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## Conceptualizing the driving forces for successful rehabilitation back to work

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** An earlier study states that the terms of desire, longing, and vanity carry with them ideas, emotions, and values that influence how individuals perceive themselves and their rehabilitation process. Our aim was (1) to use concept analysis to explore the meaning of the terms desire, longing, and vanity and (2) to investigate the potential role of these concepts in successful rehabilitation back to work.

**Methods:** To achieve these two objectives, we used a model of concept analysis. The final step in the model is to define empirical references, for example, articles within the scientific literature, to determine the existence of a concept in a given situation.

**Results:** The concept analysis resulted in 15 new searchable terms. All of these were accepted in the thesaurus system for the databases we used. We identified 59 scientific articles that were deemed relevant to the purposes of the study. Of these, only 20 was about emotions as driving forces in a rehabilitation process back to work.

**Conclusion:** The conclusion of the study is that the concepts of desire, longing, and vanity encompassed ideas, emotions, and values that influence how individuals perceived themselves and their situations. How individuals talk about and understand rehabilitation will undoubtedly play a role in how they respond to interventions, and thus, the success of the rehabilitation process back to work.

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Concept analysis; emotions; literature review; women; long term sick-leave; vocational rehabilitation

### ► IMPLICATIONS FOR REHABILITATION

- Emotional energy often drives behavior and can provide significant motivation that potentially can mobilize vocational rehabilitation.
- The concepts of desire, longing and vanity encompass ideas, emotions, and values that influence individuals' self-perception and their view of their situation. To engage people in discussions on what they long for and desire could be a new way to connect with a person in a rehabilitation situation.
- It can be less provoking to talk about what a person desires or longs for than to ask them what they want or are motivated for.
- Feelings of meaningfulness are a basic driving force and a contributing factor in how health is experienced. By affirming the desire to do activities that are liked, this in turn generates motivation to be engaged in other activities. Individual confidence is generated through the experience of mastering a skill and this in turn can underpin a desire to return to work after long-term sick leave. Earlier experience of success can be an inspiration and create expectations for a forthcoming working-role.
- Emotions relating to work such as pride can generate motivation in a rehabilitation process. Vanity and the possibility of being "ashamed" in a certain situation can be an emotional driving force to re-establish one's self.

## Introduction

Health care systems make use of a substantial body of knowledge about how negative emotions affect health. In contrast, little is known about how positive emotions can promote health. Seligman and Csikszentmihayli [1] suggested that disease models have dominated health care during the 1900s and have been unable to solve the problems people actually experience.

In a previous qualitative study of women undergoing vocational rehabilitation in Sweden [2], we identified several positive emotions that facilitated or underpinned the process of returning to work following injury. Originally expressed in Swedish, these emotions translated into the English concepts of vanity, desire, and longing. The women who were interviewed repeatedly expressed themselves through these terms, leading us to the conclusion that there is an inherent need to re-establish one's role as

a professionally active person following an injury, and that to some extent this need may be driven by vanity. Further, our study suggested that referring to concepts such as desire and longing to work may be less provocative and demanding for women than the use of terms such as empowerment or motivation that currently dominate rehabilitation dialog. If these concepts are important in rehabilitation, as our previous data suggested, it is important to understand their meaning and how they might actually influence the process.

We hypothesized that the concepts of desire, longing, and vanity encompassed ideas, emotions and values that influenced individuals' self-perception and view of their situations. How individuals talk about and understand rehabilitation will undoubtedly play a role in how they respond to interventions, and thus, the success of the rehabilitation process. However, an initial

search of various databases for the terms revealed no research that directly explored this hypothesis and little use of these concepts in relation to rehabilitation. This observation underscored the need to examine these terms more fully to understand their meanings and their potential roles in rehabilitation back to work.

### Aim of study

This study has two purposes: to use concept analysis to explore the meaning of the terms desire, longing, and vanity and to investigate the potential role of these concepts in successful rehabilitation back to work.

### Method

To achieve these two objectives, we applied the Walker and Avant [3] model of concept analysis. Concept analysis allows the researcher to examine the structure and function of a concept. It is a formal linguistic process in which the analysis must be rigorous and precise; resulting in a prudent product that succinctly describes the nature of the concept, the circumstances and consequences of its presence and the conditions under which it emerges. Concept analysis allows us to move beyond the limitations created by terminology to explore the deeper meanings of complex concepts and the nuances that define its various manifestations.

