

ANALYSIS OF TOXIC LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM MEDIATED BY JOB BURNOUT ON TURNOVER INTENTION IN THE HYBRID WORK ERA

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Abstract: This study aims to clarify whether Job Burnout mediates the relationship between Toxic Leadership and Organizational Cynicism on Turnover Intention. The study deals with the study of Toxic Leadership and Organizational Cynicism in millennial generation employees. This research utilized quantitative methods by involving a sample of 100 millennial employees who work in the banking sector in Central Java Province taken with a purposive sampling technique and was assessed using a questionnaire instrument with a Likert scale of 1-5 points. Results indicated that toxic leadership has significant effects on job burnout and turnover intention. This means that toxic leadership is shown to predict job burnout which leads to turnover intention. Meanwhile, this study revealed that the burnout variable did not mediate the relationship between organizational cynicism and turnover intention. Further, organizational cynicism has no significant impact on the job burnout variable as per data retrieved from SEM. The paper is empirical and explain the psychological dynamics of millennial employees by giving more insights into it: so as to motivate the leadership style designs that control job burnout and turnover intentions.

Keywords: *Toxic Leadership, Organizational Cynicism, Burnout Syndrome, Turnover Intention, Hybrid Work Era.*

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1. Introduction

The rise of hybrid work models is a vital response to the workplace's changing landscape, fueled in large part by the constrictions of COVID-19. Initially perceived as temporary, the requirement for remote working has now evolved into a sustainable hybrid mix of in-office and remote working. The switch brings with it several important issues with regard to organizational dynamics that is unhealthy leadership, organizational cynicism, job burnout and their influence on turnover intentions. To be more effective at improving the wellbeing of employees and organizations, organizations must understand these dynamics.

Toxic leadership refers to toxic behaviour of leaders that may create negativity at the organization's climate and culture. When employees experience cynicism, their trust and engagement can begin to erode. Such leadership approaches are connected to negative outcomes. In hybrid workplaces where people are together in person less often and rely more

on technology, an absence of feedback and other support could amplify the impact of toxic leaders. It is important to know how toxic leadership manifests in hybrid environments because they can exacerbate The ascension of hybrid work models is an important answer to the shifting landscape of the workplace, pushed into prominence by COVID-19's strictures. If, originally, long-distance working seemed a stop-gap measure until things got back to normal, now it seems that remote and office work are here to stay. The switch also implies a number of relevant issues when considering organizational dynamics, namely unhealthy leadership (organizational cynicism), job burnout and their effects on turnover intentions. In order to promote employee and organizational wellbeing more successfully, organizations need this oversight.

Toxic leadership is presenting to your followers a personality that radiates hatred, fear, and intimidation in order to produce a high level of discomfort in subordinates. Two poor leaders' behavior could then be setting the stage for a negative, toxic environment within an organization; such action is as powerful as positive action. Discontent from the trenches can erode trust and engagement. It is associated with negative outcomes, these leadership styles. For hybrid workplaces, where in-person time is reduced and employees rely even more on technology to communicate, not receiving feedback and other support could magnify the impact of toxic leaders. Since hybridity may enhance employees' feelings of alienation and cynicism, it is also important to see how toxic leadership leads to emotional exhaustion among them, which at the subsequent developmental stage can lead to their turnover intention (Athanasiadou & Theriou, 2021).

It is believed that a toxic leadership climate perpetuates burnout which further fosters the desire to leave. Particularly when employees do not feel valued (Höcker et al., 2024); (Marozva & Pelser, 2025). Toxic leadership can lead to the formation of negative perceptions about an organization's morality and mission. This cynicism can also be depersonalizing, making people feel indifferent to each other and less disposed to work hard at their jobs.

Many workers are now remote. Because the employee is not directly supervised, management may choose to performance based on outcomes. This can drive productivity and be a power mover, but it may also lead to mistrust especially if employees feel unhappy with the way they were treated. It can have you become jaded and burnt out, making you want to leave (Höcker et al., 2024); (Athanasiadou & Theriou, 2021).

The ability to do this is important for productivity, but it also combats the effects of toxic leaders and cynicism in an organization. When workers are empower to decide how they do work, they sometimes will feel less burnout and intent to turnover (Lindeberg et al., 2023); (Krajčík et al., 2023). In addition, hybrid work systems have made it clear that organizations need to change their expectations to meet employee expectations from flexibility and work-life balance. A framework that allows people to work in their respective styles can lead to job satisfaction and ultimately reduce the turnover intention, especially in a toxic leadership and organization cynicism context (Marozva & Pelser, 2025); (Bell et al., 2023).

