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Constructing
a Research Program to Study
LEADERSHIP AND PASSION AT WORK

Contents

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Passion at Work

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Abstract

This article deals with leadership and passion at work. The paper discusses concepts and theories linked to leadership and passion and then proceeds to argue for a research program that would provide a richer understanding of leadership and passion. The paper was prepared for and presented at the 32nd EGOS colloquium (7–9 July 2016, University of Naples Federico II, Naples, Italy). The work is a part of the Leading Passion project coordinated by Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki, Finland (www.leadingpassion.fi).

Introduction

■ Working life is changing (as it always is), but the changes brought by the ever advancing technology are projected to be massive. For example, Frey and Osborne (2013) argue, based on their analysis of the US labor market, that a whopping 47 percent of total US employment is at a high risk of vanishing, largely due to computerization. They further suggest that the tasks that are best shielded against computerization are those that require high levels of creativity and social skills. Thus, in order to succeed in the future, organizations are going to need highly skilled employees and they must become more knowledge-intensive. Engaging employees more fully is said to be crucial because engaged employees are consistently and continuously emotionally invested in and focused on creating value for organizations, have higher morale, are more loyal, more creative and innovative, are prepared to "go the extra mile" to delight a customer (Hlupic 2014), and, most importantly, are more productive (e.g. Bakker & Bal 2010; Demerouti & Cropanzano 2010).

All this is said to cause problems for leadership. Leading highly skilled people requires different leadership strategies than leading people doing repetitive tasks. Thus, "traditional models of hierarchical and legitimate power practices are being challenged" (Shuck & Herd 2012, 157). In spite of the recent developments in leadership research, thinking, and practice, some commentators argue that many organizations are still leading in traditional ways. This clashes with the view of the future of work, according to which organizations must "inspire and enable employees to apply their full capabilities to their work" (Bakker, Albrecht & Leiter 2011, 4–5).

In this paper, we construct a research program aimed at studying leadership and engagement. There are many concepts that look at the phenomenon of engagement from different perspectives. In this paper, we draw from literature on work engagement (Schaufeli et al. 2002), intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci 2000a), and passion (Vallerand et al. 2003) to understand the phenomenon. Based on the review, we frame our own approach around the concept of passion at work, which we see as consciously accessible, intense positive feelings experienced through engagement in work activities that people like or find important and in which they invest time and energy.

In conducting the review, we also note that research has neglected many aspects of passion and focused only on its positive connotations. We

feel it is crucial to delve into this "shadow" of passion in order to understand it more fully. Passion can trigger intense feelings in people and their reactions can be unanticipated. Therefore, we also highlight the need to focus on organizational members' own understandings of passion. We also recognize the need to pay close attention to the social and environmental factors surrounding passion. In particular, we seek to understand the role of leadership in passion at work.

Engaging, motivating, and inspiring followers has been at the heart of much of leadership discussion, especially after the rise of charismatic and transformational leadership theories in the 1980s and 1990s. Hundreds of studies have been conducted where scholars have sought for the best ways for leaders to achieve the goal of engaged or motivated followers. As is true for much of leadership research, this stream has overwhelmingly focused on the leader (see e.g. DeRue 2011) and produced rather abstract and general findings and advice for leaders: be a charismatic leader (Babcok-Robertson & Strickland 2010), be a transformational leader (Zhu, Avolio & Walumbwa 2009), or exhibit transparent communication and behavioral integrity (Vogelgesang, Leroy & Avolio 2013). A lot of this research is quantitative, again mirroring leadership as a whole (see e.g. Glynn & Raffaelli 2010). Relatively lacking is a perspective aimed at *understanding* the phenomenon, to *ex*pose meanings of leadership rather than *im*pose them (Bryman et al. 1988).

We also conduct a literature review on leadership and how engagement, motivation, and emotions have been studied in the field. We point out that the focus has been heavily on individual leaders and the quantitative aspect has been emphasized. We argue for a more open, explorative qualitative approach in order to gain a rich understanding of leading passion. Again, we find that by ignoring certain aspects of leadership, research has left a sizable shadow on the field of leading passion. In focusing on the leader and taking an ex ante approach to phenomena, the social dynamics and the perspectives of different stakeholders have been left unexamined. To solve this situation, we frame our own leadership approach by drawing from the shared (Denis et al. 2012), relational (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien 2012), and practice based (Carroll et al. 2008) approaches to leadership. Because we wish to highlight members' own meanings of leadership, we follow Alvesson and Spicer (2011) and start with a broad definition of leadership as entailing some kind of an influence process and invoking locally constructed meanings.

Finally, we proceed to craft a qualitative research program in order to attain a richer understanding about leadership and passion. In particular, we argue for a research program studying both discourses and practices in organizations and their role in shaping and defining organizational members' understandings of passion and leadership. In this way, we can tap into the hidden aspects of both passion and leadership: we can explore the shadow so that our understanding of these phenomena can be enriched.

