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Activities speak louder than words

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CHAPTER 4

When changing who you are feels unbearable

Development and validation of the work identity rigidity scale

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Abstract

Despite the fact that employees increasingly have to adjust 'who they are' at work, little is known about why certain employees might be more successful in doing so than others. We propose that Work Identity Rigidity (WIR) is a relevant unfavorable attitude towards identity-related change that captures such differences between employees. This chapter describes the development and validation of a scale to measure WIR. In Study 1, exploratory analyses indicated that WIR is a unidimensional construct. Study 2 and 3 confirmed the factor structure and demonstrated that WIR can be measured reliably in different settings and both in heterogeneous (Study 1 and 3) and homogeneous samples (Study 2). We established construct validity by showing that WIR is associated with personality traits that capture resistance to change in general, the inability to cope with change, and problematic identification with the job. Also, WIR is associated with contextual factors such as autonomy and employees' profession. Study 3, established preliminary evidence for the scale's predictive validity by showing its negative (and indirect) association with supervisor-rated performance through emotional exhaustion. The scale can be used to account for the difficulties that some employees might experience when confronted with identity-related change.

The bamboo that bends is stronger than the oak that resists
- Japanese proverb

Changing work environments increasingly require employees to adjust their work identity, defined as the subjective meaning of who one is at work (Ashforth et al., 2008). Due to the high paced technological change and increases in knowledge work, work has become more complex and dynamic over the last decades (Grant & Parker, 2009; Parker, 2014). Employees are expected to be flexible, and capable of dealing with such changes that oftentimes have a direct bearing on their work identity (Savickas et al., 2009). Nurses and doctors, for example, face increasing loads of administrative work that may make them feel like administrators or managers rather than nurses or doctors (Heijne, 2015a, 2015b). The introduction of self-service check in, luggage intake, and customs clearing is fundamentally changing the work of ground staff at airports and is thereby affecting their identity. Similarly, teachers have seen increased technology usage in and outside the classroom and are facing major educational reforms requiring them to renegotiate their professional identities (Vähäsantanen & Eteläpelto, 2009). Dealing with changes in one's work identity is part of the reality of employees entering an organization or job and a vital part of adaptive performance at work (Ashforth et al., 2008).

Being able to successfully work on identity is related to important work outcomes such as job satisfaction, turnover intentions, task performance, organizational and team commitment, workplace adjustment, and health and well-being (Lee et al., 2015; Swann et al., 2009). However, the situational demand for work identity flexibility that employees regularly face does not imply that adjusting 'who one is at the workplace' is easy or always successful. Winkler (2016) reiterates that a wide variety of negative emotions such as fear, helplessness, vulnerability, worry, frustration, irritation, and unhappiness are associated with both the events triggering identity-related change and especially to less successful changes to work identity. In particular, identity-related changes may pose a threat to individuals' resources, because of individuals need resources to adjust their identity or conserve resources when faced with potential loss concerning who they are at work. In line with the conservation of resources (COR) theory of Hobfoll (1989), individuals may thus experience stress which complicates dealing with change as well as exhausts employees

thus hampering their performance.

Little is known, however, about why certain employees may struggle more with having to adjust their identity than others. Although our understanding of the consequences of unsuccessful identity-related change is limited (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016), the associated negative emotions and potential stress indicate that changing one's identity can be a struggle for employees (Brown, 2015; Winkler, 2016). As in most processes, it is likely that not all employees struggle equally with identity-related change, and that some are more adept at this than others. However, to date, the mostly qualitative studies aimed at understanding the processes of identity construction and the adaptation of work identity, individual differences have not been taken into account. In a study among medical residents there were, for example, no indicated differences in how well individual residents dealt with identity customization (Pratt et al., 2006). Reviews about identity-related change neither discuss nor suggest that not all individuals might be equally equipped to deal with such changes (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; Brown, 2015; Winkler, 2016). This is surprising considering that individuals differ in how they typically deal with change in general, as is captured, for example, in the resistance to change scale (Oreg, 2003).

We propose that differences in how well individual employees manage to deal with identity-related change is explained by Work Identity Rigidity (WIR). WIR is an unfavorable attitude toward identity-related change that captures the extent to which employees feel reluctant and unwilling to change their work identity when the situation requires them to adapt who they are at work. Caradador and Caza (2012) defined WIR as the degree to which individuals are unwilling to engage in a deliberate comparison of their work identity to other possibilities and a reluctance to change the meaning attached to work when necessary. Employees with a rigid work identity tend to cling to their idea of who they are at work and are unwilling to compromise their aspirations, which constrains their opportunities to adapt. On the contrary, employees with a flexible work identity deploy adaptive strategies to respond to challenges and changes, and more readily adjust their self-concept as the context changes. Work identity rigidity and work identity flexibility can be considered as two opposites on a continuum.

The purpose of the research presented in this chapter is to develop a work identity rigidity scale in an effort to operationalize the extent to which employees are reluctant and unwilling to change their work identity. Beyond the development of this scale, the contribution of this research is twofold. First,

we believe that WIR, as an unfavorable attitude toward changing who one is at work, may enhance our understanding of identity-related work outcomes. With the exception of the theoretical work and definition of WIR by Cardador and Caza (2012), virtually nothing is known about why certain employees experience more difficulties in dealing with work identity-related changes compared to others. Identity specific constructs are needed that complement general personality traits associated with the ability to deal with change (Hogan & Roberts, 1996), because it would provide organizations with opportunities to develop evidenced-based interventions depending on how individuals differ in their ability to deal with identity-related change. In this way organizations can support employees facing the need to adapt their identity, which is likely to be more frequent considering the changing nature of work (Ashforth et al., 2008; Savickas et al., 2009). Second, using COR (Hobfoll, 1989) as a theoretical foundation, we show that emotional exhaustion may be a mechanism by which WIR affects job performance.

In Study 1, we discuss WIR, related constructs (e.g., intolerance for ambiguity, resistance to change) as the foundation for scale development and initial construct validation. In Study 2, we confirm the factor structure of the WIR scale and provide evidence for its contextual antecedents (i.e., autonomy and profession). Finally, in Study 3 and using a multisource survey we show that WIR is related to different supervisor-rated performance constructs through emotional exhaustion. Combined these three studies support WIR as a relevant individual construct when considering identity-related change.

