

WORK PASSION AND JOB SATISFACTION: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TASK THOUGHT AMONG GENERATION Z EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the effects of harmonious passion and obsessive passion on job satisfaction among Generation Z employees by investigating the mediating roles of role of Off-task thoughts and On-task Thoughts Off work. Data were collected from 201 employees in Indonesia working across various industries. The data analysis method in this study uses SEM-PLS. The results indicate that six of the twelve hypotheses were supported. The findings show that harmonious passion positively influences job satisfaction ($\beta=0.077$, $p=0.000$), whereas obsessive passion does not have a significant direct effect ($\beta=0.180$, $p=0.702$). Off-task thoughts at work mediate the effects of both harmonious ($\beta=0.283$, $p=0.002$) and obsessive passion ($\beta=0.351$, $p=0.019$) on job satisfaction, whereas On-task thoughts at work do not mediate these effects. These findings highlight the importance of cognitive mechanisms, particularly off-task thoughts at work, in explaining how different forms of work passion influence job satisfaction. The study extends the Dualistic Model of Passion by demonstrating the distinct mediating roles of work-related cognitive processes and offers practical implications for developing human resource management strategies to enhance employee job satisfaction.

Keywords: *Harmonious Passion; Obsessive Passion; Job Satisfaction; Off-Task Thought; Generation Z Workforce.*

JEL Classification: J28, M12, M54, J21

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The development of the dynamics of the world of work in recent decades has succeeded in making Generation Z workers face concerns about life satisfaction (VanderWeele et al., 2022). Workplace experience is a key factor that affects their well-being. One of the most impactful aspects is job

satisfaction.¹ According to Locke (1969), job satisfaction is a pleasant emotional state and results from the achievement of one's job values. Job satisfaction is a major predictor of psychological well-being and is widely recognized as a construct that is closely related to work-related well-being (Ibrahim et al., 2014).

Workplace experiences play a key role in influencing job satisfaction among Generation Z employees (Adelia et al., 2024a; VanderWeele et al., 2022). According to Hofer et al. (2024), Generation Z places a high value on flexibility, leading them to prioritize the ability to allocate time effectively between work and personal life (Rachmadini & Riyanto, 2020). Although job satisfaction has become one of the most researched topics in the field of organizational behaviour, most research still focuses on traditional factors such as compensation, work environment, leadership, and work-life balance. Therefore, understanding the factors that affect job satisfaction and engagement among Generation Z is important in supporting the well-being of employees (Adelia et al., 2024).

Additionally, Gen Z often prefers work and personal life, which allows them to blend the personal and professional aspects of their lives (Rachmadini & Riyanto, 2020). They prefer a balance between work and rest time. In a study conducted by Walker et al., (2023), individual who can allocate time off to take a break from their work tasks will help promote better feelings. Previous research has shown that break time at work contributes to employee well-being and performance. However, most studies still view rest time as a physical and behavioural recovery activity, while psychological processes that occur during rest still receive less attention. Even though individuals do not always take their attention away from work when they are resting. They can stay focused on work (on-task thoughts off work) or instead divert their mind to activities outside of work (off-task thoughts) (Hunter & Wu (2015). The two cognitive mechanisms have the potential to have different consequences on job satisfaction, but empirical evidence on these mechanisms is still very limited.

Furthermore, job satisfaction among Generation Z is also influenced by how they perceive and derive meaning from their work. This aspect is closely linked to the concept of work passion, which forms an important part of Generation Z's identity and life purpose. Passion has become an increasingly prevalent social trend, particularly among Generation Z. According to Vallerand et al. (2003), in the Dualistic Model of Passion, passion is categorized into two types, harmonious passion and obsessive passion. Harmonious passion allows individuals to engage in their work autonomously and to voluntarily regulate decisions regarding when and how the work is performed. In contrast, obsessive passion compels individuals to engage in work out of a sense of obligation, making it difficult for them to disengage from work-related activities. In other words, individuals with harmonious passion are better able to mitigate the effects of prolonged stress—particularly physical exhaustion—through effective time allocation, ultimately leading to higher job satisfaction (Vallerand et al., 2010).

¹ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/09/4-ways-young-professionals-can-be-happy-in-the-modern-workplace/> accessed on 24 October 2024.