### Analysis model

The model of concept analysis applied in the study included eight steps [3]. We have illustrated the eight steps in a table to give a better overview over the analysis process (Table 1). In accordance with these steps, we first selected and clarified the terms to be used (Step 1). The process started with a naive and pragmatic translation of the concepts from Swedish (*lust*, *längtan*, and *fåfänga*) as derived from our previous research [2]. The English terms selected for the analysis were desire, longing, and vanity. The purpose was to identify useful searchable terms for a later literature review in the last step of the model (Step 2). Initial search of various databases for the terms revealed no research that directly explored the use of these concepts in relation to vocational rehabilitation. This observation underscored the need to examine these terms more fully to understand their meanings both in Swedish and in English.

Next, we conducted a thorough examination of dictionaries and reference books to establish both a semantic and

etymological definition for each term (Step 3). We also explored common usage of the terms in daily life through searches using the most popular Internet search engines (Meta Crawler and Lycos which cover most individual search engines such as Yahoo, Google, Bing, and Ask). By comparing these definitions to the model case, we determined the most relevant definitions that would then be used to construct the search terms for the next phase of the analysis (Step 4). During the process, it was necessary to discuss the translations of terms from Swedish to English with native English speakers; one researcher in sociology – living in Sweden and familiar with the Swedish language, and another researcher in psychology – familiar with concept analysis and the field of vocational rehabilitation.

We then developed a “model case” to enable us to understand the way in which the women in the previous study used the terms (Step 5). The model case demonstrated that the use of these terms was inherent in the women’s dialog when they described the process of returning to work after long-term sick leave. Some of the women expressed that it is their desire that drives them to a given action. The desire to perform an activity that you have the talent and aptitude for, such as dance or needlework, creates a sense of satisfaction. Several women described that they longed to be “normal” and that this yearning gave them the strength to move forward in their lives. The term vanity as an expression of pride in yourself is articulated as the sense of being worth more than sheltered employment, for example.

Some uses of the concept that emerged from these searches were not considered relevant to the model case and therefore were not reported in this study (Step 6). We did not identify any relevant antecedents or consequences that occurred prior to the concept that could shed significant light on the social context in which the concept is commonly used (Step 7).

Based on the definitions of the terms developed in the study, we constructed search terms that were used to examine the potential role of emotions in the rehabilitation process back to work (Step 8). Our search was conducted in “Samsök” (Samsök provides a single point of access to the electronic resources available at Swedish research libraries) and contains a thesaurus system that suggests appropriate related terms. The terms used and the way of setting up the terms are presented in Table 2. The terms were then combined with reemployment and employment motivation.

The procedure of word testing in the thesaurus-system showed that the term *reemployment* was preferred over vocational

Table 1. Illustration of the different steps in the analysis model.

Step	The working process	Clarifying the content of the process
1.	Selection of terms/concepts	Selection of relevant terms that reflect the concept.
2.	Determine goals and objectives of the analysis	This should answer the question why are we doing this?
3.	Identify all uses of the terms/concepts that are recognized	Search to be done in the common sources, such as dictionaries, thesauruses, and public literature.
4.	Determine the defining attributes	Important to show the cluster of attributes that are most frequently associated with the concept. Implications and decisions must be made about which ones are most useful in relation to the purpose.
5.	Identify a model case	A case that exemplifies the concept and demonstrates any established characteristics (e.g. real life examples, found in the literature or designed by the researcher).
6.	Identify additional cases	The identification of borderline, related, contrary, invented and false cases in order to distinguish the concept from others.
7.	Identifying antecedents and consequences	Identifying the antecedents or consequences that occur prior to the concept that can shed significant light on the social context in which the concept is commonly used.
8.	Defining empirical references	The empirical references are classes or categories of actual phenomena that demonstrate the presence of the concepts.

rehabilitation and return to work. As a term for the driving force, the thesaurus-system suggested the term *employment motivation*.

