



Passionate workers: A Spanish adaptation of the Passion Scale



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ABSTRACT

Passion is defined as a strong inclination toward an activity the people like, that they find important, and in which they invest time and energy, like working. The aim of this study is to present evidence of the validity of the factor structure of the Spanish version of the Passion Scale. Exploratory factor analysis was carried out in a heterogeneous sample of 432 Spanish workers. The results confirmed the expected two-factor structure of passion in the workplace: obsessive passion and harmonious passion. A strong and positive correlation between harmonious passion and job satisfaction was observed, which is considered as an indicator of the positive nature of passion. Future research should investigate more extensively its construct validity with other organizational variables.

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Los trabajadores apasionados: adaptación española de la Escala de Pasión

RESUMEN

La pasión puede definirse como un fuerte impulso hacia una actividad que las personas gustan y consideran importante y a la que dedican tiempo y energía, como es el trabajo. El objetivo de este estudio es presentar datos de validez de la estructura factorial de la versión española de la Escala de Pasión. Se realizó un análisis factorial exploratorio sobre una muestra de 432 trabajadores españoles. Los resultados confirmaron la estructura bifactorial de la escala de pasión en el trabajo: pasión obsesiva y pasión armoniosa. Se observó una fuerte relación entre pasión armoniosa y satisfacción en el trabajo, lo que puede considerarse un indicador de la naturaleza positiva de la pasión. Futuros estudios deberán investigar con mayor profundidad la validez de criterio con otras variables organizacionales.

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During the early twentieth-first century, developments on Psychology have heightened the need for a new “positive psychology”. This emerging positive psychology shifts the stress on weakness and malfunctioning for the stress on human strength and optimal functioning (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). According to Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), the question is how people’s lives can be worth living. In this sense, Vallerand and colleagues believe that the concept of passion would play a key role in how life can be most worth living, as a pathway to engagement, optimal performance, and intrinsic joy, even amidst difficulties and setbacks (Vallerand et al., 2003; Vallerand, Paquet, Philippe, & Charest, 2010).

Passion can fuel motivation, enhance well-being, and provide menacing in everyday life. However, passion can also arouse negative

emotions, lead to inflexible persistence, and interfere with achieving a balanced successful life. In a work context, harmonious passion occurs when individuals freely accept work as important for them without any contingencies attached to it. Obsessive passion, by contrast, can eventually take disproportionate space in the person’s identity and cause conflict with other activities in the person’s life (Marsh et al., 2013; Vallerand et al., 2003, 2010). I could also have negative consequences such as burnout and workaholism (Aziz, Uhrich, Wuensch, & Swords, 2013; Carbonneau, Vallerand, Fernet, & Guay, 2008; Vallerand et al., 2010).

The influence of passion makes it a challenge for researchers to measure. In this sense, Vallerand et al. (2003) developed the Passion Scale focused on general activities. Later, Marsh et al. (2013) demonstrated that the Passion Scale is appropriate for assessing passion across a wide variety of activities, including work. As no adaptation of this instrument for the Spanish-speaking countries has been made yet, this study aims to contribute to the adaptation and

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validation of the Spanish version of the Passion Scale focused on the workplace.

A dualistic model of passion

In recent years, an increasing amount of research in Psychology and has been concerned with providing a better understanding of what makes people's lives more fulfilling. Although several concepts have been found useful to shedding light on what leads to a better life, 10 years of research have shown that the concept of passion represents one important answer to this question (Snyder & López, 2009; Vallerand et al., 2003). People who wake up in the morning with a smile in their face "because today is football day" or people who work hard for a cause, all have passion that makes their lives worth living.

Passion has been defined as a strong tendency toward an activity that people like, find important, and in which they spend time and energy (Vallerand et al., 2003). Thus, for an activity to represent a passion for people, it has to be significant in their lives, something that they like, and something in which they spend time on a regular basis. It should be noted that the source of passion could be oriented toward an activity (e.g., playing the piano, writing a research article, or working in a project), a person (e.g., one's romantic partner), or an object (e.g., a football card collection) (Marsh et al., 2013; Vallerand et al., 2003, 2010).

Vallerand et al. (2003) proposed a dualistic model of passion with two types of passion, obsessive passion (OP) and harmonious passion (HP). These passions can be distinguished in terms of how the passionate activity is internalized into one's core self or identity. Identity refers to an individual's relevant features, characteristics, and experiences, how these are interrelated, as well as the social and self-regulation functions that such features serve (Schlenker, 1985). According to Vallerand et al. (2003), certain activities could be so self-defining that they represent central features of one's identity.

On the other hand, internalization represents the process through which individuals transform socially sanctioned values and behaviors into personally endorsed ones (Deci & Ryan, 2000). When the internalization is autonomous, people voluntarily recognize these principles as important, assimilate them into their identity, and, thus, fully accept them as their own. However, when the internalization process is controlled, people are compelled to identify with these principles, and thus behaviors and values may remain external or be only partially internalized in the identity (Marsh et al., 2013). In the same vein, Vallerand et al. (2003) proposed that those two types of internalization should take place for sources of passion and that these processes should be conducive to HP and OP, respectively.