STUDY 1: DEVELOPMENT AND INITIAL CONSTRUCT VALIDATION OF THE WORK IDENTITY RIGIDITY SCALE

Earlier, we defined WIR as the degree to which employees feel reluctant and unwilling to change their work identity (Cardador & Caza, 2012). WIR is positioned as an unfavorable attitude toward changing who one is at work that has the potential to augment research on how employees deal with identity-related changes by pinpointing those employees who are more likely to shun adjustment and struggle. While WIR is expected to be relatively stable attitude and related to traits that capture a general resistance to change or inability to deal with change, we do expect it to be amenable to change in response to the organizational environment in which the individual resides and, thus not to be a stable trait. As an attitude towards identity-related change, WIR also differs from identity work, defined as all actions targeted at "forming, repairing, maintaining,

strengthening, or revising one's identity in order to strive for coherence and distinctiveness in one's self-concept" (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003, p. 1165). WIR is distinct from identity work in the sense that it does not reflect those behaviors that actually comprise identity change, but rather the extent to which identity change is positively or negatively evaluated by the focal individual. As a result, employees who score low on WIR, and are more flexible, could be expected to engage in more identity work.

The nomological network of WIR

We position WIR in its nomological network and discuss the expected relationships between WIR and (dis)similar constructs, including personality, strain, and ways of experiencing work and identity to develop hypotheses about convergent, divergent, and discriminant validity.

WIR and associated personality constructs

In the nomological network, WIR is anticipated to be positively related to personality constructs that capture rigidity or reluctance to change in general. We expect WIR to be positively associated with rigidity, a personality trait defined as the tendency to be behaviorally consistent and inflexible in one's ways (Mudrack, 2004). Rigid individuals are skeptical of any type of change, including identity-related changes, and tend to cling to their ideas of who they are at work. In this light, WIR also bears similarities to the personality traits that comprise resistance to change, defined as the tendency of individuals to avoid, resist, and devalue changes in general (Oreg, 2003). Along similar lines, we expect WIR to be positively related to the belief that who one is as a person is something fixed (see Chiu, Hong & Dweck's 1997 implicit person theory).

WIR is also expected to be positively related to intolerance for ambiguity, because individuals who are intolerant to ambiguity are more likely than individuals who are tolerant to perceive situations that require identity changes as threatening. Supporting this argument is the finding that managers' tolerance for ambiguity was found to be positively related to coping with organizational change (Judge, Thoresen, Pucik, & Welbourne, 1999), a finding that may generalize to coping with identity-related change because both require the individual to adapt to changing circumstances.

On the contrary, we expect a negative relationship between WIR and openness to experience, as individuals with a rigid work identity are not expected

to welcome new and unusual experiences into their lives which is a central feature of the openness to experience construct. For example, openness to experience has also been found to be positively related to coping with organizational change (Judge et al., 1999) and negatively to resistance to change (Oreg, 2003).

WIR may also be postulated to be related to personality constructs that capture the (in)ability to cope with identity-related changes. Specifically, we expect that WIR is negatively related to positive affectivity and positively related to negative affectivity. Employees with a tendency to experience positive emotions (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) are expected to have better coping strategies to deal with change. Vice versa, employees with the tendency to experience negative emotions (Watson et al., 1988) are expected to see change as threatening since they tend to focus and dwell on potential harm and stress.

Moreover, we expect WIR to be negatively related to self-esteem. The extent to which individuals believe they are capable, worthy, and successful (Coopersmith, 1967), that is high self-esteem, could be considered a resource that helps employees deal with identity-related change. Specifically, we expect that individuals with high self-esteem have more trust in their abilities to change who they are when required and are therefore more likely to engage in changing their identity as well as succeeding at it.

WIR and associated strain constructs

In the nomological network, WIR is proposed to be positively related to strain indicators. Specifically, we expect employees who score higher on WIR to experience more stress as a result of their inability to effectively cope with change. Emotional exhaustion, defined as a chronic state of emotional and physical depletion (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), closely resembles stress and results from workplace stressors (Demerouti et al., 2003). COR states that stress can be considered a reaction to either a perceived or actual net loss of resources or the lack of resource gain. When confronted with stress individuals will strive to minimize their resource losses by protecting themselves (i.e., the protection mechanism) or by further enriching their resource pool to guard against future losses (i.e., the accumulation mechanism) (Hobfoll, 1989). WIR is likely to be related to framing identity-related changes as a loss and experience higher emotional exhaustion based on the emotional resources that are spent in dealing with such a loss situations. Whereas opportunities for identity expression, such as self-reflective identity badges, were found to reduce emotional exhaustion

(Grant, Berg, & Cable, 2014), being restricted to a limited and unadjusted identity may thus imply that WIR is likely to be positively related to emotional exhaustion (Kira & Balkin, 2014).

WIR and associated ways of experiencing work and identity

In the nomological network, WIR is at least somewhat related to the way employees experience their work and their identity, because employees who see their work as an essential part of who they are, are likely to want to hold on to that specific identity. Specifically, we expect that WIR is positively related to obsessive passion, defined as the strong inclination toward work resulting from controlled internalization of that activity into one's identity (Vallerand et al., 2003). Obsessive passion is associated with the uncontrollable urge to engage in the activity and be rigidly persistent. Employees with an obsessive passion have the tendency to keep doing what they love even when this is hurting them (Birkeland & Buch, 2015). Having an obsessive passion may thus be expected to be related to having a pre-set unfavorable attitude towards change as captured by the WIR construct.

We do not expect harmonious passion, defined as the voluntary inclination toward work resulting from autonomous internalization of work (Vallerand et al., 2003), to exhibit a similar positive relationship with WIR. Employees with harmonious passion choose rather freely to engage in an activity rather than being compelled to do so, which allows them to change their course of action when needed. It is not the emotional attachment to work itself but rather the fixated and disproportionate part unique to obsessive passion that implies rigidity concerning one's work identity. Along similar lines, we do not expect to find a relationship between WIR and the degree to which employees incorporate their professional identity in their self-concept (Ashforth, Joshi, Anand, & O'Leary-Kelly, 2013) nor do we expect a relationship between WIR and calling, defined as the subjective orientation to work driven by the work itself rather than financial benefits or career advancement (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Although research shows that stronger identification makes change harder (Maitlis, 2009), this does not necessary reflect an employee's (un)favorable attitude towards identity-related change. In this vein, Cardador and Caza (2012) argue that work identity flexibility is separate from calling in that WIR helps distinguish between the healthy and unhealthy pursuit of calling. In sum, because WIR reflects a resistance toward redefining who one is, as opposed to the attachment to one's

work itself, we propose that it is positively associated with obsessive passion and distinct from harmonious passion, calling, and professional identification.