This study distinguishes between the roles of harmonious and obsessive passion to examine their respective impacts on work engagement and job satisfaction. Previous studies have often combined the two types of passion or focused on only one of them. Moreover, the variables used in this research are relatively novel and highly relevant to the current context, particularly in understanding the work dynamics of Generation Z. Most existing research has concentrated on specific populations, such as entrepreneurs in Sweden (Thorgren et al., 2019) and service workers in southern Spain (Benitez et al., 2023). Contradictory findings in previous studies, such as those by (Benitez et al., 2023), (Mantiri & Sandroto, 2023), and (Azmi et al., 2021), highlight a research gap that necessitates further investigation, particularly in the context of Generation Z across diverse cultural and industrial backgrounds, including Indonesia.

There has not been much research that integrates passion with cognitive mechanisms during breaks as a mediation mechanism, especially in Generation Z who tend to stay connected to work even outside of working hours. This study adopts five key variables adapted from (Thorgren et al., 2019), namely harmonious passion, obsessive passion, off-task thoughts at work, on-task thoughts off work, and job satisfaction. These variables will be contextualized to reflect the unique characteristics of Generation Z, who are known for their strong inclination toward seeking meaning and balance in their work. Therefore, to address this research gap, this study aims to empirically examine the influence of harmonious passion and obsessive passion on job satisfaction, utilizing variables that represent the thought patterns (task thoughts) and behaviors characteristic of today's Generation Z.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The Dualistic Model of Passion distinguishes between Harmonious Passion and Obsessive Passion (Vallerand et al., 2003). Harmonious Passion refers to work involvement that is autonomous and balanced, while Obsessive Passion tends to be forced and can lead to work-life imbalances. Additionally, the Resource Allocation Perspective explains how individuals manage their attention and cognitive resources, both at work and outside of work, which can impact job satisfaction (Kanfer et al., 1994). According to Thorgren et al. (2019), harmonious passion has become an integral part of an individual's self-concept without any pressure or coercion. They define themselves as people who have a prominent role identity, thus reducing the tendency to think about work tasks at times that should be used for personal or family activities. This helps them take a genuine break from work when they are outside of working hours. In other words, a person with a harmonious passion will be more able to control themselves and not think about work tasks when they are not working. Based on this, the researchers propose our first two hypotheses.

H1: Harmonious passion has a positive and significant effect on off-task thoughts at work

H2: Harmonious passion has negative effects on on-task thoughts off work.

In contrast, Individuals with obsessive passion tend to let work dominate their lives. In other words, they do not allow non-work-related activities while working. They will feel distracted if they have to spend time on other things outside of their work. Individuals with obsessive passions tend to lack self-control over job role limitations (Vallerand et al., 2010). On this basis, the researchers propose the following two hypotheses, namely:

H3: Obsessive passion has a negative effect on off-task thoughts at work

H4: Obsessive passion has a positive and significant effect on on-task Thought off Work

In work life, individuals are often faced with intense pressure and demands; therefore, taking a moment to step away from the activity or work being done is an important step in maintaining physical and mental balance (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Several empirical studies have thoroughly examined the impact of performing tasks without interruption (Chen et al., 2020; Kanfer et al., 1994; Parasuraman & Simmers, 2001). Allowing other roles related to tasks during breaks can lead to conflicts, resulting in decreased concentration, increased errors, and physical and mental fatigue for the individual. Such conflicts are known to interfere with job satisfaction (Burke, 2003). Previous research has shown that breaks can reduce the risk of conflict and help develop self-control skills, enabling individuals to engage in tasks effectively and thereby increase their job satisfaction (Walker et al., 2023). Based on this, the author proposes a hypothesis:

H5: Off-task Thought at Work has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction

H6: On-task Thought off Work has a negative effect on job satisfaction

Individuals with harmonious passion will concentrate better on tasks and experience a positive influence on job satisfaction (Vallerand et al., 2010). Meanwhile, individuals with *obsessive passion* tend to exhibit rigid persistence in their activities. Although individuals love passionate activities, they often find themselves in a position where uncontrollable internal urges lead them to engage in those activities. In addition, they may experience negative emotions when involvement in the activity is stopped (e.g., guilt or anxiety) (Vallerand et al., 2010). Based on this, the author proposes a hypothesis:

H7: Harmonious Passion has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction

