonomous internalization of the job, engage them grossly in the task they find passionate about, therefore it is theorized that their passion is transformed into work engagement and as a next step they would like to continue delivering high performance achievements. Harmonious passion provides people with energy to engage in work activities, which in turn results in greater level of achievements (Vallerand et al., 2007). This entails that there must be a mediating mechanism which translates passion into performance. An employee, who is physically involved, emotionally motivated and cognitively absorbed in the job activity, shall contribute to both extra role activity (e.g. OCB) and enhanced job related performance. Accordingly the characteristics of passion would be linked to performance through some mediator because passion creates commitment to engage in deliberate practice, which further has a direct influence on performance (Vallerand et al., 2007). The employees who are well connected to their work

tasks, are also presumed to be associated to the extra role behavior that are entangled with their job description, which in turn guides them to elevated task performance. The employees who are engaged consider that goals held by their co-workers are also part of their domain and they exceed their limits to help them and in this manner make contribution towards organization (Christian *et al.*, 2011). In sum, we can therefore hypothesize that harmonious passion relates to the OCB and employee's performance through the mediating mechanism of work engagement.

- **H3a:** Work engagement mediates the relationship between harmonious passion and OCB.
- **H3b:** Work engagement mediates the relationship between harmonious passion and employee performance.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Participants and Sampling Design

Full time permanent employees posted at 3 regions (83 branches) and 13 groups (86 departments) at the head office of a large commercial bank of Pakistan at the second largest metropolitan city (Lahore) was the *target population*. At the time of data collection, there were 1780 employees (927 at branches and 853 at head office). The study utilized Cochran's (1977) sample size formula to estimate an *optimal sample size*. For 95% confidence level, Z is 1.96; the variance (S) for a five-point scale comes to be 1.25 (Bartlett *et al.* 2001); and allowing for a 3.15% margin of error (D) the estimated sample size comes out to be 242. After iteration on the basis of the size of our target population (i.e. by dividing 242 by  $1+242/1780$ ), the optimal sample size is 213. Utilizing probability based *cluster sampling* design 10 of the 83 branches and 17 of the 86 departments were randomly selected. These 27 sampled business units (clusters) comprise of 228 employees and 27 managers. A census through two separate questionnaires was carried out in these clusters – as per the requirement of cluster sampling. Further the response variables (i.e. OCB and performance) in these clusters are expected to be distributed normally.

#### 3.2 Data Collection and Actual Sample

The data was collected through personal visits at the business units over a period of approximately one month. Participants were assured of *voluntary participation* and *confidentiality* of their responses. The questionnaires were designed in a manner that each *section's format* is different from the other sections. The *secrecy of the respondents* was also ensured. The independent variables and one dependent variable were measured through the employees' *self-ratings*, whereas the second dependent variable was measured through *manager's rating*. All these procedural remedies help minimize common method biases. The actual sample is 210 fully completed and usable questionnaires (93 from branches and 117 from head office).

#### 3.3 Measures

All items for harmonious passion, work engagement and OCB were scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

*Harmonious passion* towards their job activity was measured by 7 items developed and validated by Vallerand *et al.* (2003). The sample items are 'activity is in harmony with other activities in my life' and 'for me it is a passion that I still manage to control'. The scale reliability was 0.826.

*Work engagement* was measured using Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, the most frequently used scale by Schaufeli et al., (2002) containing 17 items. A sample item is 'I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose'. The scale reliability was 0.868.

*OCB* was measured using 24 item instrument developed by Podsakoff et al., (1990). The sample items include 'my attendance at work is above the norm' and 'I help others who have heavy workloads'. Six items in the construct were reverse coded. The scale reliability was 0.858.

*Employee performance* was measured by averaging two types of performance measures. Firstly, ratings by the managers on 7 items (currently being used by the bank). These items contain employee traits/behaviors e.g. 'interpersonal skills', 'work efficiency', etc. These items were rated on a 5-point numeric scale ranging from 1 (below average) to 5 (excellent). Secondly, managers ratings on 5 items (Janssen & Yperen 2004) were obtained on a 5-point numeric scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). A sample item is 'this worker fulfills all responsibilities required by his/her job' scored. The scale reliabilities for the two scales were 0.938 and 0.942 respectively.