Method

Sample and procedure

A US-based Qualtrics panel was used to obtain data by means of an online questionnaire[7]. The questionnaire was distributed to potential respondents who were employed the majority of the work week for at least a year in the US by invitation only using unique and verified email addresses. The use of targeted invitations in a panel minimizes bias through self-selection and professional survey takers, while obtaining similar reliability as traditional methods and even slightly more demographically diverse samples (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). In total 887 respondents participated. We excluded 83 incomplete responses. Another 360 were excluded from further participation in the survey because they did not meet preset criteria pertaining to their employment (i.e., 115 self-employed or unemployed respondents), their residency (i.e., 8 non-US residents), job tenure (i.e., 138 respondents with experience under one year), and their work hours (i.e., 99 respondents with work weeks below 24 hours per week). Finally, 68 responses were excluded based on careless response checks (Meade & Craig, 2012), including two instructed response items (i.e., "please respond with strongly disagree for this item"), uniform response patterns (e.g., only "7"), and a far below average response time.

The final sample consisted of N = 376 respondents of which 68% self-identified as female (M_{age} = 40.55; SD = 12.13). Most respondents had a permanent contract (94.9%) for an average of 39.10 hours per week (SD = 5.61) and had an average job tenure of 8.68 years (SD = 7.87). Of the respondents, 56.1% had a Bachelor's degree or higher, and the minimum educational level was a high school diploma. Respondents held a wide variety of jobs (e.g., paralegal, marketing director, assistant professor, teacher, hostess, dental assistant, housekeeper, web designer, truck driver, school nurse, personnel director).

Measures

Unless otherwise indicated a 7-point Likert scale was used ranging from 1 = *completely disagree* to 7 = *completely agree*. Cronbach's alpha coefficient

[7] All questionnaires used in this chapter received approval of the ethical committee of the University's Economics and Business faculty prior to the data collection.

(above .70) was used to assess internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In addition, we asked for demographic variables, including age, gender, country of residence, education, contracted work hours, job tenure, and contract type (i.e., permanent or temporary).

Work identity rigidity. The extent to which individuals feel reluctant and unwilling to change their work identity was measured using our self-developed scale (see Appendix D). Items were deductively derived from definitions found in the existing literature (Cardador & Caza, 2012). This resulted in an initial set of 45 items, which were then evaluated for overlap, content domain coverage, and inconsistency in three pilot studies[8]. Based on these pilot studies, all items with item-total correlations less than .40, factor loadings below .35, or that were too difficult to understand by respondents were dropped (Hinkin, 1998). We retained eleven items, of which seven items were indicative of WIR and four were counter-indicative (i.e., indicative of work identity flexibility)[9]. Example items are "I get upset when I have to change my work identity" and "who I am at work is flexible" (counter-indicative). Respondents were introduced to the work identity construct with a short introductory text (including examples) which ended by asking them to formulate who they are at work (i.e., used as a synonym for work identity). Respondents were asked to keep this formulation in mind in replying to the eleven items. The often elaborate responses to the open question indicated that respondents were motivated, and capable of describing their own work identity and understanding the concept sufficiently to answer the items about WIR (see Appendix E). Scale analyses are presented below.

Rigidity. Trait rigidity refers to individuals' tendency to be behaviorally consistent and inflexible in their ways and was measured with six items (Mudrack, 2004), such as "I am guided in my conduct by certain principles which I have accepted" (α = .71).

Resistance to change. The general tendency of people to avoid, resist, and devalue changes was measured with the four dimension resistance to change scale developed by Oreg (2003). The first dimension, cognitive rigidity, was measured with four items, including "I don't change my mind easily" (α = .61). The second dimension, routine seeking, was measured with five items,

[8] Students from an executive and undergraduate program at a large Dutch University, who were employed on a part-time basis participated in the three pilot studies (N = 50; N = 116; and N = 57). Details about the pilot studies can be found in Appendix E.

[9] See Appendix E.

including “I’ll take a routine day over a day full of unexpected events any time” (α = .68). The third dimension, emotional reaction to change, was measured with four items, such as “when I am informed of a change of plans, I tense up a bit” (α = .83). The fourth dimension, short-term thinking, was measured with four items, for example “I sometimes find myself avoiding changes that I know will be good for me” (α = .82). Because the reliability of some dimensions was rather low, we also included the computed overall resistance to change as an average across the 17 items (α = .88).

Implicit person theory. The extent to which people believe that who one is as a person is something fixed was assessed with three items that capture implicit person theory (Chiu et al., 1997). An example item is “people can do things differently, but the important parts of who they are can’t really be changed” (α = .78).

Intolerance for ambiguity. The degree to which people are intolerant to ambiguity was measured with the MSTAT-II developed by McLain (2009). This most recent version of the MSTAT consists of 13 items, including “I try to avoid situations that are ambiguous” and “I generally prefer novelty over familiarity” (counter-indicative) (α = .84).

Openness to experience. The extent to which people are open to new and unusual experiences was measured with the mini-IPIP scale for intellect/imagination (Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, & Lucas, 2006). The scale included four items, such as “I have a vivid imagination” and “I am not interested in abstract ideas” (counter-indicative) (α = .82).

Affectivity. Positive and negative trait affectivity of the PANAS short version (Watson et al., 1988) were included to assess individuals’ tendency to experience positive and negative emotions. Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they generally experienced five positive emotions (e.g., inspired, active) (α = .79) and five negative emotions (e.g., upset, nervous) (α = .80) on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 5 = *always*.

Self-esteem. The extent to which individuals believe they are capable, worthy and successful was measured with the ten item Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). Example items are “on the whole, I am satisfied with myself” and “all in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure” (counter-indicative) (α = .82).

Emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion was measured with the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) (Demerouti et al., 2003). The measure

consisted of eight items, such as "during my work, I often feel emotionally drained" (α = .86).

Passion. Obsessive passion was measured with seven items developed by Vallerand et al. (2003) and included items such as "I cannot live without my work" (α = .86). Harmonious passion was also measured with seven items, for example "for me work is a passion that I still manage to control" (α = .86).

Calling. Calling was measured with the scale developed by Leana et al. (2009) based on Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) and consisted of four items such as "my work is one of the most important things in my life" (α = .77).

Professional identification. The extent to which professional identity has become part of one's self-concept was measured with a scale developed by Lammers, Atouba, and Carlson (2013). The scale consisted of four items, for example "I feel I have a lot in common with others in my profession" (α = .72).

Results and discussion

Structure validation of the WIR scale

Prior to subjecting the WIR items to exploratory factor analysis, the inter-item correlation matrix was used to discard three items with correlations below .40 (Hinkin, 1998). We used parallel analysis (Patil, Singh, Mishra, & Donavan, 2008) to determine the number of factors to retain in the principal axis analysis (Ford, MacCallum, & Tait, 1986). A one factor solution was retained for the remaining eight items, because only the Eigenvalue of the first factor (3.968) was greater than the Eigenvalue of the corresponding value provided by web-based parallel analysis (1.214). Subsequently, two more items were discarded for factor loadings below .40 (Ford et al., 1986; Hinkin, 1998). The final one factor solution consisting of six items is presented in Table 1 and explained 53.8% of the variance. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the WIR scale was .87. These preliminary results indicate that WIR is a unidimensional construct that can be measured reliably.