H8: Obsessive Passion has a negative effect on job satisfaction

Individuals with a harmonious passion tend to use off-task thoughts at work to help them maintain self-motivation and job satisfaction. While Individuals with obsessive passion may feel internal pressure to continue working at a high level, off-task thoughts at work can provide an unintentional but rewarding break. This pause helps reduce fatigue, which ultimately increases job satisfaction. Meanwhile, on-task thoughts outside of work are more positive for individuals with harmonious passion, as they think about work with a sense of joy and control. This thought encourages them to stay connected to work without feeling pressured, thereby increasing job satisfaction. While Individuals with obsessive-compulsive disorder may have these thoughts, they can become a burden if they are excessive. Research conducted by Thorgren et al. (2019) suggests that off-task Thoughts at Work and on-task Thoughts off Work can act as mediators. Based on this, the author proposes a hypothesis:

H9: Off-task Thought at Work can mediate the relationship between harmonious Passion against job satisfaction

H10: Off-task Thought at Work can mediate the relationship between obsessive Passion and job satisfaction

H11: On-task Thought off Work can mediate the relationship between harmonious passion and job satisfaction

H12: On-task Thought off Work can mediate the relationship between obsessive passion and job satisfaction

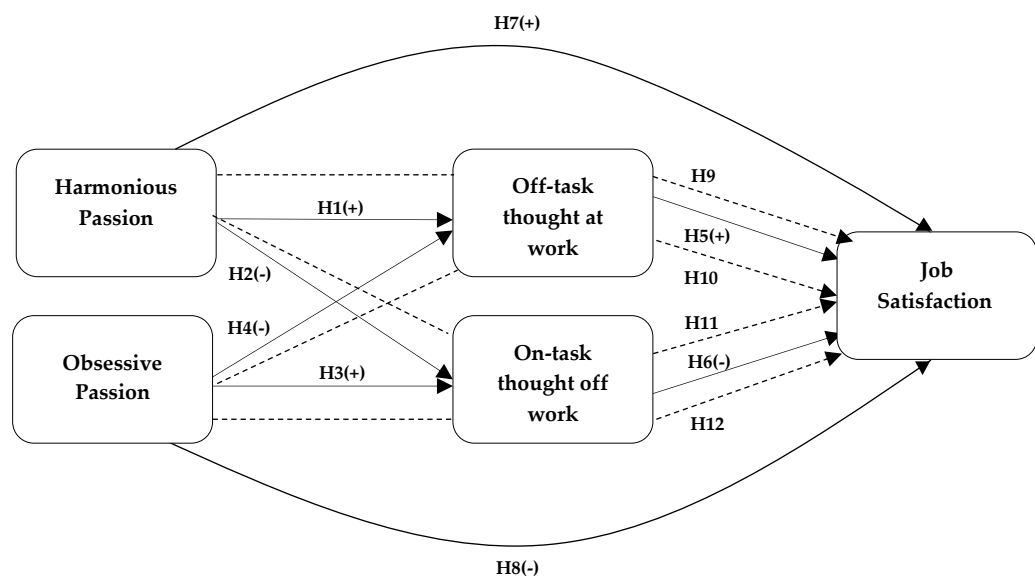


Figure 1: The Structural Model

(Adapted from Thorgren et al. (2013) with additional variable relationships developed by the authors)

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research approach. Quantitative research is a method used to test objective theories by examining the relationships among variables (Creswell & Clark, 2017). The population of this study comprises Generation Z, who work in various fields or sectors in Indonesia. Indonesia is currently enjoying the benefits of the demographic bonus, with 70.72% of its population in the productive age range (15-64 years) (IDN Research Institute, 2024). The IDN Research Institute stated that if this potential is optimally managed, it is expected to be able to push Indonesia towards a "golden era" in 2045. Today, almost half of Generation Z has entered productive age. As a generation that grew up together with the digital world, or known as Digital Natives, Generation Z has a different attitude and character compared to the previous generation (Hofer et al., 2024). Generation Z, who grew up in the era of technology and information, has quite unique behaviors, ranging from lifestyles,

perspectives, life goals to their life challenges (IDN Research Institute, 2024). These unique characteristics and behaviors also affect the way they interact with the world of work.

Data were collected using a purposive sampling technique, based on predetermined criteria: members of Generation Z born between 1997 and 2005 who have been employed for one to five years across various sectors in Indonesia. This study employs the 10-time rule formula proposed by Hair et al. (2017) to determine the sample size in PLS-SEM. This formula suggests that the minimum sample size should be equal to 10 times the largest number of formative indicators or 10 times the most significant number of structural paths in a given latent construct. This measurement model has been widely accepted (Memon et al., 2020).

