CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 BASIC INTRODUCTION

In the current business era of high turbulence and dynamic change, it is apparently becoming difficult for organization to sustain in market. To remain competitive, organizations today are dealing with a number of problems concurrently, such as globalized market place, diversification of workforce, more demanding customers and technological advancements. Moreover, technological advancements at such a rapid pace have made reproduction of services and solutions much easier than before resulting in heightened competition. In such a situation, organizations with conventional and orthodox business methods cannot survive for long. To remain competitive, organizations not only need continuous innovation rather they need to focus on reinventing and redesigning themselves.

In the backdrop of all these uncertainties, people and people management activities have taken a central stage. Various researchers have noted down the importance of people and people management practices in achieving organizational success. In this era of human capital where people are considered a unique source of achieving competitive edge; organizations need to unleash the talents of their employees as all other resources required for running an organization successfully (such as finance, machines, material and technology) can either be bought or copied.

In response, organizations need to hire employees who bring passion to their work. Past research has produced evidence supporting the critical role ‘passion’ plays in the success of organization. Passionate employees are considered important as they easily adapt to new and challenging situations [1]. Moreover, ‘passion’ enables innovation and creativity and drives employee to seek out novel sources of knowledge [2]. But at the same time, organizations need to focus their attention on cultivating passion within their employees to boost employee retention, satisfaction and commitment.
1.2 NEED OF THE STUDY

In the recent past, the concept of ‘work passion’ has become much popular among practitioners and consultants. Researchers suggested that ‘work passion’ is a unique human capability that contributes most towards organizational success. It is considered as one of the strongest positive emotions that energises employee at workplace and is also considered essential for managers to motivate others [3]. Today, ‘work passion’ is a need of the hour for efficiently responding to the constant disruptive changes of the business environment. Results of a survey reveal that passionate workers are more likely to be inspired and energized by unexpected environmental challenges rather than being stressed out of them [2]. Various practitioners have defined the term in their own way such as “personal intensity or force that fuels our strongest emotion” [4], “love that endures for long time” [1] and “an intrinsic drive to do more and excel at every aspect of one’s profession” [2]. They are continuously emphasizing on the importance of ‘passionate workforce’ in business excellence and growth.

Though, recently some surveys have highlighted the importance of ‘passionate workforce’ making it popular as a new area of research, still, the concept has received little conceptual or empirical consideration in academic literature. In the context of entrepreneurship, the concept of ‘passion’ has been defined as “enthusiasm, joy, and even zeal” [5], “selfish love of work” [6] and “love for one’s work” [7]. Passion was considered as a stable personality trait by these researchers. Later, Cardon et al, [8] provided a more comprehensive definition of entrepreneurial passion and defined it as “consciously accessible, intense positive feelings, experienced by engagement in entrepreneurial activities, associated with roles that are meaningful and salient to the self-identity of the entrepreneur”. They considered passion as a state rather than stable trait. In the context of activities, Vallerand et al, [9] defined passion for activities as “strong inclination or desire towards a self-defining activity that one likes (or love), finds important and in which one invests time and energy”. According to Vallerand et al [9], passion is a trait.

In the context of work, Perttulla [10], defined passion for work as “a psychological state characterized by the experience of intense positive emotions, an internal drive to work, and a
sense of meaningful connection towards ones’ work”. This conceptualization of work passion considered it as a state consisting of both emotional and cognitive component. According to Zigarmi et al [11] employee work passion is “an individual’s persistent, emotionally positive, meaning-based, state of wellbeing stemming from reoccurring cognitive and affective appraisals of various job and organizational situations that result in consistent, constructive work intentions and behaviors”. According to Zigarmi et al, a person becomes passionate for work through a mental process. Kelloway et al [12] provided a more broader perspective of passion at workplace by defining passion for job as comprising of healthy engagement with, involvement in and excitement stemming from work itself.

This review of literature suggests that there is a dearth of research on the concept of ‘work passion’ as excluding few exceptions [10] [11] [12], all studies on the concept of passion that have been published till date are either in the context of activities or in the context of entrepreneurship. Further, the review also reveals the presence of only two scales for measuring ‘passion’ at workplace- generalized passion scale [9] and passion for one’s work scale [13]. Vallerand’s generalized passion scale focused on how passion fits with person’s rest of the life whether it is harmonious or obsessive. This is the most extensively used and accepted measure of passion but its application in the context of work is restricted to only few studies [14] [15] [16]. Moreover, this scale does not measure the passion component in a person rather it focuses on the measurement of type of passion one has for an activity or work. Whereas, the scale developed by Pertulla focuses on the measurement of passion component in an employee rather than measuring the type of passion one has for his or her work [13]. This scale needs further validation as this scale has not been used by any other researcher and has not been applied in any other context till date. Moreover, to the best of researcher’s knowledge, there has been no theoretical or empirical examination of this construct in India. In response to this scarcity of information in literature on the concept of passion for work, this study is an initial investigation into the construct development and validation of the concept of employee work passion.