Construct validation of the WIR scale

The means and standard deviations of all measures along with the intercorrelations that were used to assess convergent, divergent, and discriminant validity of the WIR scale are found in Table 2. As expected, WIR was significantly and positively and moderately to strongly correlated with personality traits that capture the reluctance to change in general, namely rigidity (r = .30, p < .001),

Table 1: Work Identity Rigidity Scale Factor Loadings for the Exploratory Factor Analysis in Study 1

Item	*M*	*SD*	Factor 1	Inter-item correlation	α if item deleted
I get upset when I have to change my work identity	3.52	1.49	.763	.702	.845
I dislike changing who I am at work	4.17	1.56	.622	.575	.867
I get restless when I constantly have to change my identity at work	3.73	1.50	.808	.743	.838
I find it hard to change my work identity even if it is necessary	3.76	1.52	.667	.616	.860
Adjusting who I am at work makes me feel uneasy	3.73	1.57	.794	.730	.840
It costs me too much energy to change my work identity	3.73	1.51	.729	.676	.850

Note: N = 376. KMO Measure of sampling adequacy = .878. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $p < .001$. Cronbach's alpha = .87.

implicit person theory (r = .26, p < .001), and intolerance for ambiguity (r = .45, p < .001). WIR also correlated negatively and moderately with openness to experience (r = -.27, p < .001). WIR had relatively strong, positive correlations with the dimensions emotional reaction (r = .56, p < .001) and short term thinking (r = .53, p < .001) of the resistance to change scale with which it was strongly correlated (r = .52, p < .001). WIR was also moderately correlated with personality traits that capture the capability to cope with change, namely negative affectivity (r = .30, p < .001), self-esteem (r = -.32, p < .001), and to a lesser extent positive affectivity (r = -.10, p = .043). In addition, WIR was positively and moderately related to emotional exhaustion (r = .43, p < .001). As expected, WIR was only correlated with obsessive passion (r = .17, p = .001) and not with harmonious passion, calling, or professional identification. With regard to the demographic variables, finally, WIR was only correlated with age (r = -.19, p < .001) and not with gender, education, job tenure, contracted work hours, or contract type.

These results provided evidence for the construct validity of the WIR scale as the data supported all the expected relationships as hypothesized in the nomological network.

Table 2: Correlations between Work Identity Rigidity, Variables from the Nomological Network, and Demographics in Study 1

Construct	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. WIR	3.77	1.19	(.87)							
2. Rigidity	4.64	0.84	.295**	(.71)						
3. Resistance to change	4.09	0.85	.520**	.633**	(.88)					
4. Cognitive rigidity	4.47	0.90	.153**	.467**	.556**	(.61)				
5. Routine seeking	3.85	0.98	.355**	.573**	.834**	.335**	(.68)			
6. Emotional reaction	4.20	1.21	.563**	.477**	.863**	.276**	.601**	(.83)		
7. Short term thinking	3.89	1.20	.528**	.497**	.884**	.310**	.641**	.780**	(.82)	
8. Implicit person theory	4.43	1.10	.259**	.347**	.391**	.282**	.305**	.364**	.290**	(.78)
9. Intolerance for ambiguity	3.88	0.77	.453**	.424**	.663**	.217**	.583**	.619**	.623**	.288**
10. Openness to experience	4.97	1.23	-.277**	-.231**	-.424**	-.093	-.428**	-.356**	-.416**	-.064
11. Negative affectivity	2.40	0.64	.295**	.114*	.390**	.003	.263**	.443**	.462**	.139**
12. Positive affectivity	3.82	0.60	-.104*	-.003	-.287**	.080	-.289**	-.315**	-.315**	-.109*
13. Self-esteem	4.75	0.67	-.322**	-.098	-.402**	.001	-.296**	-.433**	-.478**	-.119*
14. Emotional exhaustion	4.05	1.17	.432**	.274**	.442**	.090	.310**	.474**	.474**	.167**
15. Obsessive passion	3.64	1.30	.172**	.058	.032	.055	-.010	.018	.048	.098
16. Harmonious passion	4.60	1.16	-.068	.017	-.150**	.051	-.178**	-.146**	-.162**	.111*
17. Calling	4.28	1.06	-0.001	.008	-.089	.116*	-.146**	-.098	-.108*	.017
18. Professional identification	4.76	1.09	-0.004	.044	-.085	-.004	-.092	-.055	-.104*	.114*
19. Gender	1.68	0.47	-.015	.019	.045	-.004	.013	.087	.036	-.030
20. Age	40.55	12.13	-.189**	-.020	-.109*	.030	-.055	-.154**	-.141**	-.032
21. Job tenure	8.68	7.87	-.077	-.043	-.027	-.007	.014	-.049	-.040	.006
22. Contractual work hours	39.10	5.61	.004	-.089	-.045	.002	-.072	-.048	-.017	-.057
23. Contract type	1.05	0.22	.017	.016	.023	-.040	.030	.030	.039	.050

Note: $N = 376$. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. Cronbach's alphas are reported diagonally. Gender is rated as 1 = *male*, *2* = *female*. Contract type is rated as 1 = *permanent,* 2 = *temporal.*

STUDY 2: CONFIRMATION OF THE FACTOR STRUCTURE AND INVESTIGATION OF CONTEXTUAL ANTECEDENTS

Study 2 was conducted to confirm the factor structure of the WIR scale and further establish its construct validity. Specifically, we set out to build evidence for the role of context in WIR (i.e., profession and autonomy) by assessing the factor structure and reliability of the scale among two professionally homogeneous groups, namely teachers and accountants. Although potential contextual antecedents were not yet addressed in Study 1, we argue here that WIR is likely at least somewhat context dependent since WIR is defined as an unfavorable attitude towards identity-related change rather than a personality trait. We therefore expect that WIR also in part depends on the profession of the individual. Professionals in general require a certain level of knowledge, autonomy, and altruism (Hodson & Sullivan, 2012, p. 260) and they tend to have a strong and clear professional identity because of the high work investment and specialized education (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Pratt et al., 2006; Warren & Parker, 2009). However, as argued and found in Study