HP results from an autonomous internalization of the activity into the person's identity. It refers to a strong desire to freely engage in the activity (e.g., work). The passionate activity is self-defining, elicits intrinsic job, and allows individuals to feel in control (Amiot, Vallerand, & Blanchard, 2006; Vallerand et al., 2003). Such internalization process occurs in contexts where the person willingly accepts his or her passion as important, instead of feeling pressured, either internally or externally, to do so (Vallerand et al., 2003).

With this type of passion, the activity occupies a significant but no overpowering space in the person's identity and is in harmony with other aspects of the person's life. People with a predominant HP should thus experience positive outcomes not only during (e.g., positive affect, concentration, flow) but also after task engagement (e.g., general positive affect, psychological adjustment, etc.) (Marsh et al., 2013; Sloan, 2008).

Conversely, OP is characterized by a controlled internalization and a contingency-driven engagement process that develops from intra and/or interpersonal pressure (e.g., need for self-esteem or social acceptance), or from the sense of excitement derived from

activity engagement, that becomes uncontrollable (Marsh et al., 2013; Vallerand et al., 2003, 2010). Although individuals like the activity, they feel compelled to engage in it because of these internal contingencies that come to control them. Because activity engagement is out of the person's control, it eventually takes disproportionate space in the person's identity and causes conflict with other activities in the person's life (Vallerand et al., 2003, 2010).

Whether a passion will foster positive affect and healthy persistence depends on whether it is harmonious or obsessive. With respect to affective outcomes, HP should lead to greater positive affect and less negative affect than OP during task engagement. This is because the autonomous internalization of the activity leads the person to engage in the task in a more flexible manner and thus to experience task engagement more fully. Such a flexible form of activity engagement should facilitate better concentration and the experience of positive affect (e.g., job satisfaction), absorption, and flow. Such is not the case for OP, because a controlled internalization breeds an internal compulsion to engage in the activity, leading to a more rigid and conflicted form of task engagement (e.g., workaholism) (Aziz et al., 2013; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Vallerand et al., 2003, 2010).

Furthermore, HP should also contribute to the experience of positive affect and minimize the experience of negative affect after task engagement. This is because with HP people are in control of the activity. They can decide to engage or not in the activity and when. This results in very little conflict between the passionate activity and other activities in the person's life. On the contrary, OP leads the person to engage in the activity even when he or she should not, causing conflict between the passionate activity and participation in other tasks. For instance, the person could feel guilty for having holidays when he or she was supposed to work in the last project for the company (Marsh et al., 2013).

Empirical findings support this dualistic conceptualization of passion, using the Passion Scale developed by Vallerand et al. (2003). Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses supported the two-factor structure of the Passion Scale (Carbonneau et al., 2008; Marsh et al., 2013; Schellenberg, Gaudreau, & Crocker, 2013; Vallerand et al., 2003, 2010). The Passion Scale has shown high levels of internal consistency as well as predictive, discriminant, construct, and external evidence in diverse activities (e.g., leisure, work, etc.) (Marsh et al., 2013; Stenseng, 2008; Vallerand et al., 2003, 2010). Test-retest correlations over a 3-month period revealed moderately high stability values (Stenseng, 2008).

Furthermore, results using the scale revealed that both HP and OP were positively correlated with each other and with measures of the perceived value of the passion, of the activity being perceived as a passion, and inclusion of the passion in the person's identity (Smith, 2008; Stenseng, 2008; Vallerand et al., 2003). However, the two types of passion are differentially associated with various outcomes. Overall, empirical research has showed that harmonious passion comprises positive outcomes such as enhanced psychological well-being and positive emotions (Philippe, Vallerand, Houffort, Lavigne, & Donahue, 2010), flow in the workplace (Lavigne, Forest, & Crevier-Braud, 2012), job satisfaction (Carbonneau et al., 2008; Carpentier, Mageau, & Vallerand, 2012), affective commitment toward work (Forest, Mageau, Sarrazin, & Morin, 2011). This form of passion can also prevent professional burnout (e.g., emotional exhaustion) and conflict with the other life activities (Carbonneau et al., 2008; Vallerand et al., 2010). On the other hand, obsessive passion leads to outcomes such as negative affect over time, rigid persistence, shame, anxiety and burnout (Carbonneau et al., 2008; Vallerand et al., 2010), workaholism (Aziz et al., 2013; Del Líbano, Llorens, Salanova, & Schaufeli, 2010), and higher conflict with other life contexts (Marsh et al., 2013).

Passion can be also considered as a relevant well-being indicator, such as job satisfaction, from the hedonic perspective of well-being (Cifre, Vera, Rodríguez-Sánchez, & Carmen Pastor, 2013). Although

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