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Looking for Signs of Passion in Employees

A Preliminary Study Exploring the Concept of Passion within an Occupational Context

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Abstract

According to the dualistic model of passion, there are two types of passion that people can be motivated by. While harmonious passion has a wide range of benefits for the individual, such as resilience, health, motivation, and happiness, obsessive passion increases the chances for occupational burnout, mental and physical ill-being, and loss of concentration. If obsessive passion can be detected early enough, further consequences can be prevented and an attempt to transform it could be undertaken. This study aims to provide a framework for an algorithm that holds the capability to detect signs of obsessive passion in employees. In order to collect the necessary data to provide a framework for an algorithm to detect obsessive passion, people in leadership positions have been interviewed. Additionally, they have been asked to fill in the Passion Scale in order to measure whether they are being driven by mostly harmonious or obsessive passion. The interviews have then been transcribed and analysed for common themes, speech patterns, and words in order to collect signal words and patterns. As the participants have all been found to be predominantly harmoniously passionate as opposed to obsessive and therefore could not be used for finding speech patterns and signal words for obsessive passion, the focus of the study has first shifted towards finding common themes within harmoniously passionate leaders. Reoccurring themes all have been connected to the mindset and internalisation of harmonious passion, which indicates that passion itself is indeed detectable in text and speech. However, the validity and reliability of these results have been further investigated and discussed in this paper. This study contributes to the field of positive organisational psychology by shedding a light on new potential research questions as this was the first study to attempt to find speech patterns and marker words that signal the type of passion someone is operated by by just the means of textual analysis. The dualistic model of passion and its implications are highly relevant to the field of positive psychology and need to be applied more throughly within organisational research and occupational health management. This thesis attempted to create a solution for detecting either one side of the dualistic model or the other, but has more so raised the question whether every individual can easily be sorted into one of the two groups that the dualistic model suggests exist.

Keywords: Passion; Burnout; Dualistic Model; Workaholism; Identity building

1. Introduction

Within any organisation, leaders have great influence on their employees' work behaviour and their attitude regarding their jobs (Alheet et al., 2021), which makes the organisation's success dependent on the success of the displayed leadership style (Saleem et al., 2015). There are different leadership styles a leader can choose to employ and their effectiveness might depend on the objective the leader wants to achieve. When it comes to increasing the employees' motivation, it is important to do so efficiently, as their motivation and performance affects the achievement of any organisational goals and objectives (Saleem et al., 2015). Therefore, if their well-being is impacted and they are lacking productivity and energy, the whole organisation suffers. Intrinsically motivated employees perform well and express a more positive work attitude, as their motivation depends on their internal ability to acquire new skills and conduct work in an efficient manner (Longzeng et al., 2011).

However, motivation and passion for one's job seem to be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, passionate employees who identify themselves with the organisational goals are more likely to invest themselves fully in the organisation and their work, which on the other hand can lead to an obsessive passion for work, a lack of work-life-balance, and eventually result in occupational burnout. The symptoms the individuals with occupational burnout can suffer from are excessive stress, fatigue, and insomnia amongst others, and can result in heart diseases, high blood pressure, a weakened immune system, and alcohol misuse (Mayo Clinic, 2018). As passion, work engagement being too high, and workaholism, have been linked to developing occupational burnout, organisations and leaders should be interested in being able to detect types passion in their employees and help employees cope with obsessive tendencies, while also having the chance to recognise harmonious tendencies in their employees.

Furthermore, there does not exist enough awareness in organisations on how to detect whether employees might be prone to be suffering from obsessive passion, as clear indicators

are not easy to notice. With the right system of detecting signals in their employees' behaviour and being able to distinguish between the two kinds of work passion, leaders may have a greater chance to implement efficient occupational health management interventions and help maintain their employees' mental wellbeing while facilitating a healthy level of motivation and passion towards the workplace. With utilising text mining, an algorithm could be developed and employed to detect signs of obsessive passion. For that, the right signals and markers first must be distinguished, and language and communication patterns studied in order to train the algorithm successfully. In order to get a first impression of what might be required for this framework, interviews will be used as a source for this information and as input for a further concept. With these data insights, the constructs of harmonious and obsessive passion and how they are expressed in language and communication styles may be conceptualised further.

These different text elements will be employed in order to provide a useful framework for an efficient text mining algorithm that will be able to give an answer to the question *"How can obsessive passion be identified in peoples' language within an occupational context?"*

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. The Dualistic Model of Passion

Passion can be a driving force in every life aspect. Experiencing it towards a certain activity or object should not be depicted as a personality trait but rather as a distinct relationship that one has developed with the activity or object (Vallerand, 2015). As stated by Vallerand and colleagues (2003), passion "can be seen as a strong inclination toward a specific object, activity, concept or person that one loves (or at least strongly likes), highly values, invests time and energy in on a regular basis, and that is part of one's identity". Passion therefore is more than just admiration or valuation of an object, activity, concept or person, but can be an instrument on the route to success when utilised correctly, as it is a "love toward something (…) highly valued and meaningful in

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which we invest time in important ways" (Vallerand et al., 2003, as cited in Vallerand, 2015). There are three elements that need to be fulfilled for one to consider an activity as passionate; namely being interested in the activity, considering the activity to be meaningful, and having the activity resonates with other elements of one's identity (Vallerand, 2015).