Individual differences in the socio demography may affect employee job performance and their citizenship behavior. Therefore we included *age*, *education* and *three types of tenure* (tenure with the supervisor, tenure in the branch and tenure with the bank) measured in number of years as *control variables*.

#### 4. Results

##### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation

Of the 210 employees, 25% were female and 62% were married. The analysis revealed a good blend of youth and experience, such as 16% were below 25, 53% were between 26 to 35, 13% were between 35 to 46 and the remaining 18% were above 46 years. Participants included 16% executives, 73% officers and 11% tellers. On average, they had 16 years of formal education and bank tenure of 9 years. The employees' average business unit tenure and tenure under the current supervisors was about 3, and 2 years respectively. This supervisory tenure is sufficient for the managers to evaluate a subordinate's performance. The managers were experienced, professional and mature in age and education i.e. 48 years and 16 years respectively with average bank tenure of 19 years.

The data was aggregated at individual level. The participants of branches and head office were statistically same in terms of the study variables, gender and marital status. Therefore, we combined both samples for the purpose of further analysis. The bi-variate correlations, means and standard deviations of variables are presented in Table 1. These correlations provided the initial support for our hypotheses. Harmonious passion has significant positive correlation with work engagement (coefficient = 0.724,  $p < 0.01$ ), OCB (coefficient = 0.539,  $p < 0.01$ ) and job performance (coefficient = 0.446,  $p < 0.01$ ). This provides an initial support before formally testing the Hypothesis H<sub>1a</sub>, H<sub>1b</sub> and H<sub>1c</sub>. Work engagement also has significant positive relationship with OCB (coefficient = 0.607,  $p < 0.01$ ) and job performance (coefficient = 0.425,  $p < 0.01$ ), which also justifies claim of the study and provides confidence for testing Hypothesis H<sub>2a</sub> and H<sub>2b</sub>. It is worth mentioning that OCB also has positive correlation with employee job performance (coefficient = 0.488,  $p < 0.01$ ). All these correlation coefficients are well below 1 and are less the cut off value of 0.75; this simple measure rules out the chances of *multicollinearity* (Montgomery et al., 2009).

**Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations**

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Education	15.6	1.5	1						
2. Tenure-Bus Unit	2.8	3.2	-0.068	1					
3. Tenure-Bank	8.7	9.8	-0.331**	0.486**	1				
4. Tenure-Supervisory	2.0	1.7	-0.009	0.681**	0.319**	1			
5. Harmonious Passion	3.6	0.6	0.055	0.100	0.180**	0.063	1		
6. Work Engagement	3.8	0.5	0.055	0.149*	0.195**	0.072	0.724**	1	
7. OCB	3.9	0.4	0.201**	0.044	0.052	-0.004	0.539**	0.607**	1
8. Performance	3.8	0.6	0.108	0.128	0.077	0.155*	0.446**	0.425**	0.488**

\*  $P < 0.05$ , \*\*  $P < 0.01$

Additionally, the correlations provided evidence that more educated respondents have significant tendency of OCB. They are more cooperative, conscious and consultative in their working and dealing with their co-workers as the education is significantly correlated with the OCB of employees (coefficient = 0.201,  $p < 0.01$ ).

#### 4.2 Hypotheses Testing

Prior to testing hypotheses, we measured and controlled the impact of age, education, and tenures that might influence results of the study as shown in the model 1, 3 and 6 (Table 2). The other five models are used to test our hypotheses. We estimated Durbin-Watson statistic for these models separately to examine the independence of errors and it was within the acceptable range (i.e. 1.50 to 2.50). Further we measured collinearity statistics and observed that the tolerance values of the independent variables are larger than 0.10. Hence, there is no issue of multicollinearity and we can proceed further for interpretations.