Moreover, antecedents and outcomes of passion at workplace have received limited attention and only in such contexts as passion for activities and entrepreneurial passion. While passion for
work has been seen associated with variety of positive outcomes by practitioners but there is surprising dearth of research in academic literature. Furthermore, only few attempts have been made to identify possible antecedents of passion in past studies. Thus, there existed a need to develop and empirically test a theoretical model of employee work passion with its possible antecedents and outcomes. In doing so, this study develops and examines a theoretical framework that includes perceived organization support (POS) and self-efficacy as antecedents of employee work passion and career satisfaction is taken as an outcome.

Building on the work of Pertulla & Cardon [17], we focused on self-efficacy and perceived organizational support as two of the factors responsible for the development of passion among employees towards their work. Where, self-efficacy refers to one’s beliefs in one’s abilities to organize and implement the courses of action necessary to manage prospective conditions [18]. Based on available literature, it is hypothesized that employees who are highly efficacious are likely to be more passionate for their work as they enjoy their work more and feel more enthusiastic at work. POS refers to employee’s general beliefs about the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being [19]. Here, it is hypothesized that employees who perceive that their organisation values their contribution and cares about their well-being are more likely to reciprocate the same by exhibiting high levels of passion for their work.

Greenhaus et al [20] defined career satisfaction as the manager’s assessment of his or her overall career success and progress toward meeting career goals. Regarding career satisfaction, Pertulla & Cardon, [17] precisely recommended that individuals who exhibit high levels of work passion are more likely to get recognized for their contribution early and thus may rise to corporate ladder quickly resulting in objective career success. Figure 3.1 depicts the research model of this study.

**Research Gaps**

- A search throughout the literature does not yield a consensus regarding definition and nature of ‘passion’.
• Research reveals the presence of only two scales for measuring employee work passion—generalized passion scale [9] and passion for one’s work scale [13]. Where, the first scale focuses on the measurement of two type of passion - harmonious or obsessive passion rather than passion component. While, the second scale focuses on the measurement of passion component. Thus, no consensus regarding measurement of work passion was found in the literature.

• Limited research on antecedents and outcomes of passion for work.

• Lastly and most importantly, it was found that there exists no theoretical or empirical examination of this construct in India till date.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to address the above-mentioned research gaps.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In light of the problems identified, following are the objectives of this research:

• To identify significant dimensions of employee work passion
• To develop and validate employee work passion scale
• To examine the relationship between:
  • Self-efficacy and employee work passion
  • Perceived organisational support and employee work passion
  • Employee work passion and career satisfaction
• To examine the mediating effect employee work passion between its antecedents (perceived organizational support and self-efficacy) and outcome (career satisfaction)

1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

A research model was proposed for this study which links employee work passion with its antecedents and outcome. The dispositional and contextual factors posited to have an effect on employees work passion includes 1) self-efficacy and 2) perceived organizational support (POS).
Further, employee work passion was expected to be positively related with career satisfaction. Figure 3.1 depicts the research model of this study.

Based on the research model developed for this study, following research hypotheses are framed:

H1- Self-efficacy is positively related to employee work passion

H2- Perceived organizational support is positively related to employee work passion

H3- Employee work passion is positively related to career satisfaction.

H4- Employee work passion mediates the relationship between antecedents and outcome.

   H4a: Self-efficacy will be positively related to career satisfaction

   H4b: Work passion mediates the relationship between self-efficacy and career satisfaction

   H4c: POS will be positively related to career satisfaction

   H4d: Employee work passion mediates the relationship between POS and career satisfaction

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The general intent of this exploratory, descriptive and explanatory study was two-fold. To attain the objectives of this research, we conducted our study in two phases. The first phase consists of qualitative study comprising of extensive review of existing literature on the concept of passion followed by qualitative interviews of 21 individuals belonging to variety of occupations. The purpose of these interviews was to explore the perception of Indian employees regarding the concept of work passion. After integrating the results of literature review and qualitative analysis of interviews, multi-dimensional image of work passion emerged. Based on these dimensions, operational definition of ‘work passion’ was developed which formed the baseline of our next phase. This stage ended with the generation of items for measuring employee work passion.

Next phase of analysis comprised of development of valid and reliable measure of employee work passion followed by hypothesis testing. In this stage, employee work questionnaire was
subjected to qualitative tests which resulted in the development of 17-items questionnaire to measure passion quotient among an employee. For hypotheses testing, three more research instruments were identified on the basis of literature review and expert opinions. The new general self-efficacy scale developed by Chen et al [21] was used to measure employee self-efficacy. Survey of perceived organizational support scale developed by Eisenberger [19] was used to measure the construct of POS. Last but not the least Greenhaus [20] scale of career satisfaction was used to measure the extent of career satisfaction among employees. In response, data collection was done using field study to perform required quantitative tests.

The population of the study is software engineers working in different information technology companies of National Capital Region (NCR), India. A list of 1571 Information Technology (IT) companies operating in the National capital region was used for inviting companies for participating in the research. The names of the IT companies were pooled out from www.fundoodata.com and simple random sampling technique was used to select 20 IT companies. Request for participation in this study was sent through e-mails to these 20 randomly selected companies. Only those companies were approached for detailed discussion of the research objectives that showed interest. The identity of the participating organizations was kept confidential to honor the request.