To understand the relationship between variables, and state theoretical understanding of answering the research questions in an objective and measurable manner, the following hypothesis was examined by the researcher:

- H1: Toxic Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Turnover Intention.
- H2: Toxic Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Job Burnout.
- H3: Organizational Cynicism has a positive and significant effect on Turnover Intention.
- H4: Organizational Cynicism has a positive and significant effect on Job Burnout.
- H5: Job Burnout has a positive and significant effect on Turnover Intention.
- H6: Job Burnout mediates the effect of Toxic Leadership on Turnover Intention.

H7: Job Burnout mediates the effect of Organizational Cynicism on Turnover Intention.

A model is a formal construct of the essential properties of structure and content of that which is being studied. A theoretical model grounded in the literature and which also forms the basis for hypothesis formulation is depicted in Figure 1 below.

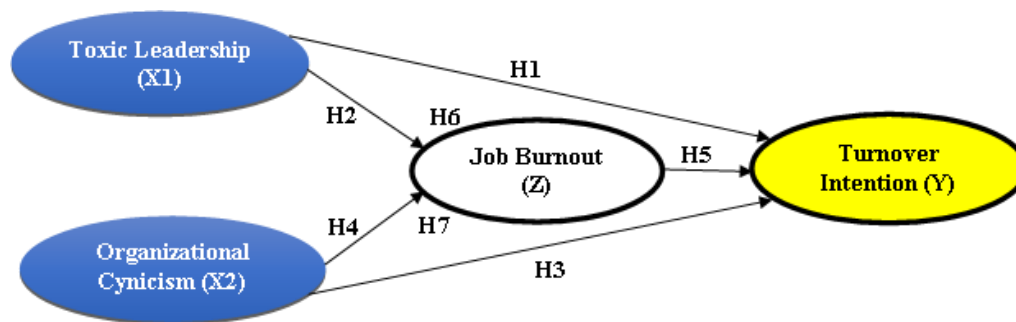


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

2. Research Method

This study uses a quantitative method through a survey of millennial generation responses on the usage of digital payment instruments. The research data uses primary data. Primary data is a source that gives data collectors the information directly. The individuals included in the study include all millennial employees who work in Central Java banking. The sampling strategy uses purposive sampling, a type of nonprobability sampling. In purposive sampling technique, samples are selected based on their special features that are relevant to the problem. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2019) it is usually recommended you sample between 30 to 500. The researcher discovered a sample with 100 respondents because of the basic feasibility of the sample. A questionnaire was implemented in this research to collect some data. The evaluation employs a metric called Likert Scale which measures all characteristics with a value of 1 to 5. The research employs SEM-PLS as the data analysis technique and uses SmartPLS software version 4.1.1.2 to process the data.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

Convergent Validity

The composite and AVE assessments must be reliable according to convergent validity test. As shown in Table 2, the mean value of AVE is above 0.7 which exceeds the minimum standard of 0.5 (Sarstedt et al., 2021). If the value of all indicators for the external loading factor is greater than 0.5, the indicator is strong (Sarstedt et al., 2021). Loading value is said to be adequate in the range of 0.5 – 0.6. The external loading values for research variables are shown in Figure 2. Figure 2 shows that each research indicator used in this study has an external loading value of more than 0.5 or strong. The diagram of algorithmic paths below shows this study's conceptual basis.