Data collection in this study was conducted through questionnaires distributed via online platforms (e.g., WhatsApp, email, Instagram). Several previous studies have used this questionnaire approach to test job satisfaction in various fields (Adelia et al., 2024; Azmi et al., 2021; Zhu, 2013). In this study, the closed-ended questionnaire asked consisted of questions with structured answers that had a Likert scale between 1 to 5 (Yamashita, 2022), with details of answers Strongly Disagree (SD=1), Disagree (D=2), Neutral (N=3), Agree (A=4), Strongly Agree (SA=5). The questions in the questionnaire were derived from previous research. The researchers retranslated the questions into Indonesian (based on a valid and reliable scale from previous research), however, adapting and modifying them according to job satisfaction settings. Constructs of passion are adapted from Vallerand et al. The following construct is Task Thought, which is adapted from Kanfer et al. (1994). Finally, the job satisfaction construct is adapted from Ibrahim et al. (2014).

This study employs Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) analysis to test the proposed hypothesis using SmartPLS 3 software. PLS-SEM is often used when the model is relatively complex and the research sample size is small (Hair et al., 2019). In addition, the aim of this study is to predict the main target or identify relevant preliminary constructions (Hair et al., 2014). Several previous studies have recognized the advantages and capabilities of this method in solving problems in studies of job satisfaction that have complex models (Egan et al., 2004; Thorgren et al., 2019).

The PLS-SEM analysis consists of two parts: the measurement model, also known as the outer model, and the structural model, also referred to as the inner model. For the Outer Model, this study uses the regulation of reflective paths (common factors) to measure the contribution of indicators to a variable (Hair et al., 2017). The Outer Model ensures that the research instruments used are valid and reliable, thereby supporting the analysis of a concept or theory that is the focus of the research (Qoyyum et al., 2021). The next test is the structural model (inner model). The structural model enables the researcher to assess the overall model and test the formulated hypothesis, thereby producing a precise and accurate interpretation of the findings through the following parameters (Hair et al., 2019).

4.0 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study employed a purposive sampling method, with the criteria set for Generation Z individuals born between 1997 and 2005 who have been employed for one to five years. A total of 201 respondents were collected, with the majority comprising 112 female workers (56%) (see Table 1). The sectors in which Generation Z employees work are diverse, including education (33%), manufacturing and industry (15.9%), food and beverage (12.9%), healthcare services (5.5%), and the creative economy (4.5%). Generation Z has begun to dominate the workforce, although the majority of respondents reported having one to two years of work experience (61.2%). A significant proportion also reported having three to five years of work experience (38.8%). Due to their relatively short tenure in the workforce, most Generation Z employees earn an average income of less than IDR 3,000,000. Nevertheless, a considerable number have already achieved an income range between IDR 5,000,000 and IDR 10,000,000.

Table 1: Demographic Respondents

Gender	Frequent	Percentage
Male	89	44%
Female	112	56%
Year of Birth		
1997	25	12%
1998	13	7%
1999	18	9%
2000	31	15%
2001	46	23%
2002	37	18%
2003	16	8%
2004	6	3%
2005	9	5%
Employment Sector		
Creative Economy	9	4,5
Otomotive	1	0,5
Government Institution	3	1,5
Retail	8	4,0
Health Services	11	5,5
Public Services	1	0,5
Transportation Services	7	3,5
Food/Beverages	26	12,9
Manufacture	32	15,9
Media and digital printing	7	3,5
Maritime Sector	2	1,0
Education	67	33,3
Banking/Financial Institution	3	1,5
Agriculture	7	3,5
Property/Construction	3	1,5
Entrepreneur	6	3,0
Others	8	4,0
Tenure		
1-2 years		61,2

3-4 years	47	23,4
5 years	31	15,4
Monthly Income		
< IDR 1.500.000	67	33,3
IDR 1.600.000 – IDR 3.000.000	61	30,3
IDR 3.100.000 – IDR 5.000.000	25	12,4
IDR 5.100.000 – IDR 10.000.000	39	19,4
> IDR 10.000.000	9	4,5
Total	201	100

Source: Authors' own work

4.1 Measurement Model Assessment (Outer Model)

The assessment of the outer model in PLS-SEM analysis involves testing for validity and reliability. Validity testing includes the simultaneous evaluation of convergent and discriminant validity. For convergent validity, an indicator is considered valid if the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value exceeds 0.5 and the loading factor is greater than 0.7. As shown in Table 1, all indicators for each variable meet the criteria for convergent validity. Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Lareker Criterion, which involves comparing the square root of the AVE of each construct with the correlations between that construct and other constructs in the model (Hair et al., 2019). If the square root of a construct's AVE is greater than its correlations with other constructs, this indicates good discriminant validity. Table 2 presents the results of the discriminant validity test, indicating that the AVE values for each variable exceed the inter-construct correlations.