Engagement, intrinsic motivation, and passion

In this chapter, we look at research on engagement, intrinsic motivation, and passion. We discuss the definitions and conceptualizations of the terms, the empirical research on them, and some of the critical comments directed at them. We conclude this section by looking at the similarities and differences of the concepts and proceed to frame our own approach to the phenomena.

Engagement

Kahn (1990) was the first to coin the term engagement in organizational research. He defined personal engagement as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" (Kahn 1990, 694). Since then, there has been a large and fast growing body of research on engagement (Bakker, Albrecht & Leiter 2011). The field is still characterized as novel, needing a lot of work to advance. For example, there is a lot of controversy about the definition of the term itself. Although the most often used definition of

Engagement

work engagement is "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli et al. 2002, 74), there are other definitions drawing more fully from the work of Kahn (Sonnentag 2011). Interestingly, the emotional dimension present in Kahn's work is somewhat downplayed in Schaufeli et al.'s approach.

Three engagement types: employee, work, and task engagement

One feature of the field of engagement is that there seem to be at least three different constructs included: employee, work, and task engagement (Schaufeli & Salanova 2011). Employee engagement is a broader concept,

including not only work related issues, but also the employee's relationship with his role and the organization, whereas work engagement more narrowly refers to the employee's relationship with his work (Schaufeli & Salanova 2011). In order to get a more fine-grained analysis of engagement, Schaufeli and Salanova (2011) propose the concept of task engagement, which would look at the employee's relationship with specific work tasks by focusing on whether employees "feel more engaged while performing some tasks rather than other tasks" (p. 42). This resonates well with Bakker et al. (2011), who also point out that it is not known whether there are fluctuations in engagement over time and what they are like. This kind of an approach can help open up the "black box" of engagement, taking a more "micro" orientation by looking at its dynamic features (how engagement changes between tasks and between moments or days).

While task engagement is a new concept, there is a lot of research on both employee and work engagement. Our focus is on work life, which is why we will focus on work engagement in this review. In this field, research has overwhelmingly concentrated on the individual level. For example, Bakker et al. (2011) call for more studies into the "climate for engagement" to look at how different contextual factors relate with engagement. This broadens the concept of work engagement towards a more collective approach. Although Schaufeli and Salanova (2011) point out some potential flaws in this approach, they also highlight the need to study the collective level of work engagement, which is distinct from the individual level.

Work engagement includes vigor, dedication and absorption

In most approaches, authors have generally divided the concept of work engagement into three components or dimensions. For example, Bakker and Demerouti (2008, 209–210) elaborate on the most commonly used definition of engagement: vigor refers to "high levels of energy and mental resilience while working"; dedication refers to "being strongly involved in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, and challenge"; and absorption refers to "being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work". Scholars have also studied the antecedents of work engagement. The work of many scholars is also nicely presented by Bakker and Demerouti (2008). They argue that high job resources (such as autonomy, performance feedback, social support etc.) and high personal resources (such as optimism, self-efficacy, resilience etc.) lead to work engagement. Furthermore, these resources have a particularly

good effect on work engagement when job demands (such as work pressure, emotional demands, mental demands etc.) are also high.

Across the board, research on work engagement has uncovered multiple benefits of high levels of engagement for both individual workers and organizations. For example, high levels of engagement have been found to have a positive effect on workers' mental health, self-assessments of their own health, and their ability to work (Hakanen 2009). Low levels, on the other hand, can cause somatic symptoms, sleeping disorders, and depression (Hallberg & Schaufeli 2006). In their meta-analysis, Harter et al. (2002) found a significant correlation between high levels of engagement and profitability. Hakanen (2009) further argues that workers exhibiting high levels of work engagement are proactive, want to work hard and stay in the organization, want to learn and develop themselves, and their work does not put a lot of strain on their health or work-life balance.

The role of emotions in engagement has not been the focus of many engagement studies. For example, Bakker and Demerouti (2008, 215) state that engaged employees experience positive emotions and "this may be the reason why they are more productive". The mechanism of how emotions may enhance productivity may be related to how happy people are more sensitive to opportunities, more helpful to others, and more confident (Cropanzano & Wright 2001); or how positive emotions, according to the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions, can broaden people's thoughts and build their personal resources (Fredrickson 2001; Fredrickson & Branigan 2005). However, these studies are tentative and since Kahn, the role of emotions has been somewhat downplayed or overlooked in research. Emotions are often referred to as being "present", as in Bakker and Demerouti's (2008) elaboration above, but they are not studied in more detail.