In past research, it has been suggested that there are two different kinds of passion one can experience. The Dualistic Model of Passion (DMP) distinguishes between harmonious passion, which can facilitate positive outcomes (Schaufeli, Taris, & van Rhenen, 2008), and obsessive passion, which can have an harmful impact on the mental well-being (Vallerand et al., 2003). As one's passion and the way it is experienced may lead to a change in lifestyle or even a reorganisation of the internalised identity construct (Joussain, 1928), the different kinds of passion drive people in different ways. When one comes to highly value an enjoyable activity, the type of internalisation process that is currently operative will determine the type of passion one is deriving from the activity (Vallerand, 2015). This passion may increase and in general change over time, as it can grow the more one invests time and energy into the activity (Mageau et al., 2009).

The dualistic model of passion could provide an explanation on the issue of why some employees are suffering from an occupational burnout, whereas their colleagues fulfilling the same tasks are not; as the root of the issue might not just be that they are "married to the job" or too invested in their work, but that they are dealing with being obsessively passionate and therefore addicted to their job and the valuation they derive from excelling at it.

2.1.1. The Internalisation Process

As the development and utilisation of the different types of passion heavily depend on the way they have been internalised within one's identity, the internalisation process needs to be taken into consideration when looking at how passion could be detected. Engaging in an activity one is passionate about will not only result in experiencing positive emotions, but naturally in attempting

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to engage in this activity even more, investing time and energy as a positive form of self regulation (Vallerand, 2015). Therefore, analysing the internalisation process and the position the passion holds within one's identity could be a key element in determining the different types of passion in employees. Several concepts will be considered and explained in an attempt to provide an overview about relevant internal processes.

The self-determination theory refers to the fact that there exist three major psychological needs; namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). While autonomy can be summarised as "a sense of personal initiative in our interactions with the world"; competence, is referring to how one is able "to interact effectively with the environment", and relatedness is described as the extent to which one "feel(s) connected to significant others" (Vallerand et al., 2015). If there is an activity one can engage in that satisfies these needs, it results in one's appreciation of the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

In line with this theory, the DMP states that having a passion for something leads to this passion representing a dimension of the spiritual self, and that internalising this object goes further than the internal versus external dichotomy (Vallerand, 2015). For example, those having a passion for playing chess do not just like to play chess occasionally, but come to see themselves as chess players, internalising the beloved activity within their identity and self-concept; engaging in a network with other chess players and establish new relationships and connections with people who hold the same activity dear to their heart. This process is connected to individuals experiencing self-growth within the pursue of their beloved activity, as they invest time and energy, which ultimately can lead to self-growth even within other areas of life (Vallerand et al., 2003).

This takes place over a course of time, as memories from the past can be utilised to sustain a sense of self-continuity (Conway, 1996). These memories may be integrated into one's self-narrative and thereby represent an important part of one's life story (McAdams, 2001); as do novel experiences, which can lead to creating room for new aspects within one's identity, hinting at

the idea that discovering an object or activity of passion may be part of the identity construction process (Rathbone et al., 2008).

Even though one has developed a predominant type of passion that is based on the initial internalisation process, and individuals appear to be predominantly affected by one type pf passion for a given activity (Ratelle et al., 2013), passion can be seen as a spectrum on which there can be movement in the type of passion that may be displayed at any given moment (Vallerand, 2015). The first reason for this fluctuation are peoples' tendencies toward self-growth fuelled by the integrated self as people learn to make more self-adaptive processes (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Hodgins & Knee, 2002). Individuals hold up different types of values, namely intrinsic, referring to values that are correspondent with one's integrated self and internally satisfying to follow, and extrinsic values, referring to the significance of external praise and rewards (Kasser & Ryan, 1993). Harmonious passion should be nurtured by intrinsic values and following them, while obsessive passion should be facilitated by extrinsic values (Vallerand, 2015). As found out by Grenier, Lavigne, and Vallerand (2014), intrinsic values indeed were able to positively predict harmonious passion while extrinsic values were found to predict obsessive passion. These findings have been supported by Kasser and Ryan, who provided evidence that individuals prioritising monetary success over psychological growth, self-esteem, autonomy, family, and community in general, tend to experience more severe levels of depression and anxiety, less positive emotional states, scored higher on narcissism, and were more prone to drug use (1993, 1996).

Harmonious passion therefore should become more prominent within one's course of lifetime as the object of passion moves toward autonomy as soon it has been internalised. This process, self-determined competence, relates to one experiencing growing feelings of competence in attempting to master activities that one has chosen to engage in (Deci, 1975). Secondly, the internalisation process is not occurring gradually but can shift from autonomous to forced and vice versa, resulting in both types of passion being existent while one will be more prevalent than the

other (Vallerand, 2015). For example, gaining task autonomy has been found to predict an increase in harmonious passion over time (Fernet et al., 2014), whereas a clear lack thereof enables the ongoing development of obsessive passion in individuals (Vallerand, 2015). Thus, as both types of passion can become operative, they appear to be two sides of the same coin.