Table 2 continued

9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
(.84)													
-.486**	(.82)												
.350**	-.141**	(.80)											
-.289**	.250**	-.418**	(.79)										
-.465**	.392**	-.531**	.467**	(.82)									
.331**	-.191**	.425**	-.247**	-.411**	(.86)								
.023	-.012	.039	.209**	-.085	.055	(.86)							
-.122*	.150**	-.217**	.426**	.219**	-.310**	.621**	(.86)						
-.177**	.120*	-.135**	.315**	.201**	-.231**	.527**	.693**	(.77)					
-.117*	.090	-.180**	.319**	.178**	-.233**	.527**	.767**	.673**	(.72)				
.068	-.078	.137**	-.032	.036	.069	-.080	-.038	-.002	-.077				
-.100	.051	-.186**	.089	.221**	-.241**	-.125*	.014	.011	-.007	-.093			
.010	-.044	-.115*	.092	.077	-.171**	-.095	.067	.087	.039	-.016	.483**		
-.107*	.065	-.034	.017	.035	.016	.080	-.055	.079	.018	-.165**	-.014	-.004	
-.002	.042	.118*	-.004	-.104*	.126*	.130*	.007	.042	.079	.002	-.119*	-.098	-.110*

1, a stronger identity in and of itself is not related to WIR. We do expect that in certain professions it might be harder to change, adjust, and deconstruct identity than in others. Specifically, we expect this to be the case when the meaning associated with one's work identity is generally shared between individuals, which potentially makes work even more central in defining who one is. From childhood on individuals have experience with teachers and thus a concept of what it means to be a teacher, something that may not necessarily be true of accountants.

In addition, we expect that autonomy, as a job characteristic, is negatively related to WIR. Research on work design shows that employees in jobs high on autonomy, develop more elaborate mental models, also with regard to their identity (Wall, Jackson, & Mullarkey, 1995). This implies that employees who have more autonomy have a better understanding of who they are at work. In addition, autonomy may provide room for employees to experiment with provisional selves (Ibarra, 1999), providing more flexibility in work identity and identity development (Kernis, 2000). In addition, autonomy may make it easier to cope with identity-related change induced stress and strain, because it offers employees control over how, when, or what they do (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014; Karasek, 1979).

Autonomy may thus be a resource that can both stimulate identity development as well as reduce the stress associated with identity-related changes.

Method

Sample and procedure

An online questionnaire was used to collect data from teachers and accountants in the Netherlands. Respondents received an anonymous link to the questionnaire, available in Dutch only (translated using a translation - back translation method), by email or through social media. A gift card for a Dutch online retailer was raffled to stimulate participation and to show appreciation for respondents' time and effort.

The final sample consisted of N = 164 teachers of which 62.8% self-identified as female (M_{age} = 43.45; SD = 13.33) and N = 89 accountants of which 31.5% self-identified as female (M_{age} = 34.22; SD = 11.93). Average tenure was 15.92 years (SD = 12.56) for teachers and 10.18 years (SD = 9.84) for accountants. On average, teachers worked 29.99 hours contractually per week (SD = 10.34), whereas on average accountants worked 39.33 hours contractually per week (SD = 5.50). Most teachers worked in either secondary (49.4%) or primary education (36.6%), followed by higher vocational education (10.4%), intermediate vocational education (1.8%), and universities (1.8%). Most accountants worked for an accountancy office (70.8%), followed by accountants who worked in a business role (19.1%), in a governmental position (6.7%), as internal accountant for a company (2.2%), or were self-employed (1.1%).

Measures

The WIR scale and the measures for emotional reactions to change (part of the resistance to change scale) were the same as those used in Study 1. With the exception of the WIR scale, all items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *completely disagree* to 5 = *completely agree*. We included age, gender, contractual work hours, and job tenure as demographic variables.

Identity centrality. We used the extent to which one's work identity was central to the respondent's self-concept to capture whether one's professional identity as a teacher or accountant extends beyond the workplace, making it more difficult to adjust. We measured identity centrality with one item (Vignoles, Regalia, Manzi, Golledge, & Scabini, 2006), namely "being a teacher/accountant plays an important role in defining who I am in general".

Autonomy. We used the four item subscale for decision-making autonomy (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). A sample item is "the job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own" (α = .84).

Data analysis

To confirm the factor structure of the WIR scale, we used Mplus to perform SEM with maximum likelihood estimation and followed Hu and Bentler's (1999) recommendations as to indices and associated cut off values to assess model fit (i.e., χ^2 non-significant, RMSEA < .06, CFI > .95, TLI > .95, SRMR < .08). We used an independent-samples t-test to compare means between teachers and accountants.

Results and discussion

Structure validation of the WIR scale

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied to validate the scale's structure. The one-factor solution consisting of all six WIR items demonstrated a good fit to the data (see Table 3). Alternative models also showed good fit, however, a comparison of the different models showed that $\Delta\chi^2$ was non-significant. Based on the good fit for the overall sample, we confirmed the factor structure found in Study 1 and decided to retain the unidimensional structure of the WIR scale. Moreover, the findings show that WIR can be reliably tested among relatively homogeneous groups and across cultures (i.e., US in Study 1 and Netherlands in this study). We also performed a CFA separately for the teachers and the accountants. Although the fit of the unidimensional model for the teachers was good χ^2 (9, N = 157) = 17.564, p = .041 (TLI = .960; CFI = .976; RMSEA = .078; SRMR = .041), the fit for the accountants was less good, χ^2 (9, N = 82) = 4.075, p = .906 (TLI = 1.043; CFI = 1.000; RMSEA = .000; SRMR =

Table 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Work Identity Rigidity scale in Study 2

Model	χ^2	*df*	p-value	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
1 1-factor WIR[1]	14.608	9	.102	.990	.984	.051	.030
2 2-factor WIR[2]	14.339	8	.073	.989	.979	.057	.030
3 3-factor WIR[3]	10.578	6	.102	.992	.980	.056	.027

Note: N= 243. [1]WIR scale. [2]WIR split into a negative attitude component and incapability component. [3]WIR split into an emotional response component, negative attitude component, and an incapability component. Estimator = ML, maximum likelihood parameter estimates with standard errors and chi-square test statistics that are robust to non-normality. Use of the conventional cut-off values of these fit indices (i.e., χ^2 non-significant, RMSEA < .06, CFI > .95, TLI > .95, SRMR < .08).

.022), which may be explained by the small sample size for accountants (Kenny, Kaniskan, & McCoach, 2015; Marsh, Balla, & McDonald, 1988). Please refer to Table 4 for the factor loadings of the combined sample.