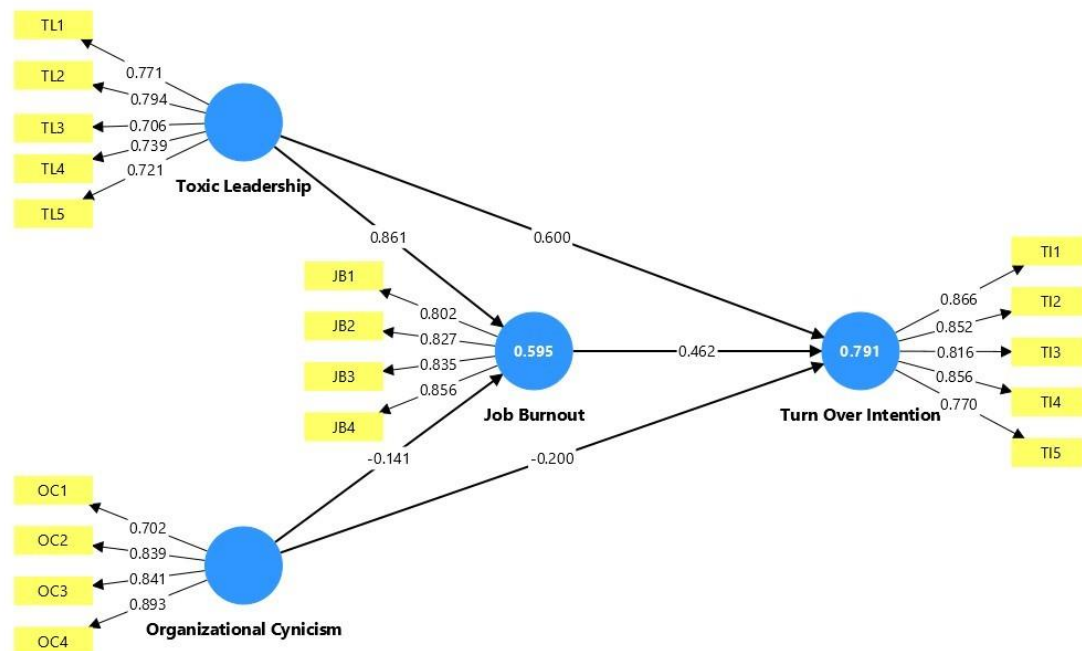


Figure 2. Outer Loading Path Diagram

In this study, the outer loading test results increase convergent validity by showing that each indicator provides a significant explanation of what is actually latent variable; this finding not only confirms the quality of the research instrument itself, but also establishes that the conceptual model shown in the algorithmic diagram is grounded in strong empirical evidence for further analysis.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity refers to the extent to which a variable construct in one latent model differs from another variable construct in a different latent model (Henseler et al., 2015). We're using the AVE parameter for validity testing which needs to meet a minimum 0.5 or higher. If the value is equal to or greater than 0.5, it means that the construct can explain 50% or more of the variance of the items (Sarstedt et al., 2021). According to Table 1, the AVE value for each variable is above 0.5 and able to declare valid.

Table 1. Composite Reliability

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Job Burnout	0.690
Organizational Cynism	0.676
Toxic Leadership	0.558
Turnover Intention	0.694

Composite Reliability

An instrument will be said to be reliable if the mean Average variance Extracted (AVE) value is above 0.5 and Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha value is above 0.7 (Ghozali & Latan, 2018). Based on Table 2, the output data with high reliability is the one that has a

Composite Reliability value above 0.7. The outcomes reveal that each of the research variables possesses composite reliability values exceeding the threshold of 0.7, indicating a satisfactory consistency reliability of the variables.

Table 2. Composite Reliability

Variable	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_a)
Job Burnout	0.856	0.899
Organizational Cynicism	0.860	0.892
Toxic Leadership	0.848	0.863
Turnover Intention	0.891	0.919

R Square Test

R-square value indicates the extent of determination of exogenous variables on the endogenous variable. The bigger the R-square, the better the level of determination. According to Hair's opinion as written Ghazali & Latan (2018), a model is categorized strong when it has a value of 0.75, a model is categorized moderate if it has value of 0.50 and is included in the weak model category if it has value of 0.25. The job burnout variable has an adjusted R-square value of 0.586 which is in moderate category, while the adjusted R-square value (R²) of turnover intention is 0.785 which is in strong category according to the findings in Table 3

Table 3. Adjusted R-Squared Test

Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted	Category
Job Burnout	0.595	0.586	Moderate
Turnover Intention	0.791	0.785	Strong

Hypothesis Testing

The bootstrapping function, which will be executed using SmartPLS 4.0 software, is hypothesis testing. Bootstrapping is a technique used to check the model significance (Qurniawati et al., 2023). The T-Statistics value shows how important that coefficient path is (Sarstedt et al., 2021).

Table 4. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Construct	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standart Deviation	T- statistics	P values	Result
JB → TI	0.462	0.458	0.074	6.204	0.000	accepted
OC → JB	-0.141	-0.108	0.104	1.365	0.172	rejected
OC → TI	-0.200	-0.187	0.063	3.182	0.001	rejected
TL → JB	0.861	0.841	0.087	9.855	0.000	accepted
TL → TI	0.600	0.597	0.095	6.291	0.000	accepted
OC → JB → TI	-0.065	-0.051	0.048	1.368	0.171	rejected
TL → JB → TI	0.398	0.387	0.081	4.886	0.000	accepted

The hypothesis test between job burnout and brand image showed a p-value of 0.000. This means the t-statistic meets the requirement of a p-value <0.05 , while the coefficient value is 0.462. This hypothesis is accepted.

The hypothesis test between organizational cynicism and job burnout showed a p-value of 0.172, which is greater than 0.05. The coefficient value is -0.141, therefore, the assumption of a relationship between organizational cynicism and job burnout is rejected.

The hypothesis test between organizational cynicism and turnover intention showed a p-value of 0.001. This means the t-statistic meets the requirement of a p-value <0.05 , but the coefficient value is -0.200. This hypothesis is rejected.

The hypothesis test between toxic leadership and job burnout showed a p-value of 0.000. This indicates a p-value <0.05 , while the coefficient value is 0.861. Therefore, this hypothesis can be concluded as accepted.