Another issue that has not received a lot of attention is the potential "dark side" of work engagement (Bakker et al. 2011; Sonnentag 2011). Work engagement is usually conceptualized as a positive concept and there is a lot of research demonstrating its positive outcomes. However, things such as the role of negative affects in engagement, the possible negative effects of high work engagement for life outside the workplace, and other unanticipated influences – have received only cursory attention (Sonnentag 2011). For example, Sonnentag et al. (2010) found that high work engagement predicted an increase in job demands over time. An interesting debate here is whether work engagement can lead to work-

aholism. While some argue that it can, Schaufeli and Salanova (2011) argue against it. They maintain that the key difference is in motivational dynamics: where engaged workers want to work hard and enjoy their work – in other words, are "pulled" to their work – workaholics feel compelled to work and feel bad if they do not – they are "pushed" to their work. Whichever the case, there is not much research on this dark side of engagement and Sonnentag (2011, 35) therefore calls for more research to "examine the conditions under which negative outcomes of work engagement do occur".

Throughout the field, the relative lack of qualitative research is evident. This is nicely illustrated in a review of the field by Bakker et al. (2011) and the comments to it published in a special issue of the European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology. The work engagement field could benefit greatly from a more qualitative approach. For example, questions of possible fluctuations of employee engagement over time, the lack of research on the more micro-level "task engagement", and the possible negative aspects of engagement are prime targets for a qualitative approach aiming to understand in rich detail what is going on in the everyday of an organization.

Intrinsic motivation

Motivation

At the heart of the idea of intrinsic motivation is that it is crucial that people feel motivated in their work and find meaningful tasks in it. The key factors that create possibilities for intrinsic motivation and support and maintain people's motivation lie in basic human needs[1] that are part of the self-determination theory (SDT) created by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan. SDT concerns intrinsic motivation and its connection to human needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness.[2]

Three basic human needs

Ryan and Deci stress that to be motivated means to be moved to do something. This means that a person who feels no inspiration to act is characterized as unmotivated, whereas someone who is activated toward an end is considered motivated (Ryan & Deci 2000b). Motivation concerns energy, direction and persistence – all aspects of activation and

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1   Ryan and Deci (2000a, 74) state that these three basic psychological needs are innate, essential and universal.

2   Ryan and Deci (2000a, 68) define SDT as an approach to human personality that uses traditional empirical methods while employing an organismic metatheory that highlights the importance of humans' evolved inner resources for personality development and behavioral self-regulation.

intention (Ryan & Deci 2000a). SDT does not view motivation as a unitary phenomenon, because people have not only different amounts but also different kinds of motivation. It is not only about the level of motivation (how much motivation), but the important factor is the orientation of that motivation (what types of motivation). The orientation of motivation concerns the underlying attitudes and goals that give rise to action, in other words, the reason why we take action (Ryan & Deci 2000b). It is crucial to understand that Self-Determination Theory lays heavy emphasis on the effects of different types of motivation, because the form of motivation affects people's behavior strongly and influences their well-being.

SDT distinguishes between different types of motivation based on the different reasons or goals that give rise to action. The most basic distinction in the theory is between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome (Ryan & Deci 2000b). Because of the functional and experiential differences between self-motivation (intrinsic) and external regulation (extrinsic), a major focus of SDT has been to supply a more differentiated approach to motivation by asking what kind of motivation is being exhibited at any given time (Ryan & Deci 2000a).

It is important to notice that intrinsic motivation is defined as engaging in an activity for its inherent satisfaction rather than for some separable consequence, which drives extrinsic motivation. An intrinsically motivated person is moved to act for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external prods, pressures, or rewards. To humans, intrinsic motivation is a pervasive and important form of motivation. Ryan and Deci emphasize that from birth onwards, humans, in their healthiest states, are active, inquisitive, curious, and playful creatures, displaying a ubiquitous readiness to learn and explore, and they do not require extraneous incentives to do so. But it is good to remember that although intrinsic motivation exists within individuals, in another sense intrinsic motivation exists in the relation between individuals and activities. This means that people are intrinsically motivated for some activities and not others. Moreover, not everyone is intrinsically motivated for any particular task. (Ryan & Deci 2000b)

Therefore, because intrinsic motivation exists in the nexus between a person and a task, some authors have defined intrinsic motivation in

terms of the task being interesting while others have defined it in terms of the satisfaction a person gains from intrinsically motivated task engagement. Ryan and Deci's (2000b) approach focuses primarily on psychological needs, namely the innate needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Their definition of a basic need, whether it be a physiological need or a psychological need, is an energizing state that, if satisfied, conduces toward health and well-being but, if not satisfied, contributes to pathology and ill-being (Ryan & Deci 2000a). They recognize that basic need satisfaction accrues in part from engaging in interesting activities. Ryan and Deci (2000b) underline that there is considerable practical utility in focusing on task properties and their potential intrinsic interest, as it leads toward improved task design or selection to enhance motivation.