Table 2: Convergent Validity

Item No	Statements	Loadings
Harmonious Passion; $\alpha = 0.878$; $CR = 0.905$; $AVE = 0.578$		
HP2	I enjoy my work.	0.836
HP3	I find it easy to manage and control my work processes.	0.707
HP4	My work reflects my personal interests.	0.724
HP5	The new things I discover in my work increase my appreciation for it.	0,727
HP6	My work provides me with meaningful life experiences.	0,767
HP7	This job offers me a wide range of life experiences.	0,747
HP8	I love my work.	0,807
Obsessive Passion; $\alpha = 0.779$; $CR = 0.857$; $AVE = 0.600$		
OP2	I am highly dependent on my work.	0.765
OP3	I have sacrificed many personal emotions for my work.	0.748
OP4	I devote a significant amount of time to completing my work.	0.790
OP5	I feel somewhat obsessive about my work.	0.792
Off-task Thoughts at work; $\alpha = 0.799$; $CR = 0.869$; $AVE = 0.625$		
OFT2	I usually take short breaks to refresh my mind when I feel tired from work.	0.746
OFT3	I feel more creative after taking some time to rest.	0.867
OFT4	I feel more focused after stepping away from the computer screen or other devices.	0.821
OFT5	I believe that taking mental breaks can enhance the quality of my work.	0.721
On-task Thoughts off work; $\alpha = 0.720$; $CR = 0.842$; $AVE = 0.641$		
ONT2	I use my break time to reflect on ways to improve my performance.	0.730
ONT3	I constantly think about the tasks I am working on, even outside of working	0.852

Item No	Statements	Loadings
	hours.	
ONT4	I find it difficult to detach my mind from the tasks I am working on, even outside of working hours.	0.816
Job Satisfaction; $\alpha = 0.887$; $CR = 0.912$; $AVE = 0.598$		
JS1	I feel that the work I do is appreciated.	0.820
JS 2	I feel that my efforts are properly recognized.	0.802
JS 3	I like the people I work with.	0.810
JS 4	I feel comfortable with my coworkers.	0.770
JS 5	I am highly satisfied with the outcomes of my work.	0.701
JS 6	Sometimes I feel that my work is meaningless. (R)	0.761
JS 7	Communication between supervisors and colleagues runs smoothly within the company.	0.741

Source: Authors' own work

Table 3: Discriminant Validity

Constructs	HP	OP	OFT	ONT	JS
HP	0.761				
OP	0.110	0.774			
OFT	0.519	0.262	0.791		
ONT	0.280	0.400	0.260	0.801	
JS	0.707	0.129	0.539	0.278	0.773

Note: Bold diagonal values ($\sqrt{AVE}$) exceed inter-construct correlations

Source: Authors' own work

Reliability testing in this study was conducted by measuring Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. A research instrument is considered reliable if both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceed 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). As shown in Table 4, all variables in this study have met the required reliability criteria.

Table 4: Cronbach Alpha

Variable	Cronbach Alpha
Harmonious Passion	0.878
Obsessive Passion	0.779
Off-Task Thoughts at Work	0.799
On-Task Thoughts off Work	0.720
Job Satisfaction	0.887

Source: Authors' own work

4.2 Structural Model Assessment (Inner Model)

The structural model was assessed to evaluate the overall model and to test the formulated hypotheses, aiming to produce precise and accurate interpretations of the findings through several parameters (Hair et al., 2019). Before evaluating the structural relationships, collinearity must be examined to ensure that the estimated parameters are not biased. The absence of multicollinearity is indicated when the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are below 5. In this study, the VIF values ranged from 1.000 to 1.456,

which are well below the threshold of 5, as recommended by Hair et al. (2019). Thus, it can be concluded that there are no issues of multicollinearity within the data (see Table 5).

