

# **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

# Differences and Definitions of the Two Types of Passion Trigger New Ideas: Integration of the Passion and Perseverance Scale and Passion Levels Intervention

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# ABSTRACT

The Dualistic Model of Passion (DMP) divides passion into two categories: Harmonious Passion and Obsessive Passion. These categories are based on how individuals internalize their activities, and they have different characteristics and roles. Harmonious Passion is generally considered healthier and more stable than Obsessive Passion, and it has a more positive impact on the individual. Over the last two decades, the DMP and the Dualistic Scale of Passion(DSP) have been commonly used to examine the effects of Harmonious Passion and Obsessive Passion on individual achievement and burnout in the domains of work, study, and sport et al. Future research could integrate perseverance and passion to develop a scale that better predicts individual achievement. Furthermore, researchers could investigate additional techniques for intervening in passion based on the dynamic variability of passion, using autonomy as a starting point to regulate the type and intensity of passion.

# KEYWORDS

Dualistic Model of Passion Harmonious passion Obsessive Passion Perseverance Passion scale

### **ARTICLE INFORMATION**

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### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Context and Significance

Passion has the ability to bring happiness, create happiness, and promote progress. A world devoid of passion is like a barren desert; a life without passion is like a stagnant pool of water. Seligman's question, "How can we make people live more worthy and better lives?" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) prompts us to consider the role of passion in achieving a fulfilling life. Before that, most mental health researchers focused on psychopathology. However, (Vallerand et al., 2003), building on Seligman's research on positive psychology, concluded that passion motivates, enhances well-being, and gives meaning to life. Passion can motivate individuals to practice deliberately, which is why basketball players may spend hours a day practicing shooting baskets, and scientists may spend years studying a single phenomenon(Vallerand et al., 2008). However, it is important to note that passion can lead to negative consequences. For example, dancers with obsessive passion may continue to dance despite injuries, leading to long-term damage(Vallerand et al., 2008). Similarly, bike riders may take unnecessary risks on icy roads during Canadian winters, which are not suitable for cycling (Vallerand et al., 2003). It is worth exploring the factors that contribute to these different outcomes and the distinctions between the two types of passion. This paper discusses whether passion is continuous or transient. It draws on relevant literature from 1993 to 2022, covering topics such as passion, perseverance, motivation, and self-determination theory.

#### 1.2 The concept of passion

"Passion" is typically defined as a strong desire or enthusiasm(Sala & Gobet, 2017). According to (Vallerand et al., 2003), passion is a strong inclination towards an activity that an individual prefers, or that holds significant value to them, motivating their intentions and behaviors to express that value or preference(Jachimowicz et al., 2018). In fact, philosophers have discussed the

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concept of passion for centuries. Spinoza proposed that acceptable thoughts arise from reason, while unacceptable thoughts stem from passion. He believed that passion is a torment and a pain for the individual, which is consistent with the etymology of the word "passion" (*passio*, the Latin for suffering). According to Spinoza, individuals are slaves to their passion, which controls them, and the role of passion is negative. In contrast to Spinoza, Hegel believed that passion is crucial for individuals to achieve the highest level of fulfillment. However, it is important to note that subjective evaluations should be excluded unless clearly marked as such. Descartes defined passion as strong emotions with an intrinsic tendency to act. He believed that the role of passion is positive if an individual's behavior is based on reason, indicating that passion has a rational component (Vallerand et al., 2003). These perspectives laid the groundwork for subsequent research on passion.

#### 1.3 Concept of Perseverance

Duckworth et al. (2007) define perseverance as an individual trait characterized by long-term persistence and passion for a goal. The authors argue that perseverance emphasizes endurance, distinguishing it from the traditional Big Five personality trait of responsibility. Perseverance involves maintaining effort and interest in projects that may take months or even longer to complete. Unlike passion, individuals with perseverance do not deviate from their goals, even in the absence of positive feedback. Additionally, (Jachimowicz et al., 2018) demonstrated that perseverance can be divided into two dimensions: persistence in interest and persistence in effort. They argued that perseverance without passion is merely an ordeal, while perseverance with passion propels individuals forward. Therefore, combining the concepts of passion and perseverance to create a new scale and using it as a measurement tool can more accurately and consistently predict individual achievement.