2.1.2. Harmonious Passion

The concept of harmonious passion stems from an "autonomous internalisation of the activity into the person's identity" (Vallerand et al., 2003). It relates to a motivational force that is intrinsic and in harmony with other aspects of the individual's identity and everyday life. Therefore, harmonious passion can lead to positive affect during task engagement because "the autonomous internalisation of the activity leads the person to engage in the task in a more flexible manner and thus to experience task engagement more fully" which in turn leads to a higher concentration and the experience of flow (Vallerand et al., 2003). The concept of flow can be best described as a state of concentration and control, as well as an autotelic experience that occurs in everyday activities such as work and is associated with positive emotions and low levels of psychological issues (Lavigne et al., 2012). Reaching the state of being in flow has been found to be more likely to take place within the context of harmonious passion, as one experiences that there is a congruence between task demands and one's skills that leads to successful task fulfilment (Csikzentmihalyi, 1978). Individuals experiencing harmonious passion are more likely to stay in an highly attentive state, being aware of their environment (Vallerand, 2015), and absorption, which refers to an intense level of concentration and immersion in the activity, and has been found to be positively predicted by harmonious passion (Ho et al., 2011). Additionally, research shows that harmonious passion is negatively related to the opposite of absorption, namely disengagement (Caudroit, Stephan, Brewer, & LeScanff, 2010),

As well, the state of work engagement motivated employees tend to experience has been "regarded as positive psychological and affective motivational state characterised by vigor, dedication, and absorption related to work" (Macey & Schneider, 2008, as cited in Choi et al., 2020). Highly engaged employees invest their time and effort in their work because they enjoy their work and themselves and are generally not driven by a work obsession (Shimazu & Schaufeli, 2008). As well, having certainty about the availability of resources and the needed support provides one with the experience of harmonious passion toward the task at hand (Vallerand, 2015). This finding was furthermore supported in a study conducted by Forest et al. (2012), in which participants were asked to find their signature strengths and then actively utilise them in their work. Becoming aware of the strengths and experiencing this new level of capability consciously lead to an increase in harmonious passion in said participants and eventually resulted in increased psychological well-being (Forest et al., 2012).

Following the Broaden-and-Build theory, repetitively experiencing positive emotions and affect may lead to changes within brain areas that are associated with mental well-being (Garland et al., 2010). This further indicates that harmonious passion is merely the better prevention and protection against mental ill-being and its consequences such as occupational burnout, as obsessive passion tends to lead one to over invest one's energy and experience burning out (Carbonneau, Vallerand, Fernet, & Guay, 2008); while harmonious passion and the associated positive affect can protect one against minor physical illnesses and health issues (Cohen et al., 1993); while facilitating and enhancing mental toughness (Gucciardi, Jackson, Hanton & Reid, 2014). This also goes in line with the findings by Phillipe, Vallerand, Andrianarisoa, and Brunel (2009), who proved that harmonious passion holds protection from concentration issues after making a mistake whereas obsessive passion did not; leaving individuals experiencing harmonious passion with a higher resilience to keep their focus under high levels of stress.

In line with that, harmonious passion has been found to negatively predict increases in emotional exhaustion, as well as positively predict an increase in work satisfaction (Carbonneau, Vallerand, Fernet, & Guay, 2008) and life satisfaction, while it remains unrelated to conflict with other responsibilities and rumination (Lafreniére et al., 2013; Vallerand, 2015). It can be stated that harmonious passion does not only lead the individual to experience an active perspective, control, and have the personal interest and volition to engage, but is also related to displaying more innovative behaviour in the workplace (Scott & Bruce, 1994).

In line with the Broaden-and-Build Theory (Frederickson, 2001), people experiencing positive emotional states also broaden their attention and may use resources at their disposal in an expanded way (Frederickson & Branigan, 2005). In a similar manner, passion may let individuals experience higher levels of affect and as they also value their passion, this valuation may increase the intensity with which the affect is experienced (Brown & Weiner, 1984). Therefore, being passionate increases the experienced affect during passion engagement, which leads to the idea that the more passionate the individual is, the more intensely they will experience the emotions when engaging and also display them to their peers. As research by Philippe and colleagues from 2010 suggests, harmonious passion may facilitate experiencing positive emotions and protect against negative emotions, whereas obsessive passion positively predicts negative emotions, especially affect, and amplifies them.

Experiencing this positive type of passion within an occupational context has been linked to individuals having found their job calling, which refers to "a transcendent summons (…) to approach a particular life role in a manner oriented toward demonstrating or deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness, that holds other-oriented values and goals as primary sources of motivation" (Dik & Duffy, 2009). Those who perceive their work as a calling are more likely to demonstrate a high attachment and commitment towards their organisation (Duffy et al., 2011) and have also been found to be able to foster harmonious passion, leading to an even higher active work

engagement (Dalla Rosa & Vianello, 2020). In return, organisational support and valuation of work both positively predict harmonious passion in employees.

2.1.3. Obsessive Passion

However, individuals who are following their calling may also tend to sacrifice their personal resources such as time, income, and psychological wellbeing for their passion (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). This driving type of passion is called obsessive passion and can be the result of a "controlled internalisation of the passionate activity within one's identity", meaning that the individual's identity, self-esteem, and perceived self-worth are strongly related to the individual's work identity (Vallerand et al., 2003). When experiencing obsessive passion, one does not have full access to adaptive self-processes as there is no secure sense of self-esteem that would allow flexibility and openness to experience life in a non-defensive manner (Hodgins & Knee, 2002). As stated by Marsh et al. (2013), obsessive passion tends to occupy more space within one's identity, as one's cognitive processes shield the passion from other activities. This has lead researchers to suggest that obsessive passion has more characteristics of a passion as it is commonly understood than its harmonious counterpart (Vallerand, 2015).