Table 5: Effect Size and Multicollinearity

PLS Path	VIF	f^2	BCCI (2.5%)	BCCI (97.5%)
HP → OFT	1.012	0.353	0.067	0.583
HP → ONT	1.012	0.072	0.079	0.601
OP → ONT	1.012	0.176	0.186	0.539
OP → OFT	1.012	0.062	0.038	0.335
OFT → JS	1.456	0.080	0.236	0.534
ONT → JS	1.280	0.008	0.302	0.585
HP → JS	1.427	0.501	-0.036	0.182
OP → JS	1.243	0.001	0.020	0.325

Source: Authors' own work

Table 6: Coefficient Determination

Variable	R-Square	R-Square Adjust	Q-Squared
Off-Task Thought at Work (OFT)	0.312	0.305	0.181
On Task Thought off Work (ONT)	0.217	0.209	0.120
Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.544	0.534	0.315

Source: Authors' own work

Based on the R-squared analysis presented in Table 6, the results indicate that the combined influence of Harmonious Passion (HP) and Obsessive Passion (OP) on Off-Task Thoughts at Work (OFT) is 31.2%, suggesting a moderate effect. Meanwhile, the combined influence of Harmonious Passion (HP) and Obsessive Passion (OP) on On-Task Thought off Work (ONT) is 21.7%, indicating a weak effect. Furthermore, the R-squared value for the job satisfaction variable (KK) is 0.544, indicating that 54.4% of the variance in job satisfaction can be explained by Harmonious Passion (HP), Obsessive Passion (OP), Off-Task Thoughts at Work (OFT), and On-Task Thoughts off Work (ONT). The remaining 45.6% is explained by other variables not included in this study.

4.3 Hypotheses Testing Result

This study tested 12 hypotheses using PLS-SEM analysis. Out of the 12 hypotheses, only six were supported, namely H1, H3, H5, H7, H9, and H10 (see Table 7). Harmonious passion was found to have a positive effect on OFT (H1 is supported) and a negative effect on ONT (H2 is rejected). Meanwhile, obsessive passion showed a positive effect on ONT (H3 is supported) but a negative effect on OFT (H4 is rejected). Furthermore, harmonious passion was also found to have a positive impact on job satisfaction (H7 is supported), including through OFT as a mediating variable (H9 is supported). Unfortunately, obsessive passion and ONT did not significantly affect job satisfaction (H6 and H8 are rejected). Interestingly, obsessive passion was found to have a positive influence on job satisfaction

when OFT served as a mediator (H10 is supported). In contrast, ONT failed to mediate the relationships between harmonious passion and obsessive passion with job satisfaction (H11 and H12 are rejected).

Table 7: Hypotheses Testing Result

Hypotheses	β	Mean	St. Dev	<i>t</i> -values	<i>p</i> -values	Conclusion
HP → OFT	0.306	0.304	0.134	2.279	0.000	Supported
HP → ONT	0.370	0.374	0.136	2.712	0.000	Rejected
OP → ONT	0.395	0.400	0.087	4.531	0.000	Supported
OP → OFT	0.200	0.199	0.075	2.675	0.000	Rejected
OFT → JS	0.399	0.405	0.078	5.146	0.001	Supported
ONT → JS	0.435	0.432	0.071	6.118	0.272	Rejected
HP → JS	0.077	0.084	0.057	1.361	0.000	Supported
OP → JS	0.180	0.183	0.080	2.249	0.702	Rejected

Source: Authors' own work

Table 8: Mediation Effect Testing Result

Hypotheses	β	Mean	St. Dev	<i>t</i> -values	<i>p</i> -values	Conclusion
HP → OFT → JS	0.283	0.265	0.093	3.054	0.002	Supported
OP → OFT → JS	0.351	0.352	0.074	4.713	0.019	Supported
HP → ONT → JS	0.024	0.032	0.076	0.316	0.321	Rejected
OP → ONT → JS	0.710	0.712	0.040	17.583	0.299	Rejected