Table 4: Work Identity Rigidity Scale Factor Loadings for the Confirmatory Factor Analysis in Study 2

Item	*M*	*SD*	Estimate	Teacher	Accountant
I get upset when I have to change my work identity	3.82	1.51	.603	.594	.659
I dislike changing who I am at work	4.60	1.56	.728	.727	.730
I get restless when I constantly have to change my identity at work	4.58	1.69	.795	.752	.839
I find it hard to change my work identity even if it is necessary	3.86	1.55	.731	.758	.675
Adjusting who I am at work makes me feel uneasy	4.25	1.61	.854	.844	.843
It costs me too much energy to change my work identity	3.66	1.39	.461	.432	.478

Note: N = 243. Standardized estimates are reported. Teacher estimates N = 157. Accountant estimates N = 82. All loadings were significant at $p < .001$.

Construct validation of the WIR scale and differences between teachers and accountants

Table 5 shows the means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations between all variables included in Study 2 for the combined sample. Table 6 shows these correlations for the teacher and accountant sub-samples.

Table 5: Correlations between Work Identity Rigidity, Emotional Reaction, Identity Centrality, Autonomy, and Demographic Variables in Study 2

Construct	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. WIR	4.13	1.19	(.86)						
2. Emotional reaction	2.74	0.73	.389**	(.67)					
3. Identity centrality	4.70	1.57	.156*	.164**	(-)				
4. Autonomy	3.74	0.64	-.162*	-.188	-.018	(.73)			
5. Gender	1.55	0.52	.171**	.169**	.059	-.063			
6. Age	40.21	13.57	.048	.016	.056	.063	.018		
7. Tenure	13.88	11.97	.019	.085	.129*	.073	.102	.816**	
8. Work hours	33.05	10.04	-.083	-.103	-.104	.118	-.221**	-.284**	-.190**

Note: N = 253. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. Gender is rated as 1 = *male,* 2 = *female*. Cronbach's alphas are reported diagonally.

In line with Study 1, WIR was significantly correlated with employees' anticipated emotional reactions to change (i.e., dimension of general resistance to change) in the combined sample ($r = .39$, $p < .001$), and for the two professions separately ($r = .36$, $p < .001$; and $r = .39$, $p < .001$ respectively). This result provided further construct validation and showed that the association between WIR and trait-based affective resistance to change is the same in two different

professional contexts, as would be expected. Contrary to Study 1, WIR was not significantly correlated with age, but a small to medium correlation was found for gender (r = .17, p = .007). It should be noted, however, that when addressed in the subsamples, the relationship between WIR and gender was only significant for accountants (r = .23, p = .031).

For the contextual factors, we used an independent-samples t-test to investigate whether there was indeed a significant difference in WIR between teachers and accountants (t = 2.89, p = .003). The teachers in the sample had a mean WIR score of 4.29 (SD = 1.13), whereas the accountants had a mean WIR score of 3.83 (SD = 1.23). Equal variances were assumed based on Levene's test (p = .298). This finding suggests that WIR is at least partially dependent on an individual's profession. The differences in WIR between teachers and accountants could potentially be explained by the significant higher identity centrality, or the extent to which one's professional identity is central to one's general self-concept, of teachers (M = 4.90; SD = 1.52) compared to the identity centrality of accountants (M = 4.32; SD = 1.59) (t = 2.86, p = .005; equal variances assumed based on Levene's test p = .132). Following this difference between teachers and accountants, a small but positive correlation between WIR and identity centrality (r = .16, p = .013) was only found in the combined sample. Identity centrality was not related to WIR in the separate samples, because there identity centrality may reflect individual differences in the strength of professional identity rather than the centrality of identity across professions that may be associated with difficulty to change similar to obsession passion as found in Study 1. Moreover, WIR was correlated with the autonomy of the employee (r = -.16, p = .010). However, in the separate samples the relationship between WIR and autonomy was only significant for teachers (r = -.25, p = .002)[10]. These results indicate, that the relationship between autonomy and WIR may be better assessed across than within professions as autonomy as a job characteristic may depend more on the context (or may imply different things for individuals in some contexts than in others) than on the individual employee within a similar professional context.

[10] Additional analyses on data not reported in Study 1 and 3 showed a similar negative correlation between WIR and autonomy (M1 = 5.17; SD1 =1.22; and M3 = 3.74; SD3 = 0.87) in Study 1 (r = -.16, p = .002) and in Study 3 (r = -.34, p = .001) as was found in the combined sample in Study 2.

Table 6: Correlations between Work Identity Rigidity, Emotional Reaction, Identity Centrality, Autonomy, and Demographics in Study 2 for Teachers and Accountants Separately

	Teachers		Accountants									
Construct	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. WIR	4.29	1.13	3.83	1.23	-	.388**	.185	-.065	.231*	-.002	.030	-.043
2. Emotional reaction	2.82	0.73	2.58	0.72	.360**	-	.159	-.134	.140	-.050	-.005	-.118
3. Identity centrality	4.90	1.52	4.32	1.59	.095	.129	-	.143	-.048	-.133	-.092	.089
4. Autonomy	3.76	0.61	3.70	0.69	-.245**	-.121	-.132	-	-.054	.408**	.462**	.125
5. Gender	1.64	0.48	1.39	0.56	.065	.137	.065	-.087	-	.150	.093	-.260*
6. Age	43.45	13.33	34.22	11.93	-.024	-.034	.067	-.132	-.187*	-	.851**	-.145
7. Job tenure	15.92	12.5	10.18	9.84	-.048	.075	.175*	-.128	.030	.791**	-	-.103
8. Work hours	29.99	10.34	39.33	5.50	.010	-.025	-.069	.168*	-.140	-.167*	-.095	-

Note: Teachers *N* = 164; Accountants *N* = 89. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. Gender is rated as 1 = *male*, 2 = *female*. Teachers below the diagonal; Accountants above the diagonal.

These results provided further construct validation for the WIR scale based on the relationship between WIR and emotional reaction, and provided some preliminary evidence for potential contextual antecedents/correlates of WIR such as profession, identity centrality, and autonomy.

STUDY 3: FIRST INDICATIONS OF PREDICTIVE VALIDITY OF THE WIR SCALE

To further validate the WIR scale we set out to test the link between WIR and employee performance (e.g., in-role performance, OCB, and workplace deviance) and propose that emotional exhaustion mediates the relationship between the two. Study 1 showed that WIR is positively related to emotional exhaustion, which we explained based on the conservation of resources (COR) theory of Hobfoll (1989). The depletion of emotional resources makes that employees can no longer engage with the work psychologically, which leads to the expectation of a negative relationship between WIR and performance.