There are interesting findings on the benefits of intrinsic motivation for one's psychological health and well-being. Niemiec, Ryan and Deci (2009) examined the consequences of focusing on one of two types of life goals: whether young adults who had recently graduated from college chose to emphasize the intrinsic or extrinsic aspirations of their life path. Results indicated that placing importance on either intrinsic or extrinsic aspirations related positively to the attainment of those goals. But the interesting finding was that, whereas the attainment of intrinsic aspirations related positively to psychological health, the attainment of extrinsic aspirations did not. On the contrary, the attainment of extrinsic aspirations related positively to indicators of ill-being[3] (Niemiec, Ryan & Deci 2009). Although extrinsic aspirations can be motivating for attaining the goals, they work very poorly on reinforcing the psychological health and well-being of the person. It is worth noticing that intrinsic and extrinsic aspirations are not always in contradiction to each other, as the lack of psychological well-being comes into play when one only has strong extrinsic aspirations.

Although humans are liberally endowed with intrinsic motivational tendencies, this propensity appears to be expressed only under specifiable conditions. Therefore, research into intrinsic motivation has placed much emphasis on those conditions that elicit, sustain, and enhance this special type of motivation versus those that subdue or diminish it (Ryan &

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3   SDT argues that it is primarily when people attain intrinsic (rather than extrinsic) goals that they will experience more well-being and less ill-being because it is only the attainment of intrinsic goals that is likely to satisfy their basic psychological needs. This links to the fact that to the extent that goal attainment does not provide basic psychological need satisfaction, it is unlikely to yield long-term psychological health benefits and may even cause some decrements. (Niemiec, Ryan & Deci 2009.)

Deci 2000b). Much of the research guided by SDT has also examined environmental factors that hinder or undermine self-motivation, social functioning, and personal well-being. These environmental factors can thwart the possibilities of the actualization of the basic psychological needs. Thus, SDT is concerned not only with the specific nature of positive developmental tendencies, but it also examines social environments that are antagonistic toward these tendencies (Ryan & Deci 2000a). Ryan and Deci (2000b) state that Self-Determination Theory is specifically framed in terms of social and environmental factors that facilitate versus undermine intrinsic motivation. This language reflects the assumption that intrinsic motivation, being an inherent organismic propensity, is catalyzed (rather than caused) when individuals are in conditions that conduce toward its expression.

SDT makes a critical distinction between behaviors that are volitional and accompanied by an experience of freedom and autonomy, those that emanate from one's sense of self, and those that are accompanied by the experience of pressure and control and are not representative of one's self. Intrinsically motivated behaviors, which are performed out of interest and satisfy the innate psychological needs for competence and autonomy, are the prototype of self-determined behavior. The social conditions that support one's basic psychological needs, feelings of competence, autonomy and relatedness are the basis for maintaining intrinsic motivation. (Ryan & Deci 2000b)

Passion at work

Passion

Vallerand and others (2003) define passion as a strong inclination toward an activity that individuals like (or even love), that they find important, and in which they invest time and energy. They also present two distinct types of passion: harmonious passion that engenders a sense of **Harmonious vs. obsessive passion** volition and personal endorsement about pursuing the passionate activity, and obsessive passion that creates an uncontrollable urge to engage in the passionate activity. Harmonious passion results from an autonomous internalization of the activity into the person's identity and thus aspects of one's identity, such as harmonious passion, that have been internalized in an autonomous fashion are then part of the self (Vallerand et al. 2003). Harmonious passion is stated to be positively correlated with general positive affect and psychological adjustment and psychological adjustment indices (Vallerand et al. 2003; Vallerand et al. 2006; Vallerand et al. 2007).

Moreover, harmonious passion has been found to be positively associated with positive experiences during activity engagement such as positive emotions and flow, while obsessive passion was positively correlated with negative emotions during activity engagement (Vallerand et al. 2003; Vallerand et al. 2006), rumination when prevented from engaging in the passionate activity and rigid persistence (Vallerand et al. 2003).

Flow

The concept of passion is closely related to other concepts, such as flow, defined as a peak experience or optimal state where a person becomes highly involved in an activity and experiences effortless concentration and complete control (Csikszentmihalyi 1992, 2008) and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan 2000). Flow can be seen as a consequence of harmonious passion (Vallerand et al. 2003) and thus passionate people should experience more flow than those who are less passionate (Vallerand 2008).

Passion, motivation and flow

Recognizing the similarities of the concept of passion with other concepts, such as flow and motivation, Vallerand and others (2007) argue that the explicit focus on the engagement in activity and the recognition of two different types of passion sets passion apart from other concepts. As Vallerand (2012) notes, there is a close affinity between the concepts of motivation and passion, but the difference is subtle and yet significant: Both passion and motivation are important, but motivation may matter more for non-passionate activities that we still need to perform in our lives (e.g., to go to school, clean up our room or office), while passion may be especially important for the relatively few activities that make us thrive in our lives.

In addition to Vallerand's research, there exists vibrant research on passion in entrepreneurial literature. For example, Cardon et al. (2009, 517) conceptualize entrepreneurial passion as "consciously accessible, intense positive feelings experienced by engagement in entrepreneurial activities associated with roles that are meaningful and salient to the self-identity of the entrepreneur". This definition is very similar to Vallerand's conceptualization of passion.