Source: Authors' own work

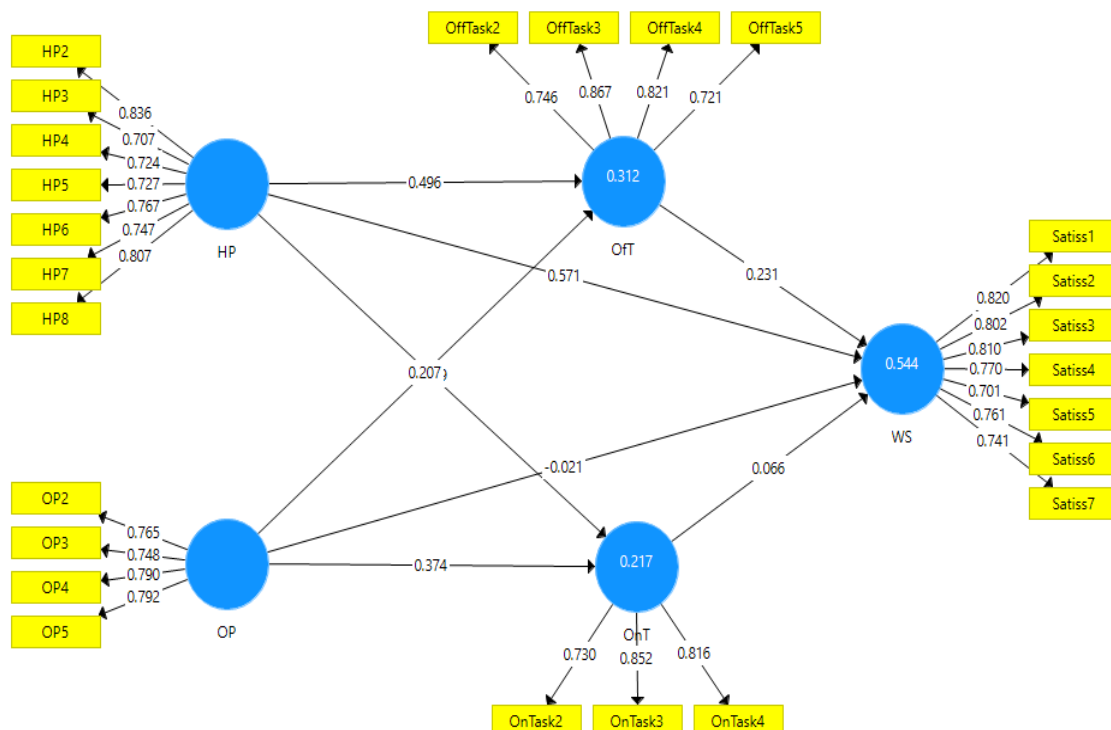


Figure 2: The Structural Model Result

Source: Authors' own work

5. DISCUSSION

This study shows that harmonious passion (HP) has a positive and significant effect on off-task thoughts at work (OFT) and On-task Thoughts at work (ONT). Someone with a harmonious passion has a controlled and balanced approach to their work and personal life. They may continue to think about their work tasks outside of working hours because they feel intrinsically connected to the job, without feeling burdened, as they enjoy and take pleasure in the work they do (Thorgren et al., 2019; Vallerand et al., 2003).

This study shows a significant positive influence of obsessive passion (OP) on on-task thoughts off work (ONT). According to Ramos Alejandro, obsessive passion arises when certain activities are individually internalized and uncontrollably become part of a person's identity. This causes individuals to feel a compulsive urge to continue engaging in that activity (Orgambidez-Ramos et al., 2014). The compulsive urge drives individuals to constantly think about work tasks even when they are not working. The fourth hypothesis also proved that obsessive passion (OP) plays a negative and significant role in off-task thoughts at work (OFT). This finding aligns with the characteristics of Generation Z, who prefer a balance between work and personal life (Chillakuri, 2020). They are more aware of the importance of maintaining mental health while working, so relaxation or mental breaks are considered essential to maintaining that balance.

This research shows a significant positive influence between off-task thoughts at work (OFT) and job satisfaction (JS). This suggests that off-task thoughts at work (OFT) can be beneficial in helping individuals restore their energy and create a more pleasant work experience (Walker et al., 2023), which states that breaks play a crucial role in reducing the risk of work-related conflicts. Unfortunately, there is no significant effect of on-task thoughts off work (ONT) on job satisfaction (JS). This is because respondents who are not yet married (176 people, or 88% of the total respondents) tend to have fewer responsibilities outside of work. As a result, their free time may be more flexible for thinking about work without being disturbed by family demands. This can reduce the potential negative impact of on-task thoughts off work on job satisfaction.

According to the research findings, harmonious passion (HP) has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction (JS). The results of this study suggest that when someone performs a job willingly, they are more likely to work happily without pressure, ultimately leading to job satisfaction (Azmi et al., 2021; Benitez et al., 2023; Mantiri & Sandroto, 2023; Thorgren et al., 2019; Vallerand et al., 2010). The eighth hypothesis indicates that there is no significant effect between Obsessive Passion (OP) and Job Satisfaction (JS). Obsessive passion (OP) causing them to lose awareness of the consequences of that activity (Vallerand, 2016).