The databases used were ERIC, Psyc-ARTICLES, and PsycINFO. These three databases are the most appropriate for the vocational rehabilitation area. Searches were done between the years 2000 and 2015 for relevant combinations of keywords that responded to the aim of the study. The time interval was chosen because a previous study [2] had shown only a few relevant studies during the 20th century. Inclusion criteria for the articles were that they should contain any of the 15 searchable terms (See Table 2) in combination with the terms reemployment and/or employment motivation. The search yielded 641 hits. Exclusion of abstracts resulted in 132 articles, which matched the selection criteria. These articles were reviewed in full. 73 articles were excluded because the searchable terms were not used to express feelings in relation to return to work. The final sample contained 59 articles that were analyzed by both researchers. Only 20 articles dealt with the role of emotions in the rehabilitation process back to work.

## Results

### Desire

The Swedish term for desire – “lust” – is probably related to the notion of to lean towards – addiction in the sense of bending to desire; amusing or desirable [4]. Different strands can be discerned [5]: interest, will, addiction, desire (e.g. I have a desire, no desire, lost desire in); satisfying a desire, physical lust, joy, for better or for worse, with enthusiasm. The Swedish verb form – “lusta” – can also be described as sexual lust or sinful desires [6].

The search engines showed that from 66 search sites, there were about 9 million hits on the notion of desire. The 20–30 top ranked items concerned sexuality, pornography, relationships and partnerships, shopping, religious difficulties in relation to sexual

drive, and some websites about music. With the exception of a Wikipedia article [7], that defined lust from a historical and religious perspective, none of the resulting hits expressed the word lust as meaning personal inclination, intense desire and enthusiasm. Thus, it seems that in daily usage the concept of desire has become associated with sexual lust rather than the broader emotion that can drive rehabilitation outcomes.

Searches of the term desire resulted in seven definitional clusters that ranged from passive and gentle meanings to more active and forceful meanings with either conscious or unconscious motivations. The seven clusters were (1) joy, (2) desire and longing, (3) a talent and aptitude for something, (4) a conscious request, (5) an unconscious drive, (6) libido, and (7) desire in combination with other words such as “in sickness and in health”. Three clusters were meaningful in the context of the current study. The clusters included (3) A talent and aptitude for something, as illustrated by the terms *taste, love, mind, dawn, orientation*. Older words for this meaning of the term desire are *leaning, inclination* and the Swedish term *ohåga*. (4) A conscious request, as illustrated by the terms *temptation, inclination, liking, desire, passion*. The use of this connotation is expressed in the form of statements such as “have the desire to do something” or “have somewhat lost the taste for something”. (5) An unconscious drive, which can be illustrated with the terms *enthusiasm, inspiration, pressure, summons, mania, instinct, inspiration, hunger, appetite*. According to Dalin and Schöier [8], desire is an unconscious force acting on the basis of an inner state of necessity and instinct, the latter of which is regarded as a natural impulse, and is often used as an opposite to reflection or intelligence.

### Longing

The term “long” extends far back in time and space and comes from the old Swedish word “langer” which meant longer in the

Table 2. Search strategy on the selected keyword combinations that show the number of hits in total, number of items at the first assessment and relevant articles for the purpose of the study.

Databases according to Samsök	Concepts analyzed	Defining attributes	Thesaurus terms	No. of hits in relation to Reemployment and Employment motivation	Articles relevant for analysis	Articles judged relevant for return to work/reemployment	Articles judged relevant for vocational rehabilitation <sup>a</sup>	
ERIC Psyc-ARTICLES PsycINFO	Desire	Interest, talent, and disposition for something	Interests	18 = I <sup>5</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	13	3	1	
			Conscious request	Ability	136 = A <sup>6</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	10	2	2
				Personality	75 = Pl <sup>7</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	36	13	4
		Desire		20 = D <sup>8</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	15	13	3	
		Appetite		2 = Ap <sup>9</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	0	0	0	
		Temptation		1 = T <sup>10</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	1	1	0	
		Unconscious drive	Enthusiasm	2 = En <sup>11</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	2	1	0	
			Pleasure	5 = Ple <sup>12</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	5	2	0	
			Cues	3 = C <sup>13</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	3	1	1	
			Expectations	66 = Exp <sup>14</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	26	12	10	
		Longing	The future and waiting for something	Wishful thinking	296 = Wt <sup>15</sup> 0 = Wt <sup>15</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	0	0	0
				Elapsed time	Experiences, Events	14 = Ex, Ev <sup>16</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	14	5
			Regret	1 = Reg <sup>17</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	1	0	0	
		Vanity	Self image How we are perceived by others and haughtiness	Self esteem	1 = Se <sup>1</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	1	0	0
				Pride	6 = Pr <sup>4</sup> and Em <sup>2</sup> or Re <sup>3</sup>	6	6	1
				641	132	59	20	