The hypothesis test between toxic leadership and turnover intention showed a p-value of 0.000, which is <0.05 . The coefficient value is 0.600, therefore, it can be concluded that the assumption of toxic leadership on turnover intention is accepted.

Meanwhile, the hypothesis test between organizational cynicism and turnover intention, mediated by job burnout, showed a p-value of 0.171. This indicates a p-value >0.05 , while the coefficient value is -0.065. Therefore, this hypothesis can be concluded as rejected.

Furthermore, the hypothesis test between toxic leadership and turnover intention, mediated by job burnout, showed a p-value of 0.000, which indicates a p-value <0.05 , while the coefficient value is 0.398. Therefore, this hypothesis can be concluded as accepted.

3.2. Discussion

Job Burnout on Turnover Intention

Based on the results of testing the first hypothesis, it was proven that toxic leadership factors significantly influence the turnover intention of millennial employees, with a P-value of $0.000 \leq 0.05$. This indicates that toxic leadership is a factor that has a significant impact on employee turnover intention. This research is relevant to research by Hariyanto et al. (2022) showed evidence that high workloads and an unsupportive work environment increase burnout, which ultimately drives turnover intention.

Organizational Cynicism on Job Burnout

Based on the results of the second hypothesis test, it shows that organizational cynicism does not have a positive and significant effect on job burnout, with a P-value of $0.172 > 0.05$ and a coefficient value of -0.141. This research is relevant to research by Pulido-Ramírez et al. (2025), which shows that organizational cynicism has a negative impact on employee psychological well-being, which is one of the triggering factors for burnout.

Organizational Cynicism on Turnover Intention

Based on the results of testing the third hypothesis, it shows that organizational cynicism has a significant effect on turnover intention, as evidenced by a P-value of $0.000 \leq 0.05$ and a coefficient value of -0.200. The results of this research are in accordance with previous studies found by Ike et al. (2024), which showed that the organizational cynicism variable significantly increases turnover intention, especially when perceptions of organizational support are low.

Toxic Leadership on Job Burnout

The results of this research provide evidence for the acceptance of the fourth hypothesis, that the toxic leadership variable has a positive and significant effect on job burnout with evidence of a coefficient value of 0.000, so that the hypothesis that states there is a positive and significant influence of the toxic leadership variable on job burnout of millennial employees, with evidence of a significance value of $0.000 \leq 0.05$. This is increasingly relevant and supported by the findings of Kılıç et al. (2020) showing that toxic leaders have an impact on decreasing productivity and increasing psychological stress that leads to burnout, especially in the financial sector.

Toxic Leadership on Turnover Intention

From the test results on the fifth hypothesis, it indicates that toxic leadership has a positive and significant impact on millennial employees' turnover intention with p-value $0.000 \leq 0.05$ and coefficient value of 0.600. These findings based on research are consistent with these found by Munandar et al. (2024) in PT. Anugrah Rekanan Abadi Mitra J&T Express, there is a role of Leadership factors as they also claimed that toxic leadership style is the most dominating cause for voluntary turnover intentions for employees.

Job Burnout mediates the effect of Organizational Cynicism on Turnover Intention

The testing results of the sixth hypothesis have shown that job burnout is not able to mediate the effect of toxic leadership on turnover intention, and the P-value = $0.0171 > 0.05$, with a coefficient of -0.065. This also contrasts with the work of Asri (2022), which revealed organizational cynicism as a psychological driver of turnover intention and burnout. So the sixth hypothesis is disconfirmed.

Job Burnout mediates the effect of Toxic Leadership on Turnover Intention

Hypothesis 7 test Table 7 shows the result of 6 th hypothesis that organisational cynicism significantly and positively on turnover intention, mediated by job burnout with P value = $0.000 \leq \alpha = 0.05$ and coeeficient = 0.398_VALUE. This result is consistent with the study conducted by Wulandari et al. (2023), that indicated the role of burnout as mediators in leadership style turnover intention. Hence the seventh hypothesis is confirmed.

4. Conclusion

The following are the research conclusions, presented numerically, for better organization:

- 1) Toxic leadership influences job burnout and turnover intention among millennial employees in the banking sector in Central Java.
- 2) Job burnout is statistically proven to mediate the relationship between toxic leadership styles and turnover intention.
- 3) Job burnout does not mediate the relationship between organizational cynicism and turnover intention.
- 4) Organizational cynicism has no effect on job burnout.

These results give us more information on the psychological side of millennial workers, especially how they feel about pressure from their bosses and how they don't care about the company. Companies, especially banks, need to look at their leadership and make it better. Leadership training should be provided to foster empathy, open communication, and empowerment, thereby reducing the risk of burnout and high turnover. Management needs to reduce organizational cynicism by creating a psychologically safe work environment and a positive organizational culture to increase employee loyalty.

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