When one is not able to learn from failure but feels rather threatened by it, one comes to experiences self-threats instead of living life in a mindful manner (Brown & Ryan, 2003). These self-threats may hold short-term advantages, as one is able to mobilise energy in order to deliver high performance, but will eventually result in putting a strain on the individual, mentally, as well as physically (Vallerand, 2015). The more pressure one experiences to perform an activity as demanded, the more likely one will utilise obsessive passion to succeed and reach perfectionism, while their obsessive passion has even been found to positively predict aggression (Philippe et al., 2009). The concept of perfectionism refers to having expectations towards one's performance and achieve that excessively high (Hewitt & Flett, 2002). Even though striving for perfectionism and

reaching optimal performance could be considered as oriented towards growth, the impression that one needs to be perfect in order to reach uphold standards to fit within one's own self-narrative is connected with control and pressure; and therefore positively predicting obsessive passion (Vallerand, 2015). This may lead individuals towards adopting a rather ego-invested mode, making them defensive over their activity engagement, and leaving them feeling superior over others (Tracy & Robins, 2007). As found out by Philippe and colleagues (2009), individuals that are harmoniously passionate are less likely to engage in behaviour covering up their mistake subsequent to a grave error, whereas obsessively passionate individuals are more likely to attempt to engage in makeup calls as the passion is so intertwined with their identity that a mistake poses a serious self-threat.

Obsessive passion is therefore associated with high levels of engagement that lie beyond the individual's control (Lavigne, Forest, & Crevier-Braud, 2012), meaning that individuals cannot resist but have to pursue the activity they are obsessively passionate about, no matter whether this will correspond negatively with other aspects of their lives (Pollack, Ho, O'Boyle & Kirkman, 2020). Organisational constructs such as overcommitment and workaholism, also referred to as pure work addiction, have been related to the concept of obsessive passion (Preckel, von Känel, Kudielka, & Fischer, 2005; Spence & Robbins, 1992, as cited in Lavigne, Forest, & Crevier-Braud, 2012). In general, obsessive passion has been found to lead to high levels of cognitive symptoms and anxiety (Houlfort et al., 2010), as well as negative emotions during engaging in work activities (Vallerand et al., 2003). If the basic psychological needs are not being satisfied, one is more likely to become dependent on the task or activity and fully rely on it to get the satisfaction out of it, hence becoming obsessed with it.

One could say that when one is experiencing need satisfaction while pursing a passionate activity one is capable of internalising it as harmonious passion when there is no other lack of need satisfaction one is experiencing outside of the activity (Vallerand, 2015). This is

supported by research that indicates that obsessive passion has been associated with escapism, referring to individuals using the passionate activity as a refuge from other negative events in their lives (Fuster, Chamarro, Carbonell, & Vallerand, 2014; Lafreniére et al., 2009). Even though obsessive passion may trigger adaptive forms of cognitive processes, they should be of lesser quality than those triggered by harmonious passion (Vallerand, 2015), which might root in the fact that they tend to be more ego-invested (Hodgins & Knee, 2002). The activity of passion then holds a compensatory function as it is the individual's only source of satisfaction in life, which is in line with the finding of Stenseng, Rise, and Kraft (2011) which states that escaping personal problems only predicts obsessive passion, while not being associated with harmonious passion.

Individuals who are suffering from obsessive passion within their occupational context experience high levels of rumination when they are being kept from engaging in the activity that is facilitating their passion, as they want to cling onto the passionate activity and are less likely to be able to focus on other life tasks (Ratelle et al., 2004) which leads to low levels of mental well-being combined with high levels of experiencing negative physical symptoms and emotions (Rousseau & Vallerand, 2003). Negative affect has been found to positively predict physical illness and therefore weakening the individual to become more prone to ill-being, mentally as well as physically, in the future (Vallerand, Rousseau, & Dumais, 2013).

In conclusion, individuals suffering from obsessive passion experience a more passive perspective with an urge to fulfil a task or duty. This concept has been linked to the concept of workaholism. Individuals suffering from workaholism can be best defined as "people who are addicted to work" (Oates, 1971, as cited in Choi et al., 2020). They are more likely to work to an unhealthy extent that is beyond the scope of what their organisation demands of them and let their work-life-balance and mental well-being suffer from it. Eventually, this can lead to individuals lacking energy and suffering from grave consequences, such as occupational burnout.

2.2. Occupational Burnout

Burnout itself has been conceptualised by Maslach (1982) first, who defined it as a condition occurring in three different dimensions, namely emotional exhaustion, in which workers feel exhausted and drained, depersonalisation, in which workers who are communicating a lot with others experience actively disliking their interaction partners, and finally personal accomplishment, in which workers have to deal with a perceived lack of accomplishment and identifying as a failure. The three most frequently identified workplace stressors are workload, role conflict, and role ambiguity (Miller, Ellis, Zook, & Lyles, 1990), emphasising on how the quality of the internal communication climate and working environment can be of significance when it comes to preventing occupational burnout.