**Table 2: Regression Models for Testing Hypotheses**

	Work Engagement		OCB			Employee Performance		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Constant	2.365	1.465	1.336	0.815	0.305	2.149	1.488	1.157
<i>Control</i>								
Age	0.021	0.009	-0.003	-0.012	-0.016	0.290**	0.282**	0.281**
Education	0.096	0.022	0.228**	0.175**	0.165**	0.093	0.048	0.044
Tenure-Bus Unit	0.351*	0.213*	0.343*	0.243	0.150	0.258	0.173	0.133
Tenure-Bank	0.078	-0.012	0.086	0.021	0.027	-0.263*	-0.318**	-0.316**
Tenure-Supervisory	-0.288*	-0.151	-0.326*	-0.227	-0.161	-0.019	0.065	0.093
<i>Independent</i>								
Harmonious Passion		0.709**		0.512**	0.204*		0.436**	0.302**
<i>Mediator</i>								
Work Engagement					0.435**			0.189*
R-square	0.052	0.536	0.080	0.333	0.420	0.098	0.281	0.297

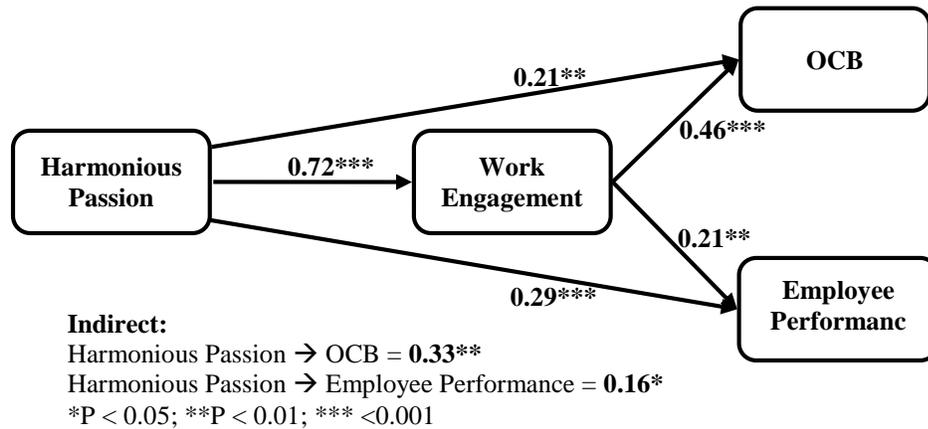
\*P < 0.05 \*\*P < 0.01

For testing H<sub>3a</sub> we followed the process of mediation as prescribed by Barron and Kenny (1986) to establish three relationships, a) the independent variable (harmonious passion) with dependent variable (OCB); b) the independent variable with mediator (work engagement); and that of c) the mediator with the dependent variable. Further to establish the mediating path through difference (dropping) of beta value of the independent variable, consequent upon the inclusion of mediator. The first three steps have already been

established while testing H<sub>1a</sub>, H<sub>1b</sub> and H<sub>2a</sub>. After inclusion of the mediator in Model 5, the beta value of the independent variable dropped from 0.512 (p<0.01) to 0.204 (p<0.05). This decrease in the beta value (about 31%) and the significance suggest that work engagement mediates the relationship between harmonious passion and OCB. For conclusive inference about the indirect effect, we generated *bootstrap confidence intervals* utilizing Hayes Process Macro in SPSS for 5000 samples. The interval ranges from 0.1277 to 0.2889; it does not contain zero, supporting the conclusion that the indirect effect is significant (Hayes, 2013). Therefore, *H<sub>3a</sub> is supported*.