Building on passion research from social psychological literature, as well as more recent research on entrepreneurial passion, other definitions have been created, combining job or work passion into attitudes or orientations toward one's job. Ho et al. (2011; 2014) conceptualized job passion as a job attitude comprising both affective and cognitive elements that embody the strong inclination that one has towards one's job. Defining work

passion, Bergqvist and Eriksson (2015) argue that passion can be considered as consciously accessible positive feelings experienced through engagement in activities such as work – any work – associated with roles that are meaningful for self-identity. Thus, passion can be considered as orientation to an activity such as work – any work. Taking the definition further and adding to the results passion may have, Hardgrove and Howard (2015) defined employee work passion as the positive emotional state of an employee that comes from engagement in work related to employment, and which results in persistent and productive engagement in work related activities, further resulting in harmonious congruence with a worker's life beyond the workplace. Again, the similarities of these approaches with both Vallerand's and Cardon et al.'s work are evident.

Conclusions

Work engagement, intrinsic motivation and passion at work

Although work engagement, intrinsic motivation, and passion at work are distinct concepts and have their respective streams of research, according to our review, they share surprisingly many characteristics. All of them refer to a kind of a positive state of mind that is experienced by engaging in a specific activity. All of them engender a sense of volition: people enjoy the activity and engage in it freely. In every field, in varying degrees, empirical findings point to the positive effects of the respective concept for the individual and the organization. In both work engagement and intrinsic motivation studies, scholars have also recognized the importance of the context (cultural, social and environmental factors) in affecting people's experiences. In passion literature, this approach seems to be lacking.

Within each stream, there are authors who recognize the similarities between these concepts and there have been some attempts to delineate the different concepts in more detail. However, to our knowledge, an easy delineation is not forthcoming, given that there is ample debate within the fields about the respective conceptualizations. Above, Vallerand and others (2007) contend that the focus on activity and the two forms of passion set it apart from similar concepts. Through our review, we would argue this is not the case. However, there is one thing that differentiates work engagement and intrinsic motivation on the one hand from passion at work on the other: The role of emotions. In work engagement and intrinsic motivation, affects, emotions, emotional states and so on, are referred to more or less in passing, whereas in passion literature emotions

Role of emotions

are put in center stage. In another statement, Vallerand (2012) muses that it is the passion towards those few activities that really makes people thrive that sets it apart. Although we are sure many work engagement and intrinsic motivation scholars would argue that this is what they are also advocating, we think Vallerand has a valid point here. Focusing on emotions and, particularly, on the more intensive positive emotions offers an intriguing avenue to contribute to research in this area.

Therefore, for this study, we draw from both Vallerand (2003) and Cardon et al. (2009) and define passion at work as consciously accessible, intense positive feelings experienced by engagement in work activities that people like or find important and in which they invest time and energy. Drawing from work engagement and intrinsic motivation research, we also want to explore the effect of the context, or social and environmental factors, on passion. We want to uncover what factors can facilitate or undermine passion at work. A specific object of inquiry for us is leadership and its relationship with passion, to which we turn in the next section.

Before turning to leadership, we want to make a further comment on research in this area. The majority of the research reviewed above – on work engagement, intrinsic motivation, and passion at work – is quantitative. This research has revealed many aspects of the phenomenon. However, this fact has, in our view, produced a somewhat "lopsided" view of

it. This is nicely illustrated when we look at the problems and unresolved issues in work engagement research discussed above, most of which can be extended to apply to intrinsic motivation and passion research. Authors specifically refer to the lack of qualitative studies in the field, which could give us a richer and more nuanced picture of the phenomenon. In addition, the discussion about overlooking the possible dynamics of engagement and the introduction of the new concept of task engagement, coupled with the difficulties in unearthing the potential dark side of work engagement, point to the need to conduct more open studies in order to have novel insights into these issues. Quantitative studies are good at studying phenomena and concepts we already know about. To us, it seems a qualitative approach is called for in order to make more descriptive research to uncover the intricacies of the phenomenon.

Another reason for a more open approach lies in the very uncritical and unproblematized treatment of the concepts. In work engagement, intrinsic motivation, and passion at work, the connotations of each concept are overly positive. Although new avenues are being opened into looking

at the "dark sides" of these concepts, we feel these approaches seem a bit mechanical and restricted. Whichever concept we use, this phenomenon relates to things that are important to people and can even touch on their deepest desires – and fears. Furthermore, research often focuses on the efficiency side of the phenomenon and how fostering things such as work engagement can benefit the organization.