#### 2. Developments in passion research

#### 2.1 The Dualistic Model of Passion (DMP)

Vallerand et al. (2003) proposed the DMP, which provides a detailed study of the categories and roles of passion. According to this model, passion is defined as a strong inclination towards an activity that an individual spends a great deal of time and energy on and gradually internalizes as part of their identity. According to the DMP, which is based on self-determination theory(Deci & Ryan, 2000), passion can be categorized into harmonious and obsessive passion depending on how an individual internalizes the activity. The model considers both the quality and quantity of passion. The model posits that passion is dynamically evolvable, as individuals internalize the activity towards which they are passionate as a division of the self, which develops more complexly over time. Autonomy is the key to distinguishing between the two types of passion. Whether an individual chooses and directs activities flexibly or rigidly and experiences positive or negative emotions is closely related to autonomy. Harmonious passion arises when individuals internalize activities into their identity autonomously(Mageau et al., 2009). Autonomous internalization occurs when individuals embrace an activity that is important to them for its own sake rather than for social acceptance or self-esteem(Mageau et al., 2011). This type of internalization creates a motivational force that encourages individuals to engage in an activity, accompanied by a sense of personal identity and willpower. The individual is not coerced into the activity but rather has the freedom to make choices. Harmonious passion refers to activities that occupy an important but not overwhelming place in an individual's identity, allowing them to balance other aspects of their life. On the other hand, obsessive passion arises when an individual internalizes an activity in a controlled manner, leading to potential interference with other areas of their life (Mageau et al., 2009). Individuals with obsessive passion often have a strong preference for certain activities. However, they may not always engage in these activities solely based on preference. Other factors, such as social acceptance, self-esteem, and the intense excitement experienced during the activity, may also play a role in their engagement. Obsessive passion can overwhelm an individual's identity, leading to an inability to participate effectively in other activities in life(Bélanger et al., 2013).

As high individual autonomy is positively correlated with subjective well-being(Deci & Ryan, 2000), the DMP suggests that harmonious passion also predicts subjective well-being positively(Vallerand et al., 2003). Furthermore, (Vallerand et al., 2006) found that harmonious passion is linked to positive experiences such as mindful flow and engagement, while obsessive passion is associated with negative experiences such as frustration, self-blame, and guilt. It is important to note that this is not a comprehensive list of experiences. Internalizing activities autonomously allows individuals to engage in activities more flexibly, allocate their energy, and focus their attention better. This leads to more positive experiences of activities. While individuals with controlled passion are able to engage in activities autonomously, those with obsessive passion may struggle to do so. Obsessive passion can lead to negative experiences when engaging in other activities, as individuals may be disturbed by thoughts related to their passion. It is important to note the negative impact that obsessive passion can have on individuals' autonomy and overall well-being. Individuals experiencing obsessive passion may feel anxious, irritable, or guilty when unable to devote sufficient time and energy to the activity. This may occur even if the alternative activity is beneficial (Vallerand et al., 2007). Furthermore, the DMP suggests that having a harmonious passion not only results in more positive experiences but also mitigates negative ones. For

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instance, individuals with harmonious passion have the autonomy to make their own choices, allowing them to engage in other activities promptly after experiencing negative emotions. However, an individual with an obsessive passion for an activity may spend excessive time and energy on it, and their attitude towards participation may be rigid or stereotypical. This can lead to conflicts with other activities and result in negative experiences.

Harmonious passion differs from the obsessive passion in the flexibility of behavioral adherence. Individuals with harmonious passion can control their activity and decide when to engage or not. If the individual perceives that the activity has become a negative factor in their life, they can autonomously cut off or diminish their connection to the activity. Individuals who have a harmonious passion are flexible in their adherence to behavior. They persist in the activity if it benefits them but reduce or stop participating if negative outcomes are frequent. This rational approach to behavioral adherence is not present in individuals with obsessive passion. Due to being more controlled by the activity, individuals may find it difficult to make autonomous choices, resulting in a passive adherence to the behavior. They may engage in the activity directed by obsessive passion even in the absence of positive factors and persist in the activity despite potential personal costs, such as risking their own safety (Vallerand et al., 2003). Furthermore, individuals may perceive their self-worth to be contingent on the time and effort invested in their passionate activities. If the outcome of the activity is unsatisfactory, they may experience a decrease in self-worth and subsequently increase their investment of time and energy in the activity to gain recognition(Liao et al., 2022).