1. Se = self esteem, 2. Em = employment motivation, 3. Re = reemployment, 4. Pr = pride, 5. I = interest, 6. A = ability, 7. Pl = personality, 8. D = desire, 9. AP = appetite, 10. T = temptation, 11. En = enthusiasm, 12. Ple = pleasure, 13. C = cues, 14. Exp = expectations, 15. Wt = wishful thinking, 16. Ex, Ev = experiences, events, 17. Reg = regret. a Some of the articles are listed under more than one thesaurus term.

sense of time (length). It stems from a colloquial Germanic word, e.g. in English long, in German “lang” of the same meaning; and is related to the Latin “longus”, “long”; cf. longitude, height, long [9]. Longing also means to wait eagerly, to desire intensely [5,6], and longing for something [10].

The word longing returned about 1 million hits in Google, with the results primarily describing longing in an existential sense. The first hit is a page of proverbs and poems that contain the word desire, demonstrating the link between these two concepts. One quote states that, “Longing is a powerful source that can be used to make things happen” [11]. A webpage from the Swedish Church [12], penned by Kim Astrup, tells us that we must dare to look forward and bear in mind that we all yearn for liberation, comfort, love, and vitality. Longing leads people to make different choices in their lives. Astrup argues that those who take their desire seriously, wherever it may be leading them, no matter where they are, will eventually find what has been long-awaited, or will find satisfaction in their lives [12].

Definitions of the term longing could be clustered into six groups, which took one of two directions, namely a longing in time and space, a spatial dimension or a biological and psychological state of mind and emotions. The six clusters were (1) the future and anticipation of something, (2) elapsed time, (3) the strong desire and will, (4) thirst for/hunger, (5) hankering for something, and (6) libido. Three of these clusters were relevant to the current analysis: (1) The future and anticipation of something, for example, to long for something or someone, as illustrated by the terms longing, desire, homesick and the Swedish word *traktan*. (2) Elapsed time in relation to loss and absence that has a direction backward in time. This refers to a longing for what has been, as illustrated by the term *deficiency*, *lack*, *non-existence* and the Swedish word *småktan*. (3) The strong desire and will that entails the mind being focused on something that is wanted, as illustrated by the terms; *follow*, *pursue*, *eagerly desired*.

### Vanity

In Old Swedish, the word “fäfänger” was used to signify vanity, to refer to a sense of idleness and fruitlessness [13]. Two strands in meaning can be identified: One that does not succeed, fruitless, useless, without real value; and one who is interested in his appearance; complacent [5]

Our search on the word vanity returned approximately 66,000 hits. Wikipedia [7] presents vanity within the scope of pride, as one of the seven deadly sins. Searching on the word vain gave 15 hits, mostly in blogs and newspaper articles. Like desire, colloquial use of the term vanity has shifted the term into a negative realm, preventing its use as a positive motivator of behavior and adjustment.

The definitions of the term vanity resulted in four clusters. The four clusters were (1) idle, (2) self-image, (3) how one is perceived by others, and (4) worthless/emptiness. Two of these clusters were relevant to the current analysis: (1) Self-image, as illustrated by the terms flirtatious, proud, keen on appearance, frivolous, and (2) How one is perceived by others, as illustrated by the notions of superficiality, vanity, conceit, bloating, haughtiness, and the Swedish word *prålsjuka*, meaning to long for things that are ornate or to be seen.

### The link between the concepts and vocational rehabilitation

The remainder of this paper presents the findings of the empirical usage of the three concepts using the search terms defined in the

earlier phase of the study (see Table 3). Specifically, this phase of the study examined the use of each concept in journals within the field of vocational rehabilitation. Figure 1 illustrates the number of articles judged relevant to vocational rehabilitation based on concepts analyzed and their searchable thesaurus terms.

### Desire

The concept of desire was contained in nine articles [2,14–21].