A sample size of 668 was taken at two different points of time (150 for EFA and 518 for CFA) and data was collected from the entry, middle and senior level employees. Final questionnaire also included some of the essential demographic information such as age, education, gender, marital status, and tenure of the respondents. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM) were used for data analysis and hypotheses testing. Tools used for statistical analysis were Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS).


1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study makes a significant contribution to the current movement of positive psychology. Positive psychology is study of positive emotions in organization. Review of literature suggests that scholars have always been interested in studying the negative aspects of work life such as burnout, job stress until recently. With the emergence of positive organizational behavior, scholars have shifted their focus from negative to positive emotions at work. Studies pertaining to positive aspects of human personality such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience are attracting researchers of today. This study of ‘work passion’ construct will directly contribute to the present list of positive human capacities.

More specifically, this study is an attempt to provide clear understanding of the term work passion in Indian context. Apart from defining the concept of work passion, this study also contributes towards the development of reliable and valid measure of work passion. Lastly, an attempt has been made to study the antecedents and outcome of work passion so that organizations can not only hire passionate employees rather they can foster this unmatched human capability of their employees.

1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In this study, data is collected from Information Technology companies operating in National Capital region of India. Sample from different regions of India may be taken to further investigate the concept of employee work passion and its relationship with its antecedents and outcome. Additionally, the analysis also suffers from small sample size as larger sample size would have allowed a more refined analysis of the research framework. Though, this study has been done with some limitations but has used both qualitative as well as quantitative techniques for data collection which provides strength to its findings. Moreover, advanced tools for data analyses were used in this study for obtaining accurate results.
1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The work presented in this thesis focuses on the measurement and development of ‘work passion’ in employees. In doing so, the first major objective of this study was to develop the reliable and valid measure of ‘work passion’ in Indian context. Another objective of this study was to study the relationship between self-efficacy, POS, work passion and career satisfaction of employees. The results obtained from this study are encouraging. The study has been organized in seven chapters. Brief outline of the various chapters is as follows:

Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter. This chapter starts with the brief overview of changing business environment and its adverse effects on the organizations. It also discusses the importance of people and people management in overcoming the adverse effects of constantly changing environment along with the importance of employee ‘work passion’. It underlines the significance of the study and emphasizes on the source of motivation for this present study. The chapter throws light on the various research objectives and hypotheses that have been addressed in this study followed by the brief overview of research methodology adopted for the study. Finally, the scope and limitations of the study have also been highlighted.

Chapter 2 contains the extensive review of literature on the concept of passion. The chapter discusses historical evolution of the concept of passion along with the review of available literature on passion in different domains - activities, entrepreneurial and work. Similarly, different scales available to measure passion in different context are also reviewed. This in depth review of literature allowed researcher to identify the gaps in previous researches and provided opportunity and inspiration for adding into the existing literature.

Chapter 3 provides the detailed description on theoretical framework proposed for this study. Theoretical framework for this study attempts to link employee work passion with its antecedents and outcome. Thus, this chapter provides detailed description on the two antecedent’s self-efficacy and perceived organizational support of employee work passion chosen for this study along with the details of study which provides support to this relationship. In line with the same,
the chapter contains review of literature on career satisfaction as an outcome of employee work passion along with the studies supporting this relationship.

**Chapter 4** describes the research methodology used to conduct this study. As mentioned earlier, this study comprised of two different phases, where first phase is exploratory in nature and second phase is descriptive as well as causal in nature. The chapter offers specifics of the population and the sampling method adopted for the study for both the phases separately. It also contains detailed description of the demographic information of the sample used for this study. This chapter includes the findings of phase 1 as these findings paved the way for phase 2. Further, the research instruments used to conduct this study are described along with details of methods used for data analysis.

**Chapter 5** focuses on data analysis along with various analysis techniques used in the study. Chapter starts with the demographic analysis of the participants. Then, it started with the confirmatory factor analysis of employee work passion scale which was one of the major objectives of this study. The next step is to test the reliability and validity of other research instruments used in this study with the help of CFA using AMOS 18.0. After testing the reliability and validity of all the research instruments, hypothesis testing is done using two-step structural equation modeling technique with the help of AMOS 18.0. First hypothesis is to study the effect of self-efficacy on employee work passion. Second hypothesis is to study the effect of POS on employee work passion. Third hypothesis is to study the effect of employee work passion on career satisfaction. Fourth and final hypothesis is to study the mediating role of employee work passion between its antecedents and outcome. Results suggested that the entire hypotheses are accepted and employee work passion is found to mediate the relationship between self-efficacy, POS and career satisfaction.

**Chapter 6** represents the conclusion of the study. Further this chapter talks about the contribution of the study to knowledge field as well as the practical implications of the study in organization. Lastly, limitations and scope for future research in the area of employee work passion is discussed.