#### 2.2. Overview of current research

With the development of passion-related research, an increasing number of scholars have extended their research horizons to all areas of life, including sport(Loftesnes et al., 2021; Lopes & Vallerand, 2020; Vallerand et al., 2006, 2008), work(Greenbaum et al., 2012; Schellenberg et al., 2022), gambling(Mageau et al., 2005), interpersonal relationships(Guilbault et al., 2020), academics(Schellenberg & Bailis, 2017), and gender relations(Busby et al., 2020), education(Bonneville-Roussy et al., 2013), mood prediction(Verner-Filion et al., 2012), and Internet use(Seguin-Levesque et al., 2003) et al. It is widely acknowledged that continuous practice is necessary for individuals to succeed in a particular domain. In other words, experts are made rather than born(A. Ericsson et al., 2007). Deliberate practice, as defined by (K. A. Ericsson et al., 1993), refers to active practice during free time, which is a highly structured activity motivated by the goal of improvement. Immediate feedback on performance and the development of performance-related knowledge and skills are crucial for achieving high levels of performance. Deliberate practice is motivated by various factors, with passion being one of the most significant (Sigmundsson et al., 2020). Liao et al. (2022) discovered that differences between an individual's "realistic" self and their "desired" self in passionate activities can impact their passion levels. Furthermore, these differences can vary depending on the context, such as when the same employee works under different leaders, resulting in different types and levels of passion(Schellenberg et al., 2022). Fernet et al., (2014) also found similar results. (Ruiz-Alfonso et al., 2023) found that the same student can have different levels of passion depending on their teacher's style. This was further supported by their study which also found that different teaching styles can elicit different levels of passion in the same student. Similarly, Ruiz-Alfonso et al., (2023) also investigated different passion states. This perspective aligns with the dichotomous passion model, which proposes that passion development is a dynamic process that emerges from the interaction between individuals and specific activities, and can occur in anyone.

Vallerand et al. (2008) examined the relationship between passion and sports performance using the Achievement Goal Classification(Elliot & Harackiewicz, n.d.). The study found that both harmonious and obsessive passion predicted mastery goals, whereas obsessive passion predicted all three types of goals, including mastery goals (self-improvement), performance-approach goals (outperforming others), and performance-avoidance goals (avoiding failure compared to others), with performance-avoidance goals negatively predicting individual performance. Individuals with mastery goals typically hold a perspective of competence growth, and their motivation to achieve is more internalized and autonomous. In contrast, individuals with performance goals generally hold a perspective of competence as a fixed entity, and therefore, their motivation to achieve is dependent on external factors such as task difficulty. The study by Lopes and Vallerand (2020) found that athletes with higher levels of harmonious passion experienced less burnout, while those with higher levels of obsessive passion were more likely to feel burnout. This supports the idea that harmonious passion leads to a purely adaptive and more autonomous internalization process, while obsessive passion leads to a mixed internalization process that can both adapt and conflict with the individual. It is important to note that these findings are based on subjective evaluations and should be interpreted with caution. Similar findings have been observed in the academic field(Stoeber et al., 2011). Although studies have suggested a considerable difference between harmonious and obsessive passion, it does not mean they are completely opposed or unrelated. Indeed, harmonious and obsessive

passion is significantly and positively correlated in elite soccer players, whereas the two passions are not correlated in average soccer players (Loftesnes et al., 2021). In addition, individuals enjoy participating in activities driven by both harmonious and obsessive passion(Vallerand et al., 2003), and both types of passion increase the frequency and duration of deliberate practice, thus improving performance in both activities (Vallerand et al., 2008).

In the workplace, employees may perform differently under different leaders. Obsessive passion motivates individuals to pursue a goal rigorously and stubbornly, discarding other competing activities that may interfere with the achievement of this goal(Bélanger et al., 2013). The concept of bottom-line thinking, also known as bottom-line mentality (BLM), is prevalent in the world of work. It is a one-dimensional mindset that prioritizes achieving a bottom-line outcome over other competing priorities(Greenbaum et al., 2012). Leaders with a bottom-line mindset typically focus on one type of goal, such as performance, profitability or productivity, to the exclusion of other goals, such as employee happiness or relationships. It is important to note that this approach may not be suitable for all situations and may lead to negative consequences in the long run. Additionally, employees with high levels of obsessive passion may believe that they are more likely to succeed at work if they are managed by a leader with a bottom-line mindset, but this may not always be the case. Accordingly, if an employee is aware that they will be working with a leader who supports the BLM, their level of obsessive passion for the job may also increase(Schellenberg et al., 2022).