Within this concept, the search term, *interest*, was rarely used in the vocational rehabilitation literature. Only one article used this term. Specifically, Verne [17] analyzed the different methods used in vocational rehabilitation for people with traumatic brain injury. He noted that the rehabilitation process must take into account the individual's interests and abilities and that these must relate to the employer's requirements.

The term *ability* is present in two articles [17,20]. To regain the ability to work seems to be a complex and multifactorial phenomenon wherein internal resources and external support affect ability and each other [20].

The term *personality* is present in four articles [16–19]. Vernè [17] argued that consideration must be given to the individual's personal strengths and interests when planning a return to work. In Medin et al's study on stroke [16], the term personality was used to refer to the driving force in patients' recovery and ability to return to work. They discussed the individual differences that occurred in relation to the desire to regain one's previous role. Ogawa et al. [18] suggest that higher interpersonal sensitivity negatively affects the return to work status among depressed workers that were or had been on sick leave. Strauser et al. [19] stress that work personality has to be related to one's ability to meet the demands of work. Furthermore, their results show that young adults who have survived tumor cancer have significantly lower levels of work personality and career readiness compared to young adult non-cancer survivors.

The term *desire* is present in three articles. The term is used in the meaning of desire to work. In Flinn et al's study [15], for example, the results show that desire has been a driving force for mentally ill soldiers' ability to return to and remain at work. Another article focused on women returning to work after breast cancer treatment [22]. They used the word desire to describe the women's drives for returning to work. In a research study by Åhrberg et al. [2] women on long term sick leave expressed that desire was of particular importance as a driving force in the rehabilitation process back to work.

The term *cue* is present in one article [21]. The term *cue* is used when describing how former addicts who are medical professionals can return to work when the hospital environment itself can act as an unconscious context for continued abuse.

### Longing

The concept of longing was slightly more common than desire, with 11 articles making reference to related search terms [23–33].

The term *expectation* was used most frequently. Eden et al. [25] examined the characteristics of people on disability pension and their driving forces for returning to work. Some were driven by a strong internal commitment to work and had positive expectations about working again. Kuijer et al. [26] found that feelings associated with positive anticipation could serve as predictors of return to work, and Hansen et al. [27] stress that some of the strongest predictive factors for a return to work concern the individuals' expectations and a high level of life satisfaction

Table 3. Overview over the results of the analysis of the literature review.

Authors	Title	Year	Journal/Book	Concepts analyzed	Thesaurus term	Analysis of the content in relation to vocational rehabilitation	No. in Ref. list
<sup>a</sup> Vernè et al.	Return to work after brain injury	2006	In: León-Carrion et al. (eds). Brain injury treatment: Theories and practices	Desire	Interests, Ability, Personality	The rehabilitation process must take into account the individual's interests and abilities and that these must relate to the employer's requirements. Consideration must be given to the individual's personal strengths and interests when planning a return to work.	[17]
Nordlund et al.	Personal resources and support when regaining the ability to work	2013	Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation	Desire	Ability	Internal and external resources are intertwined in the process of regaining the ability to work for patients with exhaustion disorders. The phenomena seem to be complex and multifactorial wherein internal resources and external support affect ability and each other.	[20]
Medin et al.	Stroke patients' experiences of return to work	2006	Disability and Rehabilitation	Desire	Personality	The workplace was experienced as important in the rehabilitation process. The term personality refers to the driving force in patients' recovery and ability to return to work. Individual differences that occurred in relation to the desire to regain one's previous role was seen.	[16]
Ogawa et al.	Interpersonal sensitivity associated with return to work status following sick leave	2013	Asian Journal of Psychiatry	Desire	Personality	Higher interpersonal sensitivity negatively affects the return to work status among depressed workers that were or had been on sick leave	[18]
Strauser et al.	Career readiness, developmental work personality and age of onset in young adult central nervous system survivors	2013	Disability and Rehabilitation	Desire	Personality	Work personality must be related to one's ability to meet the demands of work. Young adults who have survived tumor cancer have significantly lower levels of work personality and career readiness compared to young adult non-cancer survivors.	[19]
Flinn et al.	Return to work experiences for veterans with severe mental illness living in rural group home facilities	2005	Work - A Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation	Desire	Desire	Return to work efforts was identified as a personal goal and expressed as a desire to work. Desire was a driving force that helped mental ill people to return to and remain at work.	[15]
Fantoni et al.	Factors related to return to work by women with breast cancer in Northern France	2010	Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation	Desire	Desire	Desire is used to describe drives for returning to work.	[22]
Åhrberg et al.	Desire, longing and vanity: Emotions behind successful return to work for women on long-term sick leave	2010	Work - A Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation	Desire	Desire	Women on long term sick leave expressed that desire was of particular importance as a driving force in the rehabilitation process back to work.	[2]