Although individual benefits, like good health and job satisfaction, are often factored in, a distinct managerial "efficiency ghost" hovers behind them. We contend that herein lies the shadow of passion: it is held as a distinctively positive phenomenon and its other possible features are glossed over. We argue that passion at work is a multifaceted phenomenon and the overly positive connotations do a disservice for understanding it. Furthermore, this positive treatment also leads organizations and managers to use it as a normative tool: passion at work is good, which is why everybody should be passionate. This can also materialize in a compelling imperative in organizations: "Of course you want to be passionate about your work!" Here we also find the shadow of leading passion, which highlights the fact that organizations can use it to exact even more work from their employees.[4]

Leadership

In this chapter, we briefly look at how leadership literature has approached leading work engagement, motivation, and passion. While there exists a stream of research studying leadership and engagement, there are not many studies looking at leadership and intrinsic motivation. Therefore, we look at the larger area of motivating and inspiring. Moreover, we found no studies discussing leadership and passion at work. In this review, in order to get some insight into this area, we examine research on leadership and emotions. Leadership is a notoriously complex concept, about which Stogdill (1974) famously quipped: "There are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept". After reviewing leadership literature on engagement, motivation, and emotions, we move to consider the implications of the review on our research and also to frame and position our own approach in the field.

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4   Incidentally, this kind of a mechanism is found above in the work engagement review by
    Sonnentag et al. (2011).

Leading engagement

In their review of the field, Bakker et al. (2011, 13) comment on the research on leadership and engagement by stating that "the role of the leader in fostering work engagement has received limited research attention". They note that transformational leadership has received some attention and call for using alternative models of leadership to understand how leadership affects engagement. In particular, the exact mechanisms or processes by which leaders influence their followers' engagement have not been adequately addressed (Bakker et al. 2011).

Looking at the state of research, we concur with Bakker et al.'s (2011) assessment: apart from transformational leadership, one is hard pressed to find studies about leadership and engagement. A few studies examine engagement and servant leadership (see e.g. Van Dierendonck & Nuijten 2010), but otherwise transformational approaches dominate the field. The most common version of transformational leadership is concerned with followers' performance and developing them to their fullest potential (Avolio 1999). The four factors of transformational leadership are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (see e.g. Bass & Avolio 1990).

Transformational leadership

Many studies have examined the effect of transformational leadership on work engagement. Several studies have found that there is a strong connection between work engagement and transformational leadership (Zhu et al. 2009; Salanova et al. 2011; Song et al. 2012). These studies suggest that by exhibiting transformational leadership behaviors, leaders can enhance their followers' work engagement.

Although this stream of research points to certain behaviors that can foster work engagement, it has some obvious drawbacks. The first one concerns the studies themselves. Like a majority of leadership research (see e.g. Glynn & Raffaelli 2010), practically every study looking at engagement and leadership is quantitative. Studies rely on strict, predefined constructs and try to find connections with them. While they may tell us something of the overall behavioral patterns affecting engagement, they do not tell us much about the "exact mechanisms or processes by which leaders influence their followers' engagement" (Bakker et al. 2011).

Another problem is the transformational leadership construct itself. Multiple scholars have pointed out its many problems. They are well illustrated by Alvesson & Kärreman (2016): the transformational leadership construct is in places incoherent and arbitrarily excludes certain factors, it

overemphasizes the role of the leader and reduces others to mindless followers, the context and social dynamics are regularly neglected, and transformational leaders are idolized and seen as ethically superior. Because of these problems, another approach is called for to better understand the relationship between leadership and engagement.

Motivating and inspiring

There exists a sizable body of work about work motivation where scholars examine what energizes (gets people to invest energy in their work), directs (which activities people focus their efforts on), and sustains (makes people persist in these activities) work-related behavior (Pinder 1998). This work has resulted in many different models of work motivation, many of which are also supported by empirical studies (Ellemers et al. 2004). Although there is research explicitly examining the relationship between leadership and motivation, a case could be made that most of leadership research considers phenomena close to motivation. For example, on the list above, work motivation is presented to be about energizing, directing, and sustaining work related behavior. The definition could easily be applied to leadership by simply substituting "work motivation" with "leadership". Although scholars disagree about the definition of leadership, one thing that they almost universally agree on is that it is about influence (see e.g. Yukl 2010, 21). If we leave simple coercion out, a lot of influence can be said to be about motivating people to think or act in certain ways.

New leadership   Nowhere in leadership research is this tendency as evident as in the so-called new leadership approach (Bryman 1996), which encompasses approaches such as transformational, charismatic, and visionary leadership. Smircich and Morgan (1982) coined the term *manager of meaning*, where leaders are seen as being able to define the organizational reality for their followers. This term very succinctly describes the new leadership agenda: it highlights the symbolic dimensions of leadership and the ways through which leaders can inspire their followers to attain great results (Bryman 1996). This kind of inspirational leadership is something most people, especially practitioners, often see as leadership proper.

Although the new leadership approach is a bit extreme in its focus on great leaders and their ability to influence others, this view of leaders as being able to influence and also motivate their followers is almost ubiquitous in most of leadership research. Leaders are presented as the ones who can, and should, motivate others into action. They are rarely talked

about as those whose job it is to make it possible for their followers to *get motivated*. According to Ryan and Deci (2000b), this kind of an approach relates to extrinsic, not intrinsic motivation, and is not the ideal type of motivation. Fortunately, new leadership approaches have been presented recently, which give more room for followers' perspectives. We return to them in the section where we present our own approach to leadership.