Extensive research has been conducted on the differences between harmonious and obsessive passion across various fields. It is common for casinos worldwide to allow gamblers to voluntarily exclude themselves from gambling for a certain period if they feel they have lost control over their gambling behaviour. However, studies have shown that gamblers who have imposed this policy on themselves tend to have higher levels of obsessive passion for gambling activities(Vallerand et al., 2003). Gambling is often associated with addiction. Therefore, it is important to understand the difference and connection between passion and addiction. Passion refers to a strong inclination towards an activity, while addiction builds on this to create a strong dependence on the activity. Addiction is also associated with increased impulsivity and depressive states, whereas passion is more associated with healthy, positive emotions(Deleuze et al., 2018). Traditionally, swing, salsa and tango are performed by pairs of dancers. Individuals who are warm and patient with their partners and have a good rapport with them tend to have higher levels of harmonious passion for the dance. Conversely, people who are demanding of their partners and even like to complain about their partner's poor performance often have higher levels of obsessive passion. According to Guilbault et al. (2020), dancers who share a harmonious passion for dance tend to have better relationships with both their dance partner and their significant other.

Married individuals who have a harmonious passion for the Internet experience fewer arguments with their significant others (Seguin-Levesque et al., 2003). Additionally, high levels of parental support for children and teacher support for student autonomy promote the development of more harmonious passion and persistence in learning activities over time (Bonneville-Roussy et al., 2013). Furthermore, individuals with harmonious passion are better able to predict the emotions they will experience when participating in the same activity, while those with obsessive passion tend to overestimate their emotional response. This means that individuals with obsessive passion may anticipate an excellent emotional experience from a positive event, but when the event actually occurs, their emotional experience is not as intense as expected (Verner-Filion et al., 2012).

#### 2.3. Shortcomings of existing research

Most studies on passion utilize the DMP (Vallerand et al., 2003)and passion scales (Bouffard, 2017; Sigmundsson et al., 2020; Vallerand et al., 2003). Yang, Zhenfang, Lu si mei & Luo Li. (2022) developed and tested the reliability and validity of the Scale for Work Passion for Primary and Secondary School Teachers, which is based on the DMP and was used with Chinese research subjects. This scale is more accurate in measuring the level of passion among Chinese native subjects. However, some researchers (Guilbault et al., 2020; Loftesnes et al., 2021; Mageau et al., 2005) have simply replaced the existing scale's keywords with words related to the target research area to study the difference between harmonious and obsessive passion. This approach ignores the fact that their subjects may not be suitable for using this scale. When using the Dualistic Passion Scale with subjects of a different ethnicity than those used to develop the scale, it is important to measure and analyze the scale in advance to ensure its reliability and validity for the target study population. Furthermore, there is still disagreement among existing studies on major issues. For example, Curran et al. (2015)argue that passion provides individuals with the psychological energy necessary to participate in and complete an activity, while Sigmundsson et al. (2020)contend that passion only determines the direction of activity and is perseverance that provides the energy for passionate activities.

Overall, there is not enough research on passion in China compared to abroad. Obviously, the number of relevant articles is not enough. At present, there are a number of studies that point out that perseverance should be included in passion-related studies and that the trait of perseverance is very important for passion, but there are no studies that integrate passion and perseverance

into one scale to better explore the issue of passion. In addition, although a number of studies have suggested that harmonious and obsessive passion have different effects on individual performance and mood in areas such as work, learning relationships, etc., it is more important to determine what factors influence changes in passion and how such influences play a role.

#### 3. Conclusion

Existing studies on passion have explored various aspects of daily life, highlighting the importance of research on this topic. However, most studies, both in China and abroad, have relied on the DMP Vallerand et al. (2003) and passion scale. Despite being over two decades old, the model and scale still demonstrate good reliability after repeated investigations. This model's passion scales can be applied to study, work, and sport et al. When studying passion, it is important to consider its link to motivation and perseverance. Passion determines the direction and goal of the activity, while motivation drives the actual behavior, and perseverance provides the energy to complete the activity. The dichotomous passion model proposes that passion can be divided into two types: harmonious passion, which is linked to positive experiences such as flow and engagement, and obsessive passion, which is linked to negative experiences such as frustration, blame, and guilt. The distinction between the two types of passion is rooted in the concept of autonomy. This idea has been supported by most research on the DMP since its inception. The issue of passion extends beyond the contrast between harmonious and obsessive passion. Future research should concentrate on specific techniques for intervening in passion, with 'autonomy' serving as a promising starting point.