(continued)

Table 3. Continued

Authors	Title	Year	Journal/Book	Concepts analyzed	Thesaurus term	Analysis of the content in relation to vocational rehabilitation	No. in Ref. list
Wilson & Compton	Re-entry of the addicted certified registered nurse anesthetist: A review of the literature	2009	Journal of Addictions Nursing	Desire	Cues	The term <i>cue</i> is used when describing how former addicts who are medical professionals can return to work when the hospital environment itself can act as an unconscious context for continued abuse.	[21]
<sup>a</sup> Gilworth et al.	Personal experiences of returning to work following stroke: An exploratory study	2009	Work – A Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation	Longing	Expectations Experiences/events	The patients' expected information as well as a support system for the process of return to work and that return to work would lead to a change in life roles.	[23]
Fadyl & McPherson	Return to work after Injury: A review of evidence regarding expectations and injury perceptions, and their influence on outcome.	2008	Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation	Longing	Expectations	There is too little evidence to conclude that personal expectations have a significant effect on return to work outcome.	[24]
Eden et al.	Characteristics of disability pensioners returning to work: An interview study among individuals with musculoskeletal disorders	2007	Disability and Rehabilitation	Longing	Expectations	A strong internal commitment to work and positive expectations about going back to work again was important driving forces for disability pensioners.	[25]
Kuijter et al.	Prediction of sickness absence in patients with chronic low back pain: A systematic review	2006	Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation	Longing	Expectations	Feelings associated with positive anticipation could serve as predictors of return to work.	[26]
Hansen et al.	Factors relevant to a return to work: A multivariate approach	2006	Work – A Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation	Longing	Expectations	Some of the strongest predictive factors for a return to work concern the individuals' expectations and a high level of life satisfaction and sense of coherence.	[27]
Heijbel et al.	Return to work expectation predicts work in chronic musculoskeletal and behavioral health disorders: prospective study with clinical implications	2006	Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation	Longing	Expectations	Personal expectations of future return to work have a significant impact on long-term sick-listed persons' return to work.	[28]
Schultz et al.	Predicting return to work after low back injury using the Psychosocial Risk for Occupational Disability Instrument: A validation study	2005	Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation	Longing	Expectations	Using a Psychosocial Risk-for-Disability Instrument can be useful and practical for prediction of return to work outcome in the subacute stage after low back injury in the workers' compensation context.	[29]
Schultz et al.	Psychosocial factors predictive of occupational low back disability: Towards development of a return-to-work model	2004	Pain	Longing	Expectations	People with high levels of expectation also had a higher return to work rate.	[30]
Shaw & Huang	Concerns and expectations about returning to work with low back pain	2005	Disability and Rehabilitation	Longing	Expectations	Feelings associated with negative anticipation and anxiety can hinder return to work.	[31]
Nimgade & Costello	Return to work for a company president with traumatic brain injury	2003	Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation	Longing	Expectations	The process of rehabilitation contributed to help manage the gap between patients' capabilities and their personal expectations.	[32]

(continued)

Table 3. Continued

Authors	Title	Year	Journal/Book	Concepts analyzed	Thesaurus term	Analysis of the content in relation to vocational rehabilitation	No. in Ref. list
Soeker et al.	I'm going back to work: Back injured clients' perceptions and experiences of their worker roles	2008	Work – A Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation	Longing	Experiences/events	Negative experiences, such as lack of collaboration between stakeholders, poor matching of workers and work, age and education, etc. constitute a barrier and create an experience of uncertainty.	[33]
Medin et al.	Stroke patients' experiences of return to work	2006	Disability and Rehabilitation	Vanity	Pride	Informants expressed pride over their own abilities to take initiative and be active in the rehabilitation process. Patient's capacity and ability to return to work was strengthened by experiences of motivation or "will" and a feeling of self-efficacy in combination with external support.	[16]

<sup>a</sup>The article is listed under more than one of the thesaurus term.