Leading emotions

Emotions are a pertinent, although for scholars often a tacit part of leadership. The picture of a leader capturing the hearts and minds of his/her followers, so common in charismatic, transformational, and, lately, authentic leadership literature, has its roots in Weber's (1947) ideas on a charismatic leader's ability to express "passionate emotions to attract passionate followers and stimulate social and organizational change" (Thanem 2013, 396). During the last two decades, leadership scholars have started to focus explicitly on the role of emotions in leadership (Gooty et al. 2010). This recognition follows a wider preoccupation with emotions and affect in organization studies more broadly (Ashkanasy & Humphrey 2011; Brief & Weiss 2002). Scholars contributing to this "affective revolution" (Barsade et al. 2003) argue that we must study emotions because "affect is inherent to any situation in which humans interact with each other and their environment, including at work" (Barsade & Gibson 2007, 51).

The interest in emotions in leadership research is evidenced by, for example, a recent special issue in The Leadership Quarterly (see the introduction to the special issue in Connelly & Gooty 2015). Studies have examined, for example, the role of emotional intelligence, emotion recognition, and empathy in leadership. As is readily apparent, studying affect in leadership is riddled with conceptual controversies – for example, what the relationships between affect, emotion, and mood are – although in some areas things are looking brighter (Gooty et al. 2010). Again, these developments closely follow those in organization studies more broadly (Ashkanasy & Humphrey 2011).

Leader as the manager of emotions

In reviewing the research on leadership and emotions, one common theme quickly surfaces: the majority of research focuses on how the leader can either use his emotions or manage others' emotions for good effects. For example, studies on emotional contagion study how leaders' emotions can be transmitted to their followers and what effects this can have. Studies have found, for example, that leaders' emotions in fact are

effectively transmitted from leaders to their followers (Sy et al. 2005; Barsade 2002), that followers can appraise their leaders' abilities and influence based solely on emotional expressions (Lewis 2000), and that leaders' positive emotions can be conducive to followers' effectiveness (Volmer 2012). One extension of this theory, the emotions as social information theory (Van Kleef 2009), argues that emotions are not merely transmitted from leaders to their followers as such and that there are multiple processes at work that can complicate the transmission: positive emotions may have negative effects and vice versa. Emotion work, or emotional labor (Hochschild 1983) has been brought into leadership studies. In emotional labor, an individual manages his or her emotional expressions in order to affect other people's emotional states. In leadership studies, emotional labor is viewed as a strategic tool of the leader (Humphrey et al. 2008). Scholars have studied, for example, the effects of leaders' surface acting and deep acting on their followers: surface acting was found to lead to diminished worker satisfaction, whereas deep acting led to heightened worker satisfaction, especially where the leader-follower relationship was poor (Fisk & Friesen 2012).

So, again, as with literature on leadership and motivation, studies primarily focus on the leader. The followers' role and the effect of the particular situation are downplayed, and possible dynamic elements do not get much attention. New approaches are called for and fortunately some more recent leadership approaches offer better alternatives to study leadership and emotions in a more fruitful way.

A new approach to passion and leadership

In this section, we have reviewed research on leadership and engagement, motivation, and emotions. This research has been overwhelmingly quantitative and has focused very heavily on the leader – features that are not unexpected to those familiar with leadership research.[5] These studies have contributed to our understanding about leading engagement, motivation, and emotions in providing some insight on how leaders should behave in order to get better results in organizations. However, we feel that these streams have not provided a very complete picture about the phenomena they are interested in, nor about the actual everyday actions leaders, or other stakeholders, can take to actually influence them. Furthermore, by

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5   For some scathing reviews of the field, see e.g. Alvesson (1996) and Gemmmil and Oakley (1992) and for a more comprehensive review of the field, Glynn & Raffaelli (2010).

taking a strictly ex ante approach to the phenomena, they fail to provide the knowledge of how organizational members themselves view them.

Fortunately, these somewhat traditional approaches to leadership have received alternatives during the recent decade or two. Here, we draw from three approaches: shared leadership, relational leadership, and leadership as practice. Shared leadership is an umbrella term for those approaches that seek to broaden the scope of leadership studies outside formal leaders (see e.g. Denis et al. 2012). We want to highlight the role of other stakeholders, especially followers, in affecting leadership. The relational leadership approach (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien 2012) emphasizes the role of dynamic relationships in leadership; leadership does not reside in individual people, but in the relationships between them. We contend leadership is about relationships, and that studying relationships is especially important when we are discussing issues like engagement, motivation, and passion that have a distinct social dimension. The leadership as practice approach (Carroll et al. 2008; Crevani et al. 2010) argues that everyday practices in organizations are a significant source of leadership. Everyday life encases numerous routines, procedures, and habitual ways of working that construct a lot of the leadership experiences for organizational members. When we consider the shared and relational dimensions of leadership and recognize that a lot of leadership resides in practices, we highlight the way that leadership emerges from the inherently "messy" world of organizational reality (Denis et al. 2010).