#### 4. Outlook

#### 4.1 Development of a new scale integrating perseverance and passion

Research has shown that passion and perseverance are closely linked, as demonstrated by their conceptualization. Passion is defined as a strong inclination towards an activity that is preferred or holds significant value, while perseverance is a trait characterized by persistence and passion towards a goal over an extended period of time. If an individual lacks the perseverance to stick to an activity for a long period of time, or if they lack a strong inclination towards it, they will not be able to achieve their full potential in that activity. For instance, at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, students with low perseverance exhibit higher dropout rates than those with high perseverance, even after controlling for Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, high school rankings, and the Big Five personality trait of responsibility(Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Thus, combining perseverance and passion to create a new Passion-Perseverance Scale based on the existing Passion Scale may more accurately and consistently predict individual achievement.

#### 4.2. Passion scales should be tested before the citation.

The Passion Scale, which has been highly cited(Bouffard, 2017; Sigmundsson et al., 2020), includes the item 'I spend a lot of time on projects I enjoy'. However, (Vallerand et al., 2003)suggest that this item measures an individual's passion for an activity. Although(Vallerand et al., 2003)suggest that this is a measure of an individual's passion for an activity, this item may still be less rigorous and requires improvement. Some individuals may have limited time to engage in their preferred activities due to various objective factors. For instance, office workers who enjoy travelling may only have a few days off each year to do so. Similarly, children living in mountain villages may have a passion for playing guitar or basketball, but their financial situation may prevent them from pursuing these activities. It is important to acknowledge that these limitations exist and can impact one's ability to engage in their hobbies. In summary, some individuals may not have the opportunity to engage in their preferred activities frequently, despite their passion for them. This group may react adversely to the statement "I spend a lot of time on my favorite projects", which could impact the study's findings. Therefore, when developing a local passion scale in China, it is important to thoroughly review and improve the items using established scale development techniques and content from both domestic and international sources.

#### 4.3. Examine the utilitarian aspect of passion

Based on the assumptions of Self-Determination Theory(Deci & Ryan, 2000), individuals are naturally drawn to activities that they find interesting and that aid in the development of a more concrete and unified self-perception. This theory suggests that human beings are growth-oriented. It is assumed that an individual's participation in an activity is accompanied by an evaluation of that activity. This involves weighing the costs and benefits of implementing the activity in relation to their surroundings and personal conditions. For instance, an individual may have an interest in basketball and video games and occasionally participate in these activities. However, upon returning to these activities after a period of non-participation, they may find that they struggle to beat their opponents in the game and fail to score in basketball due to being out of shape. This lack of success can lead to a lack of positive feedback. After evaluating both activities, one may consider giving up the hazardous video game and continuing with

basketball, which is at least good for health. This raises the question of whether passion can be utilitarian or non-utilitarian. Passion is closely linked to motivation, which is driven by needs and influences behavior. In this materialistic society, is there truly non-utilitarian passion? Should passion be utilitarian? These questions may be explored in future studies.

#### 4.4. Developing intervention techniques for passion

Current research on passion examines the relationship between harmonious and obsessive passion and its effects on individual achievement and mood in the domains of sport, education, work, and study. However, there is a lack of research on how individuals can develop high levels of harmonious passion while inhibiting obsessive passion. Previous research has demonstrated that passion levels are continuous, dynamic, and variable. The term 'autonomy' is recognized as a crucial factor in distinguishing between the two types of passion, which suggests an avenue for research into passion intervention techniques.

#### 5. Conclusion

The article's aim is to suggest a number of ideas that could help to advance the development of passion-themed research in the field of psychology. In order to do this, it summarises the advances and shortcomings of the current literature. This suggests that there is an urgent need for current research to develop scales that integrate the concepts of passion and perseverance. Furthermore, it may be possible to intervene in the level of passion by utilising the dynamic variability of passion. Although the paper concludes with some constructive suggestions, such as the development of a new passion scale and the use of passion variability to intervene in passion levels, these suggestions have not yet been implemented. It is hoped that future research will begin with the development of a new scale that incorporates the traits of passion and perseverance and will find ways to effectively intervene in passion levels.

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