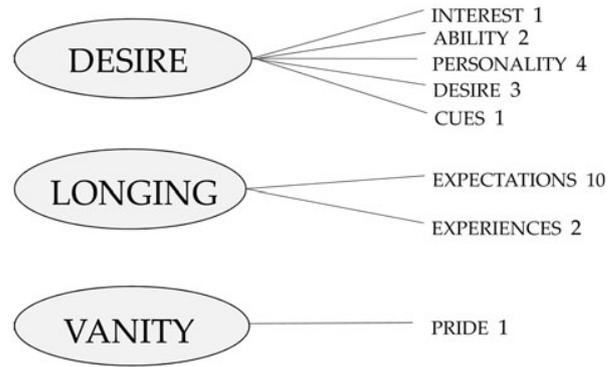


Figure 1. Number of articles judged relevant to vocational rehabilitation based on concepts analyzed and their searchable Thesaurus terms.

and sense of coherence. Similarly, feelings associated with negative anticipation and anxiety can hinder return to work [31]. Schultz et al. [29,30] examined the variable expectation of recovery as a predictor of return to work and found that people with high levels of expectation also had a higher return to work rate. Gilworth et al. [23] investigated expectations and experiences of stroke survivors in relation to return to work. The results showed that the interviewees expected information provision as well as a support system for the process of return to work. They also expected that return to work would lead to a change in life roles. In a case study conducted by Nimgade [32], the result showed that the rehabilitation process contributed to help manage the gap between patients' capabilities and their personal expectations. Heijbel et al. [28] note that personal expectations of future return to work have a significant impact on long-term sick-listed persons' return to work. If you expect you will return to work, you do so to a much greater extent than those who do not expect to. However, a literature review conducted by Fadyl and McPherson [24] concluded that there is too little evidence to conclude that personal expectations have a significant effect on return to work outcome. They point out that a weakness in these studies is how expectations are measured.

The term *experiences/events* was used in two articles [23,33]. Soeker et al. [33] discusses the importance of inhibiting and facilitating experiences that affected individuals who had undergone spinal rehabilitation and their ability to resume their previous profession. The results show that negative experiences, such as lack of collaboration between stakeholders, poor matching of workers and work, age and education, etc. constitute a barrier and create an experience of uncertainty. On the other hand, experiences of a positive working culture, job training, meaningful and satisfying work can be a facilitator. The results may provide support to our thesis that past experience can be an aspiration, and create expectations for a forthcoming working-role.

**Vanity**

Vanity was illuminated only in one article [16]. Based on the term for vanity's delimited characteristics and the synonym *pride* the study deals with the term of pride as a driving force back to work in the sense of feeling proud of one's self. Medin et al. [16] show that informants in their study expressed pride over their own abilities to take initiative and be active in the rehabilitation process. Attention is also drawn to the individual patient's capacity and ability to return to work. This was strengthened by experiences of motivation or "will" and a feeling of self-efficacy in combination with external support.

## Discussion and conclusion

Only 20 articles published between 2000 and 2015 were identified as relevant to this study. Of the 15 relevant search terms that emerged after the concept analysis, we identified research articles primarily in relation to three terms *personality, desire, and expectations*. These search terms relate to two of our three concepts (desire and longing). However, eleven of the 20 articles presented in the Results section use emotional concepts as an expression for the driving force in rehabilitation to return to work after long-term sick leave [2,15,16,18,21,22,25–27,31,33]. These results are in line with the purpose of the study. The remainder of the twenty articles (nine all together), use the terms such as interests, ability, personality, expectations, and experiences, more generally without reflecting on the terms as a primary motivator in a rehabilitation process [17,19,20,23,24,28–30,32]. Although almost half of the articles use feeling concepts they do not necessarily relate to emotional expression [34].

An understanding of the meaning and power within these everyday terms has involved interesting reflections over the strong driving forces linked to emotions. The word emotion comes from the Latin “*e movere*” which means to set in motion. The word “feelings” is a far less distinct concept. All emotions are feelings, but all feelings are not emotions [34].

In this study, we demonstrate that emotions as a driving force in the rehabilitation process is an under-valued aspect within research on vocational rehabilitation. To engage people in discussions on what they long for and desire could be a new way to connect with a person in a rehabilitation situation. The concepts of desire, longing, and vanity encompass ideas, emotions, and values that influence individuals’ self-perception and their view of their situation. Such an approach can be a more relevant way of identifying deep-seated motivations that is far more salient to lives of people in vocational rehabilitation.