Even though this provides a clear definition of a medical phenomenon, there is not one clinical picture of burnout as depression and anxiety disorder are two of the disorders have been found to have overlapping symptoms with burnout (Golonka et al., 2019). This overlap might lead to an interdependency, meaning that a patient suffering from the symptoms of one disorder might increase the symptoms of the other (Golonka et al., 2019). With burnout being recognised as a work-stress related phenomenon affecting the patient's health and job performance rather than a medical condition, a distinct form of treatment or an efficient way of preventing it on an organisational level has not been established yet. Individuals affected by it can suffer from symptoms ranging from excessive stress, fatigue, insomnia, being more prone to cardiovascular diseases, high blood pressure, a weakened immune system, and substance misuse (Mayo Clinic, 2018).

However, the question why two employees with the same workload working under the same circumstances do not suffer from the same impact on their mental health has been raised as the mentioned stressors are only negative forces that might contribute to suffering from a

burnout. One of the factors of importance that is very different from just being a stressor and could be an explanation or mediator for this impact could be the individual's passion for work, which is a characteristic individuals include to make sense of their identity (Vallerand et al., 2003). Overly passionate employees might "experience organizational failures as well as successes as personal events, that their passion impacts on their performance, tenacity, self-efficacy beliefs, as well as on organizational goals" (Baum & Locke, 2004, as cited in Lavigne, Forest, & Crevier-Braud, 2012). Therefore, these events would have a significantly bigger impact on their mental well-being and performance than on employees who do not experience this kind of passion and identify themselves less with their organisation. In fact, obsessive passion has found to be positively related to burnout, as one experiences an urge to engage in the tasks at hand and burns themselves out, as conflicts between work and other life activities are emergent (Vallerand et al., 2010). Hence, occupational burnout seems to be one of the biggest consequences that people suffering from obsessive passion may face eventually. As occupational burnout yet still remains to be treated as a phenomenon rather than a health condition itself, all of its antecedents should be studied to be able to understand and prevent it better.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Data Collection

3.1.1. Procedure

People working in leadership positions from different occupations and organisations have been interviewed and asked to elaborate on different factors associated with their work, such as commitment to their job, their leadership career path, and their willingness to prioritise work over other roles and activities in life among others. Due to the ongoing situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews have been conducted online.

Potential participants were approached through professional networks such as *LinkedIn*. As people in leadership positions were expected to reveal more significant signs of passion since they are working under more extreme circumstances than employees without managerial functions and may be driven by a stronger passion, they have been selected as the focus of the present research. In total, 10 participants, of whom eight participants were male and two female, were interviewed.

Because revealing the true purpose of this research would have potentially biased the way the participants answered the questions, it was only revealed after the interview had been concluded. The potential interviewees agreed to participating under the impression to be asked questions regarding their leadership style, work motivation, relationship with their employees, and similar topics centred around leadership. Prior to conducting these interviews, the Ethical Committee of the BMS faculty at the University of Twente had agreed to the described data collection procedure. All data has been processed completely anonymously and will be destroyed after an appropriate amount of time. The interviewees have stated their consent to be recorded orally and were informed about their rights to withdraw from the interview at any given point.

3.1.2. Measures

Prior to the actual interview, participants were asked to fill out an adjusted version of the Passion Scale, an instrument, developed and validated by Vallerand et al. (2001), that consists of two sub scales with seven items each that are measuring obsessive and harmonious passion (see Appendix II). As well, there were five items that measured the level of general passion of the participants, displaying if the interviewee felt passionate or indifferent towards their work. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the presented statements on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from "*Strongly agree*" to "*Strongly disagree*". These questions had been embedded within

Qualtrics and were shared with the participants with the information that these questions would function as a preparation for the interviews.

The interview followed a semi-structured concept that allowed additional information and questions upon request or chance. In total, participants were asked a set of around 40 questions (see Appendix I), concerning topics like leadership experience, their perceived impact as a leadership figure, high and low points in their career, and their work-life balance. All these questions were aimed at receiving answers that are emotionally rich and insightful. The more thorough the language patterns and communication styles that can be linked to employees suffering from obsessive passion can be studied, the more extensive the training set will be, as language "is the most common and reliable way for people to translate their internal thoughts and emotions into a form" (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010). Therefore, a fixed textual questionnaire would not have gathered as much useful insights as a semi-structured interview could, since small cues and reactions might be able to shed more light onto the mental state of the interviewee, as conversations are "often characterised by a blending of emotions, rather than discrete productions" (Cowie & Cornelius, 2003, as cited in Truesdale & Pell, 2018).

There are no clear hypotheses formulated as this is the first study conducting research on how passion expresses itself in language, yet there are certain expectations towards the content and speech elements of the participants' answers. Individuals that are passionate would be expected to elaborate on their passion, explain why they are fascinated by it while being emotional and euphoric even. The assumption that people who experience harmonious passion are talking in a positive manner, about good experiences and high points of accomplishment in their lives could be made, whereas individuals that experience obsessive passion may bring up the topic of control, a lack of work-life-balance, feeling the urge to follow their passion.

3.2. Data Analysis Strategy

Initially, it was planned to sort the participants into two groups based on the results of the Passion Scale, namely the obsessively passionate and the harmoniously passionate group. These groups would then have been used to better map the experiences and emerging patterns that might have been found.

In order to find repeating patterns or meaningful signal words, the interviews were coded with the software *Atlas.ti*, allowing for a closer and more in-depth analysis of the transcriptions. A codebook (see Appendix III) based on the answer possibilities to rather closed questions, as well as the answers to the open questions was created initially and adjusted throughout the coding process. All interviews were coded and analysed by the same researcher. The transcripts and codes were scanned and counted in order to find repetitions and similarities between the different interviewees that could be used as a potential trainings set for an algorithm.