In this study, we seek to understand the locally constructed meanings, the members' understandings (Iszatt-White 2009) of leadership. Thus, we follow Alvesson and Spicer (2011) and start with a broad definition of leadership as entailing some kind of an influence process and invoking locally constructed meanings. Qualitative research on passion is scarce; the same applies to research on engagement and motivation in leadership. Therefore, through our qualitative design, we also seek to contribute to research on leadership and passion by highlighting the ways both leaders and followers construct meanings of leadership and passion.

By highlighting the views of different stakeholders and the relationships between them, we also seek to tap into the often neglected side, or shadow, of leadership. In mainstream leadership approaches, leaders are the ones calling the shots. However, when we study everyday life in organizations, we find a much more nuanced picture where multiple actors in dynamic relationships affect leadership. There are those with more power

and more possibilities to influence others; and structures, procedures and so on, that can powerfully shape everyday life in organizations. However, we contend that this everyday life does not represent a Weberian iron cage where people just have to accept how they are treated or "managed". In contrast, there is a lot of room for people to inventively play with the rules, structures, and leaders that seek to constrain them. De Certeau (1984) refers to this capability of people as "poaching": people are not just passive objects of managerialism, but instead active actors able to make their own choices, albeit in an environment with many restrictions. By taking an approach that privileges people's own ideas and actions, we will be able to shed some light into this shadow of leadership.

Towards a research program on leading passion

We have argued that despite some very vibrant research streams on the phenomenon of passion (engagement, intrinsic motivation) at work, we still have a limited understanding of how it plays out in the everyday lives of organizations. In this study, we chose to approach this phenomenon through the concept of passion at work, defining it as consciously accessible, intense positive feelings experienced by engagement in work activities that people like or find important and in which they invest time and energy. We also want to highlight the role of the social and environmental factors in affecting passion at work, especially leadership.

When reviewing leadership studies in this area, we found that they focus on formal leaders and utilize quantitative methods, taking an ex ante approach to phenomena instead of striving to understand them. In this study, we draw from shared, relational, and leadership as practice approaches in order to tap into the complex nature of leadership. In order to understand leadership better, we want to privilege organizational members' understanding of both passion at work and leadership.

Because we are striving to understand organizational members' own views about leadership and passion, a qualitative approach is called for. Such an approach is also appropriate when the phenomenon under study is complex – a comment Conger (1998) made nearly two decades ago about studying leadership! As we hope we have shown, passion at work and leadership are both very complex and rich phenomena, which is why

a qualitative design should provide us a very good basis for interesting findings.

We propose to study leadership and passion through two strategies. First, in order to understand organizational members' views, we will conduct a discourse analytic study on their language use. The discursive approach argues that "at its most basic, the study of organizational discourse is about understanding the processes of social construction that underlie the organizational reality" (Phillips & Oswick 2012). By identifying and describing discourses about passion and leadership, we will be able to tap into the processes through which organizational members come to define these concepts. This approach also recognizes the dynamic aspect of these processes as phenomena are co-constructed by people in an ongoing process of meaning making and negotiation (Fairhurst & Grant 2010). In identifying the discourses through which organizational members operate, we will also be able to see some of the shadow of passion and leadership. What kinds of discourses do people draw from, how restrictive are these discourses, whose perspectives are privileged and whose perspectives are sidelined in them?

Second, in order to understand how passion at work and leadership are played out in the everyday lives of organizations, we take a practice based approach. The many approaches applying practice theory share an interest in everyday activity in organizations: 'What humans actually *do* when managing, making decisions, strategizing, organizing, and so on' (Miettinen, Samra-Fredericks & Yanow 2009, 1309). By adopting a "strong practice-based programme" (Nicolini 2013), we can uncover everyday practices at work and how they affect people's understandings and experiences of passion and leadership. This approach calls for taking everyday practices in organizations seriously: organizational phenomena such as passion and leadership are mostly experienced through practices. The nature of these practices defines a lot of the social reality for people in organizations and studying practices helps in uncovering the practical side of the shadows of passion and leadership. For example, it can be seen whether practices leave room for people to engage in their passions in their own ways or whether they force people to adopt certain perspectives ("I *have* to be passionate about my work!")

In this paper, we have argued that past research on both passion (engagement, intrinsic motivation) and leading it (leading engagement, motivation, and emotions) have glossed over many important dimensions of

the phenomena. Specifically, organizational members' own perspectives and understandings have often been either ignored or subjugated under powerful leaders. The two strategies of our research program are aimed at exploring these shadows. Through these strategies, we will be able to shed some light on both the discursive and the practical shadows cast by these complex phenomena.

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