In relation to their experiences of desire and longing, the women in the earlier study [2] knew from experience what they desired and they longed to experience that situation again. Emotional energy often drives behavior [35] and can provide significant motivation that potentially can mobilize vocational rehabilitation. Like desire, vanity, and the possibility of being “ashamed” in a certain situation can be another emotional driving force to re-establish one’s self [35].

The women’s ways of expressing their desire and longing to be normal and actively engage in activities, is grounded in their need to find meaning in their lives. Feelings of meaningfulness are a basic driving force, and a contributing factor in how health is experienced [36–38]. By affirming the desire to do activities that are liked, this in turn generates motivation to be engaged in other activities. Individual confidence is generated through the experience of mastering a skill and this in turn can underpin a desire to return to work after long-term sick leave [2,15].

Longing for something is emotional and when unfulfilled creates frustration. However, longing is intertwined with other conditions that are potentially pleasurable. Longing, hope, and anticipation are sometimes so closely related that they can be difficult to distinguish. Reliance is the appealing side of waiting [12]. Earlier experience of success can be an inspiration and create expectations for a forthcoming working-role [24,25,27,28,30].

Haslam et al. [39] point to the power that exists in emotions relating to work such as pride and that this can generate motivation. Researchers have chosen emotional concepts such as desire and enthusiasm to express the driving force that exists behind a worker’s motivation and desire to work [14,40–42]. This is equivalent to the driving force we suggest is most important in relation

to work-related rehabilitation processes. Based on symbolic interactionism [43], the feeling of vanity can be explained as a driving force behind the aim to re-establish one’s identity and self-image. From the perspective of the sociology of emotions, the women’s experiences can be explained as the mobilization of motivation [43] and be mobilized to underpin vocational rehabilitation activities.

The conclusions of this study are that the concepts of desire, longing, and vanity encompass ideas, emotions, and values that influence how individuals perceive themselves and their situations. The way individuals talk about and understand rehabilitation undoubtedly plays a role in how they respond to interventions, and therefore the success of the vocational rehabilitation process and the return to work.

## Methodological limitations and further research

The problems we encountered during the analysis process have, among other things, related to managing a large number of variable texts in which the terms appear and selecting relevant meanings, as well as determining the defining attributes and identifying antecedents and consequences to these terms. The different steps of the model [3] have offered a good structure and support for our work and offered the flexibility needed to meet the aims of our study. Another demanding element in our work has been to find searchable synonyms for the characteristics of the terms, as these are exemplified with Swedish words and expressions. During the process, it was necessary to discuss the translations of terms from Swedish to English with native English speakers.

Through Swedish–English dictionaries, discussions with native English speakers and the thesaurus indexes we eventually arrived at 15 accepted concepts that proved to be useful for carrying out Step 8 of the analysis. One consequence of using the thesaurus system was that it was not possible to use the concept “vocational rehabilitation” as a search word, and reemployment needed to be used instead. In so doing, we also had hits in the research literature that deal with driving forces in work within a wider perspective. This literature is not presented in the result section.

The results of this study suggest that emotions as driving forces in a rehabilitation process aiming at returning to work after long-term sick leave are an undervalued human capital. The importance of emotions as human capital is also discussed by Wettergren et al. [34].

As mention earlier, there is a great deal within the health care system of knowledge on how negative emotions can influence health while little knowledge is available on how positive emotions can promote health [1,34].

Given emotions constant presence, one would think that they have already been explored, but this is hardly the case [37,43]. It is clear that researchers have long behaved to feelings as something private and inaccessible, something that is beyond science domains [34,44].

There is a need of more research to investigate whether the studied emotions are relevant and important to a larger group of people (both men and women) who have returned to work following a period of long-term sick leave. Such studies might provide important knowledge on how we communicate with our clients in the context of rehabilitation work and might contribute to a broader awareness of the importance of being sensitive to the concepts and words clients choose to express themselves with, and therewith to gain access to the inner driving forces that reside in all people.

To understand emotions as driving forces in the rehabilitation process, it is also important to study related research literature in the areas of sociology, psychology, organization theory and human resource management.

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