Similarly, for testing H<sub>3b</sub>, the first three steps have already been established while testing H<sub>1a</sub>, H<sub>1c</sub> and H<sub>2b</sub>. After inclusion of the mediator in Model 8, the beta value of the independent variable dropped from 0.436 (p<0.01) to 0.302 (p<0.05). A decrease in the beta value (13.4%) and the significance, suggest that work engagement mediates the relationship between harmonious passion and employee performance. For conclusive inference about the indirect effect, we generated *bootstrap confidence intervals* utilizing Hayes Process Macro in SPSS for 5000 samples. The interval ranges from 0.0189 to 0.2616; it does not contain zero, supporting the conclusion that the indirect effect is significant, thus also *supporting H<sub>3b</sub>*.

The regression models discussed above tested the hypothesized relations one by one. The bootstrapping for the mediation process allowed us statistical inference of only one mediation path at a time. Therefore, we also tested the whole model in one go through path analysis utilizing AMOS software. Again we found support for all hypothesized relations. The coefficients for the direct and indirect paths along with their significance have been provided in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Path Analysis Results for the Hypothesized Model**

### 5. Discussion

The study attempts to understand the mechanism whereby harmonious passion is translated into employee’s work engagement, OCB, and job performance. The mediating role of work engagement between harmonious passion and OCB and between harmonious passion and employee’s job performance was also tested. Participants selected through a probability

sampling design from a large commercial bank provided a suitable context and reasonable representative sample for this investigation.

Work engagement is a concept for investing personal energies and emotional connection with work and is predicted to be an outcome of harmonious passion. The study provided empirical evidence that harmonious passion is positively related with work engagement. Ho et al. (2011) showed that harmonious passion positively correlates with cognitive engagement – one constituent of work engagement. These results suggest that individuals not only have passion for the sports and other non-work related activities - which are apparently more pleasurable as provided in the earlier research - but are also passionate about their jobs. The evidence for the impact of harmonious passion on OCB was missing in prior research despite the suggestion that cognitive ability and personality measures, which are ingredients of passion, may potentially predict OCB. This study finds that people who are harmoniously passionate about their job activities also demonstrate the behavior at their work place, which promotes harmony and courtesy among co-workers during job performance. To the best of our knowledge, these new direct and indirect links of harmonious passion to OCB have not yet been investigated. The eastern context and the banking industry is a further niche of the paper.

Consistent with the previous research that harmonious passion positively relates to employee's performance. The study uses two different scales for the measurement of employee's job performance. The first scale used is the evaluation criterion of the bank and is a practical measure of their actual performance annually, whereas the second is the widely used scale (Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004). Results of both the scales are almost similar exclusively as well as jointly. Moreover, employee performance has been rated by their respective supervisors, which minimizes the possibilities of common source bias. The results reveal that employees with good self-rated score on harmonious passion are also good in their supervisor rated score on performance. This is a matter of great significance for the Managers as well as for the organizations.

The study finds that work engagement is significantly and positively related with OCB. In other words, individuals who put in their personal selves to their work role are presumed to conceive a broader idea of that role and resultantly cross the prescribed limits to facilitate the people as well as the organization at large (Kahn, 1990). The empirical support in the context of Pakistani banking industry offers an insight for the managers that their employees have enough dedication and absorption with a tendency to involve in altruistic and conscientious behavior. Therefore, provision of a work environment conducive for work engagement seems beneficial. Our contention is that employees who experience high level of connectivity with their work task; they in turn are intertwined with their in-role job description, leading to high task performance.

We found support for the notion that harmonious passion creates energy and provides goals for engagement and also influence performance. An employee, who is physically involved, emotionally motivated and cognitively absorbed in the job activity, shall contribute the extra role activity and enhanced job performance. Several studies discussed the relationship of passion with non-work related activities (Mageau et al., 2005; Vallerand et al., 2003), including gambling (Amiot et al., 2006; Vallerand et al., 2003; Studies 2 and 3), sports such as hockey, football and cycling. However, no empirical study has been conducted on the harmonious passion in the work context, except for the two studies (i.e. Vallerand & Houliort, 2003; Ho et al. 2011).