Employees who score high on WIR are more likely to appraise a situation or change concerning their work identity as a threat or loss based on two reasons. First, employees who score high on WIR are likely to focus on how change may negative impact them. Indeed, study 1 found a positive relationship between WIR and the short-term thinking dimension of the resistance to change scale, which suggests that for employees with a rigid work identity the short-term inconvenience predominates over the long-term benefits of change (Oreg, 2003). Employees who score lower on WIR are likely to be more reflective and pragmatic about change than employees who score higher on WIR. The first are expected to shape their attitudes regardless of the positive or negative aspects of that change. The stress that employees with a high WIR score experience based on their increased sensitivity to perceive loss thus resulted in our expectation of a

positive relationship between WIR and emotional exhaustion.

Second, employees who score higher on WIR are expected to deplete more emotional resources compared to employees who score lower on WIR. Study 1 showed that there was a strong positive relationship between WIR and the emotional reaction dimension of the resistance to change scale, which suggests that employees with a rigid work identity are likely to expend more emotional resources. The stress that employees with a high WIR score experience based on their expenditure of such resources to protect themselves (i.e., their work identity) and to minimize their resource losses thus suggests a positive relationship between WIR and emotional exhaustion.

The increase in emotional exhaustion associated with WIR is likely to be related to the employee's performance as ample research has shown that emotional exhaustion, as a form of stress, is negatively related to in-role or job performance (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004; Cropanzano, Rupp, & Byrne, 2003; Halbesleben & Bowler, 2007; Keijsers, Schaufeli, Le Blanc, Zwerts, & Miranda, 1995; Parker & Kulik, 1995; Swider & Zimmerman, 2010; Taris, 2006; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). We expect that the emotional exhaustion associated with WIR triggers strategies to conserve energy. As a result, in-role performance of employees who score high on WIR is expected to be lower than that of employees who score low on WIR, because they are more likely to experience emotional exhaustion. We thus hypothesize:

H1a: Emotional exhaustion mediates the negative relationship between WIR and in-role performance.

Enacting OCB, broadly defined as the affiliative and challenging positive organizational behaviors that extend in-role performance (Organ, 1997; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998) also consumes resources. The availability of resources affects whether or not employees engage in OCB (Bergeron, 2007; Bolino, Harvey, & Bachrach, 2012; Koopman, Lanaj, & Scott, 2016; Rubin, Dierdorff, & Bachrach, 2013). We therefore expect that employees reduce their OCB in order to conserve energy, because they are emotionally exhausted and lack resources due to their rigid work identity (Bolino, Hsiung, Harvey, & LePine, 2015; Chang, Johnson, & Yang, 2007; Chiu & Tsai, 2006; Cropanzano et al., 2003). We thus hypothesize:

H1b: Emotional exhaustion mediates the negative relationship between WIR and OCB.

WIR also influences workplace deviance through emotional exhaustion. Workplace deviance is defined as the "voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and, in doing so, threatens the well-being of the organization or its members, or both" (Bennett & Robinson, 2000, p. 349). Workplace deviance, especially behaviors such as withholding effort and working slower, could be a way for high WIR employees to protect themselves against threats and deal with a lack of resources resulting from emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion has indeed been shown to be related to workplace deviance (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Mulki, Jaramillo, & Locander, 2006; van Jaarsveld, Walker, & Skarlicki, 2010). We thus expect that employees who score high on WIR show more withdrawal behavior, because the emotional exhaustion of high WIR employees likely requires them to use protection-focused strategies. We hypothesize:

H1c: Emotional exhaustion mediates the positive relationship between WIR and workplace deviance.

Method

Sample and procedure

A multisource survey was used to obtain data by means of an online questionnaire[11]. Respondents from the Netherlands who met the same requirements as set in Study 1 and their supervisor both received a personal invitation by email. Questionnaires were available in Dutch (translated using a translation - back translation method) and English to allow members of the expat population in the Netherlands to participate. Gift cards for a Dutch online retailer were raffled to stimulate participation and to show appreciation for the invested time and effort. In total 156 of the 205 distributed questionnaires were completed by employees (response rate 76.1%) and 121 of the 160 questionnaires by their supervisors (response rate 75.6%). Completely matched data was obtained for N = 100 employee-supervisor dyads.

The employee sample (N = 100) was 52% self-identified as female (M_{age} = 36.40; SD = 13.37). Average job tenure was 6.49 years (SD = 8.44). Respondents worked 33.27 hours contractually per week on average (SD = 13.23). The respondents held a wide variety of job titles, including consultant, dental assistant, software engineer, nurse, chef, administrator, sniper, bartender,

[11] The data collection of Study 3 is the same as used in Chapter 3. The only overlapping variables between the two datasets are OCB (rated by supervisor) and the demographics.

and HR advisor, and were working in a variety of sectors (e.g., 16% education, 12% industry, 10% consulting and financial services, 10% health care, 7% IT, 6% government, 6% retail and hospitality, 5% construction, 4% non-profit, and 20% other). The supervisor sample (N = 100) 44% self-identified as female (M_{age} = 43.44; SD = 11.47).

Measures

The WIR scale and measure for emotional exhaustion were the same as those used in Study 1 and were answered by the focal employees. Unless otherwise indicated a 7-point Likert scale was used ranging from 1 = *completely disagree* to 7 = *completely agree*. We included age, gender, contractual work hours, job tenure, and industry as demographic variables. The performance constructs were rated by the supervisor of the focal employee.

In-role performance. Supervisors rated the in-role performance of their employee(s) using a four item scale (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). A sample item is "this employee adequately completes responsibilities" (α = .89).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior. Supervisors rated the extent to which employees went beyond their in-role performance by evaluating their OCB. We focused on helping behavior, defined as the small acts of consideration that help to build and preserve relationship at work, because it clearly complements in-role performance and can be accurately rated by supervisors because of its visibility and direct and clear affiliative nature (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). In addition, affiliative OCB is expected to deplete resources whereas challenging OCB can offer employees a way to restore their resources (Hobfoll & Freedy, 1993). We used the six items for helping behavior (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998), for example "this employee helps others in this group with their work responsibilities" (α = .85).

Workplace deviance. Supervisors rated the extent to which they saw employees voluntarily violating organizational norms (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). We focused on organizational deviance and in particular on withdrawal behavior, because these small acts of going against the organization are clearly undesirable but could be rated by supervisor without eliciting too much social desirability bias. Furthermore, withdrawal is more likely aligned with WIR, than other more vindictive deviant behaviors such as stealing. We selected those seven items from the organizational deviance scale that reflected withdrawal (Bennett & Robinson, 2000), such as "this employee came in late to work without permission" (α = .80).