Initially consisting of more than 50 codes, an elaborate analysis of the interviews showed that only 11 of the codes were used repeatedly and across the interviews. Codes that respond to the answers to closed questions, such as question 10 "*Did you feel any internal or external pressure to become or stay a leader?*", were excluded from the final codebook since the answers given were notions either of agreement or disagreement without an actual emotional tone that could have been measured within the scope of this research.

4. Results

As a first step, the analysis of the Passion Scale survey revealed the participants' scores of harmonious and obsessive passion towards their work, as well as displayed whether they experienced actual passion. It was possible to state that nine out of ten participants felt passionate towards their work (see Table 1), and that all of them displayed harmonious, as well as obsessive passion towards their work. For a better comprehension of the data, Table 2 was created in order to

Table 1

Passion Scale Results

Q1 HP	Q3 HP	Q5 HP	Q6 HP	Q8 HP	Q10 HP	Q2 OP	Q4 OP	Q7 OP	Q9 OP	Q11 OP	Q12 OP
2	3	0	2	2	2	-1	1	-1	-1	-1	1
-2	-2	-1	-3	-1	-1	0	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3
2	2	2	2	2	2	0	1	-3	-3	0	-2
2	2	3	2	3	2	-2	2	-1	0	-2	-2
2	3	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	3	1	0
2	2	1	2	1	0	0	2	1	-2	-1	1
3	2	3	3	3	2	-2	-2	-3	-2	-1	-2
2	2	2	3	1	2	1	0	-1	-2	-1	0
1	1	2	2	1	2	-1	-2	-3	-3	1	-2

visualise the emerging pattern of people being either harmoniously or obsessively passionate towards their work. All participants scored positively on harmonious passion while scoring negatively on obsessive passion.

As this was a first explorative study that aimed at detecting the signs of passionate language with utilising the Passion Scale and conducting interviews, it was decided to explore the data at hand and see whether harmonious passion does express itself in a detectable and clear manner as the original objective could not be fulfilled. In order to dive deeper into the transcripts and make use of the data at hand, it was decided to code the participants' interviews to understand whether explicit signs of passion could be found.

The answers to the most of the questions did not result in revealing insightful data that served the initial purpose of this study, even though there were some interesting thoughts on the topic of leadership to be collected. With shifting the focus towards harmonious passion being operative within the interviewees, some words and ideas have been found to appear repeatedly. The most commonly reoccurring themes (see Table 2) are all themes that are connected to the growth-oriented mindset that has been associated with harmonious passion. Especially responsibility towards other people and one's duties seem to be a common theme when it comes to leaders in which harmonious passion has become operative. As well, happiness is a key element when it comes the participants describing their work and attitude towards their job. Furthermore, reaching goals, being trusted, and helping others have been each mentioned 21 times, which indicates that

these themes are commonly experienced in harmonious passion. All these codes pose a strong contrast to the mindset and codes that were expected to be collected from leaders suffering from obsessive passion. Growth, being mentioned 18 times, and feedback, being mentioned 17 times, both hint at the opposite of the ego-centred and closed mindset of obsessively passionate people.

Table 2

Most commonly appearing themes

Theme	Times mentioned
Responsible / Responsibility	35
Happy	22
Goal	21
Trust	21
Help*ing	21
Grow*th	18
Feedback	17
Free*dom	14
Respect	7
Fulfill*ment	6
Energy	4

5. Discussion

As this has been conducted as exploratory qualitative research, there was not a clear set of hypotheses that would have been tested. So far, there has not been any further research in how obsessive passion expresses itself exclusively in a way that could be detected by a text mining algorithm. The original goal, to be able to provide a framework with explicit patterns, phrases, and signal words, has not been reached within the scope of this research. However, this does not mean that this exploration has not been successful or shed a new perspective on how passion expresses itself through language. It was possible to derive some valuable insights, even though they were not of the expected nature. For example, even though it was not possible to determine set words and markers that could be used to program a text mining algorithm for detecting obsessive passion, the

discovery on what type of topics the participants were associating with leadership and their passion also proved to be helpful. As well, since the reoccurring themes found in the interviews all have been connected to harmonious passion, the detection of passion itself does seem to be possible with text mining and analysis.

There are some circumstances that need to be considered when it comes to the conduction of this research, such as the fact that with only ten participants the sample size was not as big as it had been expected, therefore possibly providing less insights than it would have been needed to make inferences about a larger population. As well, there might have been a bias concerning the position of the participants, as people working in leadership positions usually have already proven some level of resilience and mental toughness in order to reach their current position.

Additionally, it has to be noted that only two of the participants were native English speakers, possibly influencing the results as participants who are native English speakers might use different words or expressions to describe the same emotion or attitude. Even though all participants were fluent in English, they might have understood questions or statements a little differently than the native speakers or simply used simpler words to express themselves. However, this should also be evaluated from a different perspective, as individuals speaking in a language that is not their mother tongue might need more cognitive capacity to find the right words and put them in the right order, therefore leaving less capacity to mask emotions and eventually providing more honest answers.