This study is first of its kind in the context of Pakistan and in the natural setting of banking industry- a well-established and progressive industry, having all the features of a modern banking in the world. Secondly, we have investigated the new relationship of harmonious passion with work engagement, which, to the best of our knowledge, has not been earlier explored empirically. The existing literature exhibits relation of harmonious passion with performance through the mediating mechanism of only *cognitive* engagement. Thirdly, we have empirically tested the relationship of harmonious passion with employee's OCB, which, to the best of our knowledge is rarely tested. Fourthly, consistent with the previous research to the effect that harmonious passion positively relates with employee performance (Ho et al., 2011) and the mediating role of work engagement (Christian et al., 2011). We have found these relationships in eastern hemisphere. Fifthly, by employing the probability cluster sampling design, the variation of the response variables (OCB and employee performance) is accounted for variety of participants ranging from the lowest to the maximum. Finally, we have noted that indirect generation of OCB through a cognitive based mechanism (a mediator) is more profound than the direct creating from independent variables. This is very much similar to another study (Qadeer & Jaffery, 2014) where employee psychological capital (the mediator) generated by organizational climate, was being converted indirectly to OCB than direct impact of the climate.

The study demonstrates a positive relationship of harmonious passion with work engagement, with employee's job performance and OCB (extra-role behaviors). This provides an opportunity for researchers in focusing their attention towards the role of harmonious passion and work engagement and towards exploring new avenues of enhanced employee performance in the context of organizational productivity. The point here is that nurturing of harmonious passion in employees, will lead them towards a culture of cooperation, harmony and courtesy, where they invest their physical, emotional and cognitive energies, which in turn is conducive for the progress of the organizations and ultimately towards the employee performance. The managers at the time of recruitment of employees for certain jobs should gauge the harmonious passion of the candidate for that particular job by setting out suitable interview questions. The managers should also design the work for the existing employees in a manner, which appears to be meaningful and stimulating to create interest and value for the job leading to enhanced harmonious passion.

Engaged workers are likely to perform their tasks more efficiently and effectively. In case of OCB, the employees, connected to work, are presumed to create a social context that is beneficial to teamwork, helping, voice, and other important discretionary behaviors, which ultimately lead to organizational effectiveness (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Therefore organizations should adopt the measures to cultivate and enhance worker's engagement, first through selection and then through designing of the job.

### *5.1 Limitations and Directions*

The sample was drawn from employees of a large bank working in *one city*. The demographic situation may have influenced on participants' personal characteristics. Never the less, the sample was split between branches, where most of employees are from the local city and the head office, where people from all over Pakistan are working. We did not find any visible variations among the results from the two sources. The study measured independent, mediating and one dependent variable from the self-report of the employees,

which may pose some risk of percept-percept bias and could have inflated the correlation among these variables. To minimize the chances of such a bias, we used reverse coded items in the questionnaire. This research also measured the performance of employees reported by the supervisor, which helped to minimize the possibility of common source biases. In aggregate, these procedures help tackle the risk of common method variance.

Data was collected by employing a *cross sectional design*, which may prevent from establishing causal relationship. For example, the current status of the job may have more liking for the employees, which in turn has given them more opportunities to invest their physical, emotional and cognitive energies to the job and in case their job is rotated or tenure is prolonged, they may lose the interest and the love for the job. Future research may also employ longitudinal data to assess these possibilities.

Another limitation of this study is that it took the job as one unit, whereas we know that job as a whole consists of various tasks, and it is possible that employees may be more passionate about some tasks and less passionate about some other tasks. However, from the response received, it is considered that employees may experience harmonious passion for the job as a whole. Future research should also undertake the impact of passion on other individual behaviors, such as absenteeism and turnover.

### 5.2 Conclusion

Harmonious passion is of great importance in generating employees' work engagement, non-enforceable contextual performance (OCB) and formally described job performance. Whereas, in line with the existing research, work engagement positively impacts both OCB and job performance; its impact on OCB is even higher than job performance. We also confirm the mediating role of work engagement between harmonious passion and both types of performances. Keeping employees, who are harmoniously passionate about their job brings many performance benefits and ultimately help create a conducive environment for effective and efficient functioning of organizations.

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