Based on the research findings, Off-task Thought at Work significantly mediates the relationship between harmonious passion and job satisfaction among Generation Z. According to Sara Thorgren, Joakim Wincent (2019) off task thought at work is one of the concepts of task thought which

refers to the involvement of thoughts or cognitive processes that are not related to the task when a person is working. Out-of-task thoughts or behaviours have important implications for well-being related outcomes (Moon et al., 2020). It means that the presence of Off-task Thoughts can serve as a form of healthy reflection, allowing them to momentarily shift their focus away from work without losing commitment to their tasks. Individuals with Harmonious Passion tend to have a balance between work and personal life (Thorgren et al., 2019). Meanwhile, for individuals with Obsessive Passion, although they tend to think about work obsessively, Off-task Thoughts at Work can serve as a mechanism to alleviate the perceived pressure.

The results of the subsequent hypothesis testing indicate that on-task thought at work (ONT) is unable to mediate the relationship between harmonious passion (HP) and obsessive passion to job satisfaction (JS) (H11 and H12 are not supported). According to Milman & Mills (2023), individuals with harmonious passion can enjoy their work in a balanced and healthy manner. They feel satisfied with their work because it aligns with their interests and values, not because they have to constantly think about or obsess over the job after working hours. They tend to focus more on the intrinsic satisfaction they derive from the work itself, which makes them more satisfied with their work. So the concept of on-task *thought at work* refers to the involvement of individuals in thinking about strategies, self-instruction, and planning how to handle work-related tasks even though the individual is not working (Thorgren et al. 2019) is less likely to characterize by individuals with harmonious passions. Meanwhile, according to Kanfer et al. (1994), engaging in on-task thoughts when not working demands a large amount of attention. Individuals with obsessive passions often experience stress or anxiety related to their work, which is exacerbated by continuing to think about work even outside of working hours (Vallerand et al., 2010). This makes them feel excessive fatigue, which can hinder their performance and even have an impact on their job satisfaction.

6.0 CONCLUSION

In this study, Generation Z employees tend to prioritize workplace comfort that aligns with their passions and life balance. They seek jobs that not only provide income but also support personal development and a balanced lifestyle. This tendency indicates a strong inclination toward harmonious passion, where work is perceived not merely as a source of income but also as a means to achieve intrinsic satisfaction and enhance quality of life. These findings align with the results of this study, which show that the respondents predominantly exhibit harmonious passion, as they already feel comfortable in their current jobs.

From a managerial perspective, the findings suggest that organizations should focus on emphasizing meaningful work, autonomy, opportunities for skill development, and supportive leadership, as these factors are more likely to foster a healthy form of work passion that enhances job satisfaction. Organizations should create environments in which employees can engage enthusiastically

with their work while maintaining psychological well-being. From a theoretical perspective, this study extends the Dualistic Model of Passion by demonstrating that the relationship between work passion and job satisfaction is explained through distinct cognitive mechanisms during work breaks. Specifically, the findings identify *off-task thoughts at work* as a significant mediator linking both harmonious and obsessive passion to job satisfaction, whereas *off-task thoughts off work* do not play a mediating role. These results suggest that not all work-related cognitive processes equally translate passion into positive work outcomes, thereby providing a more detailed understanding of the psychological pathways through which different forms of passion influence employees' job satisfaction.

A further limitation of this study is the use of non-probability sampling, which may reduce the representativeness of the sample and limit the generalizability of the findings. Future studies are encouraged to adopt probability sampling methods and recruit more diverse participants across industries and regions to improve the external validity of the results. Comparative studies involving different generational cohorts and industry sectors are also encouraged to examine whether the relationships among work passion, cognitive processes, and job satisfaction vary across demographic and organizational contexts. Furthermore, future studies may incorporate additional variables, particularly moderating factors, to provide a deeper understanding of the conditions under which work passion influences job satisfaction.

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DECLARATIONS

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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ETHICAL APPROVAL

Formal ethical approval was not obtained for this study. However, the study adhered to recognized ethical guidelines, including voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and the responsible handling of participant data.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) DECLARATION

The authors declare that artificial intelligence tools (such as ChatGPT or similar technologies) were used to assist in language editing and improve the readability of the manuscript. The authors take full responsibility for the content, accuracy, and integrity of the manuscript

Author Contribution

E.A.: Writing – original draft preparation; S.M.J.: Supervision, Writing – review & editing. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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