Lastly, the questions might not have been deep enough in order to result in the emotional answers that were expected. It also needs to be taken into consideration that all of the interviews took place in an online setting, which has been proven to not be as inviting as interviews that take place in person. They have been found to often be more exhausting for participants as both parties are not able to pick up on social cues, or to react to body language and the atmosphere as

well. This could have limited the willingness of the interviewees to share their insights and emotions with the interviewer or made them less focused on the questions. A real connection between the interviewer and the interviewee could not be fostered within an online setting.

Furthermore, the questions might have been too open ended, therefore leaving too much space for answers that are very unlikely to be including the same patterns or the exact same words as other interviewees would. When first planning the research design of this study, it had been discussed to use the Life Story Interview template by McAdams (2001), but it had been decided that the setting for these type of intimate interviews would not ideally be set online. These questions might have yielded more results that would serve the initial purpose as the participants would have been asked to dive deeper into their self-perception and reflection, resulting in a more emotional tone.

When it comes to the selection of the participants, it would also have been an interesting approach to interview people who had been suffering from occupational burnout in the past to get an idea on how the condition develops, on how they realised what was happening first, and how they are dealing with it in the present. In the beginning of this project, the idea of interviewing these patients seemed to be a good option, but the places to approach them and also creating a safe space to talk about their experience were not feasible due to the current COVID-19 situation and the limitations it puts upon conducting research on sensitive topics.

While it can be clearly stated that individuals being harmoniously passionate about an activity experience more positive outcomes and impacts on their well-being, it has also been proven that individuals that are obsessively passionate do not only suffer from negative consequences. In fact, the difference between individuals on both sides of the spectrum only operate largely when it comes to failure situations (Lafreniére et al., 2012), which relates to the fact that obsessively passionate individuals can still excel at their job and remain healthy. As well, even individuals motivated by harmonious passion can suffer greatly under tough conditions.

Interestingly, all participants also scored somewhat on obsessive passion, which was used as an indication to further validate the fact that harmonious passion is more than just the absence of obsessive passion, just like positive psychologists have demonstrated that happiness is more than just the mere absence of unhappiness (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003; Csikszentmihalyi & Seligman, 2000). Consequently, individuals might shift on a spectrum of passion over the course of their lifetime, while influences could also derive from external sources and events.

6. Implications for Future Research

When conducting future research on this topic, which should be highly encouraged, there are several adjustments that would need to be made to this research design. For example, self-narratives or elevator pitches could potentially be used as a source for textual input, as they would not only include sentiments that interviewees share spontaneously, but also with well-prepared and thought-through words that would demonstrate what they identify themselves and want to be perceived as.

A shift in topic that could be suggested would be focusing on the internalisation process, as a broad review of literature has been presented to explain how the process plays a significant role when it comes to one of the passions becoming operative within one's mind. This may lead to the idea that if the internalisation process of work and related concepts could be influenced and changed before obsessive passion as a consequence of a forced internalisation arises, obsessive passion in the workplace and its consequences could be prevented and even an attempt to actively facilitate harmonious passion could be started.

Another factor that needs to be taken into consideration is that this study has been built upon the assumption that only people who are actually passionate about their work may be suffering from obsessive passion and could be prone to getting occupational burnout. However, Participant 3 demonstrated that even though they may not generally feel passionate about their job, they are displaying signs of obsessive passion and disclosed their mental state to be negatively

impacted by their work. This is again related to the fact that harmonious passion might be just be a better protection against illness and burnout, whereas it is in fact possible to suffer from occupational burnout within all of the three conditions, namely being indifferent, obsessively, or harmoniously passionate.

7. Conclusion

In general, it could be stated that the DMP is not as black or white and easily to detect as Vallerand suggests. This research has shed light on the fact that passion can not just not be split within two fields, not just represent two sides of a coin, but can rather be seen as a spectrum with many different facets and levels. There are too many aspects limiting the proper and clean analysis of passion throughout different contexts and fields of research. Participants realising that their passion might not be healthy tend to excuse their work addiction, hiding behind excuses and pretending to have control over their work-life-balance while they clearly have not. Even though it can be deemed possible to detect elements of passion within textual analysis, the scope of this research did not allow to draw a final conclusion on what the best practice to do so may be. After all, workaholism should be treated as any other addiction. Not in regards to creating a social stigma around it, but by understanding the need for help and support for people suffering from work addiction.

Understanding the difference between the two extremes of the spectrum may be helpful with that, as not every addiction to work should be treated the same. However, this also means that awareness for the fact that people might have the ability to mask their obsession better needs to be raised. Performance pressure, societal stigma, and avoidance as a coping mechanism are all factors that can easily undermine the truthful analysis of passion within participants and also raises the question whether these factors are the same factors that play a role when it comes to acknowledging occupational burnout as a distinct disease as a disease cannot be conceptualised if

the societal pressure is too high to acknowledge its roots and symptoms; rather excusing it with experiencing a regular depression disorder.

This research therefore proposes to see the DMP as a first step when it comes to mapping passion and its expressions, but not the final product. The concept of passion seems to be rather complex and not just dualistic, as Vallerand himself has stated that the type of passion one experiences can shift throughout one's life, indicating that passion should be mapped on a spectrum rather than a scale.

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Appendices

Appendix I - Interview Questions

Q1: If asked about your occupation or position, would the first thing you would say be a synonym for leader?

Q2: What does being a leader mean to you?

Q3: How long have you been working as a leader?

Q4: How did you get into this position?

Q5: Have you already found yourself in leadership positions in your earlier life, for example in school or during leisure activities?

Q6: Have people ever told you that you have natural leadership skills and how did that make you feel?

Q7: Is there any personality trait you would immediately get rid of if you had the chance?

Q8:Why do you think this would improve yourself or your life?

Q9: Did you choose to be a leader or would you say you somehow always ended up as a leader?

Q10: Did you feel any internal or external pressure to become or stay a leader?

Q11: Did you have a role model or person you looked up to that really inspired you as a leader?

Q12: What would you say has inspired you to become the leader you are now?

Q13: What would you advise someone who is looking at you to be that inspiration?

Q14: Is there any particular piece of wisdom that you feel you passed on to someone, for example a mentee or employee?

Q15: So would you say you are doing a good job as a leader?

Q16: Do you feel like you are able to make a difference at your current job?

Q17: Do you feel like you inspire your employees?

Q18: Do you feel inspired by your employees and their work?

Q19: How do you motivate your employees?

Q20: And do you need to motivate yourself for your work sometimes?

Q21: Do you think you have ever used your work as a distraction from negative feelings, such as guilt, depression, anxiety, helplessness?

Q22: Do you get so caught up in your work that you had to reschedule personal commitments or appointments? How often would you say that happens?

Q23: Do you sometimes spend more time working than you initially intended?

Q24: What would be the most positive memory or episode in your career that made you feel really accomplished as a leader?

Q25: Would you say you actually like being a leader?

Q26: Do you feel like your position brings out the best in you?

Q27: How would you feel taking a step back from your job and letting someone else, someone of your own choice, take over?

Q28: And what if you could not choose that person?

Q29: Has there ever been a decision you needed to make that made you want to not be the executive decision maker?

Q30: What would you say was a negative point in your leadership career, where you felt unenergised or hopeless, or overwhelmed?

Q31: Next to being a leader, what other actives or roles would you say define you as a person?

Q32: Do you often have to prioritise being a leader over other roles in your life and your wellbeing?

Q33: Have you ever tried to make more time for you to work, freeing up the time by not doing other things?

Q34: Do you think your social network would agree with that? Have they ever accused you of working too much?

Q35: What did they say why they think that?

Q36: What would you say was the hardest decision you ever had to make?

Q37: Do you feel like being a leader provides you with the chance to have a more active role in what you're doing as a job?

Q38: Do you use that for example to make sure you are still living a healthy lifestyle, for example getting enough exercise, or going outside and catch fresh air or the like?

Q39: Is there a major life project or goal you want to achieve before you retire?

Q40: What would you be if you were not a leader?

Appendix II - Adjusted Passion Scale

1. My work is in harmony with the other activities in my life.
2. I have difficulties controlling my urge to do my work.
3. The new things that I discover with my allow me to appreciate it even more.
4. I have almost an obsessive feeling for my work.
5. My work reflects the qualities I like about myself.
6. My work allows me to live a variety of experiences.
7. My work is the only thing that really turns me on.
8. My work is well integrated in my life.
9. If I could, I would only do my work.
10. My work is in harmony with other things that are part of me.
11. My work is so exciting that I sometimes lose control over it.
12. I have the impression that my work controls me.

13. I spend a lot of time doing my work.
14. I love my work.
15. My work is important for me.
16. My work is a passion for me.
17. My work is part of who I am.

Key:
Harmonious Passion: 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10
Obsessive Passion: 2, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12
General Passion towards work: 13-17

Appendix III - Codebook

This codebook consists all the initial codes. However, only the recurring themes have been counted (see Table 2), as the other codes did not provide additional insights for the purpose of this study.

1 - Leadership
      1.1 Leadership Quality
      1.2 Leadership Flaws
      1.3 Choosing Leadership
      1.4 Ending up as Leader
2 - Previous Experience
      2.2 Previous Leadership Experience
      2.3 No Leadership Experience
3 - Natural Skills
      3.1 Was told to have Natural Leadership Skills
      3.2 Was not told to have Natural Leadership Skills
4 - Personality
      4.1 Personality Flaws
      4.2 No Personality Flaws
5 - Pressure
      5.1 Internal Pressure
      5.2 No Internal Pressure
      5.3 External Pressure
      5.4 No External Pressure
6 - Inspiration
      6.1 Had Role Model / Inspiration
      6.2 No Role Model / Inspiration
      6.3 Inspired By Others
      6.4 Not Inspired By Others
      6.5 No Inspiration For Others
7 - Advice
      7.1 Gave out Advice / Wisdom
8 - Self perception
      8.1 Good leader
      8.2 Not a good leader
      8.3 Leadership Impact
      8.4 No Leadership Impact
9 - Memories
      9.1 Positive Memory / Episode
      9.2 Negative Memory / Episode
      9.3 Hardest Decision
10 - Work-life-balance
      10.1 Autonomy through Leadership
      10.2 Autonomy through Leadership
      10.3 Work as Coping Mechanism
      10.4 Ability to give up control
      10.5 Disability to give up control
      10.6 Other Roles / Activities
      10.7 Prioritising Work
      10.8 Liking of Job
      10.9 Conscious Work-life-balance
11 - Motivation
      11.1 No Motivation needed
      11.2 Motivation needed
12 - Future
      12.1 Major Life Goal / Project

Table 2

Most commonly appearing themes

Theme	Times mentioned
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Respect	7
Fulfill*ment	6
Energy	4