Data analysis

To test our hypotheses and to re-examine the factor structure of the WIR scale, we used Mplus to perform SEM with robust maximum likelihood estimation. We used the same fit indices and cut-off values as in Study 2. As the performance of some respondents was rated by the same supervisor (N = 13) (i.e. data were nested), we took into account complex sampling features by using a sandwich estimator in Mplus (i.e., Type = Complex).

Results and discussion

Descriptive statistics

Table 7 shows the means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations between all variables included in Study 3. As expected and in line with Study 1, WIR was moderately to strongly correlated with emotional exhaustion (r = .40, p < .001). The result that employees who score higher on WIR are more likely to experience higher emotional exhaustion supports the assumption that WIR reflects an unhealthy approach to work (Cardador & Caza, 2012). No significant correlation was found between WIR and in-role performance, OCB, or workplace deviance. Contemporary thinking about mediation, however, does not require a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Hayes, 2009; Hayes & Rockwood, 2016). Emotional exhaustion, as expected, was negatively correlated with in-role performance (r = -.22, p = .026), OCB (r = -.21, p = .032), and positively with workplace deviance (r = .20, p = .048). The demographic variables did not significantly correlate with WIR, emotional exhaustion, or performance (except for an unexpected negative correlation between age and in-role performance; r = -.20, p = .045). We do not control for

Table 7: Correlations between Work Identity Rigidity, Emotional Exhaustion, Supervisor rated Performance, and Demographics in Study 3

Construct	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. WIR	3.52	0.95	(.75)							
2. Emotional exhaustion	3.14	0.95	.403**	(.75)						
3. In-role performance[1]	5.97	0.76	.038	-.222*	(.89)					
4. OCB[1]	5.78	0.72	.001	-.214*	.605**	(.85)				
5. Workplace deviance[1]	1.85	0.75	.142	.198*	-.365**	-.198*	(.80)			
6. Gender	1.52	0.50	.026	.157	-.143	-.092	.018			
7. Age	36.40	13.37	.041	-.010	-.203*	-.001	-.097	.195		
8. Job tenure	6.49	8.44	.000	.038	-.143	-.007	.164	.150	.560**	
9. Contractual work hours	33.27	13.23	.181	.059	.099	-.128	-.096	-.226*	-.107	-.195

Note: N = 100. * p < .05, ** p < .01. Gender is rated as 1 = *male,* 2 = *female.* [1]Rated by supervisor. Cronbach's alphas are reported diagonally.

these variables in our further analyses (including age as we did not hypothesize this relationship) in order to increase statistical power and offer better interpretable results (Bernerth & Aguinis, 2016).

Structure validation of the WIR scale

See Table 8 for a CFA of the WIR scale in which we augmented the employee sample with the unmatched employees (N = 56) to gain power as some of the model fit indices are less suitable for small sample size such as RMSEA, SRMR, and TLI (Kenny et al., 2015; Marsh et al., 1988)[12]. The factor structure of WIR with a one-factor solution consisting of six items showed good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Alternative models showed overfitting, indicating that the two- or three-factor solutions were more complex than needed. In addition, a comparison of the different models showed that $\Delta\chi^2$ was non-significant. Based on these results we again confirmed the results found in Study 1 and decided to maintain the unidimensional structure of the WIR scale. Please refer to Table 9 for the factor loadings.

Table 8: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Work Identity Rigidity scale in Study 3

	Model	χ^2	*df*	p-value	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
1	1-factor WIR[1]	9.580	9	.386	.997	.996	.020	.029
2	2-factor WIR[2]	7.153	8	.520	1.000	1.007	.000	.026
3	3-factor WIR[3]	3.416	6	.755	1.000	1.028	.000	.018

Note: N = 156. [1]WIR scale. [2]WIR split into a negative attitude component and an incapability component. [3]WIR split into an emotional response component, negative attitude component, and an incapability component. Estimator = ML, maximum likelihood parameter estimates with standard errors and chi-square test statistics that are robust to non-normality. Use of the conventional cut-off values of these fit indices (i.e., χ^2 non-significant, RMSEA < .06, CFI > .95, TLI > .95, SRMR < .08).

Table 9: Work Identity Rigidity Scale Factor Loadings for the Confirmatory Factor Analysis in Study 3

Item	*M*	*SD*	Estimate
I get upset when I have to change my work identity	3.11	1.35	.731
I dislike changing who I am at work	3.92	1.46	.508
I get restless when I constantly have to change my identity at work	3.83	1.64	.687
I find it hard to change my work identity even if it is necessary	3.46	1.37	.550
Adjusting who I am at work makes me feel uneasy	3.75	1.44	.644
It costs me too much energy to change my work identity	3.40	1.39	.679

Note: N = 156. All loadings were significant at p < .001.

[12] CFA based on only the matched data showed overfitting, χ^2 (9, N = 100) = 7.342, p < .602 (TLI = 1.027; CFI = 1.000; RMSEA = .000; and SRMR = .034).

Hypothesis testing

To test our hypotheses, we examined the model in which emotional exhaustion fully mediated the relationship between WIR and in-role performance, OCB, and workplace deviance. The mediated model showed that all hypothesized paths were significant and that the model fit was good (see Figure 1). As expected, employees who reported higher emotional exhaustion were more likely to receive lower ratings on in-role performance (β = -.22, p = .027) and OCB (β = -.21, p = .018), and higher ratings on workplace deviance (β = .20, p = .039) from their supervisors. We tested the indirect effects of WIR on in-role performance, OCB, and workplace deviance through emotional exhaustion for significance using bootstrapping. The confidence interval (CI) did not include zero for both the indirect effect of WIR on in-role performance (bootstrap estimate = -.090, 95%CI [-.139, -.004]) and OCB (bootstrap estimate -.086, 95%CI [-.128, -.004]). For workplace deviance a significant indirect effect could only be found using a CI of 90% (bootstrap estimate .080, 90%CI [.006, .132]). Hypotheses 1a and 1b were therefore both supported, whereas hypothesis 1c only received marginal support.

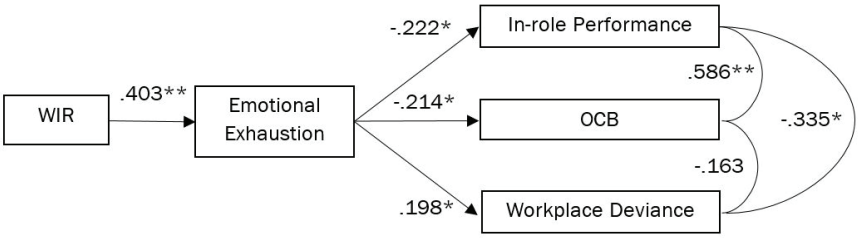

Figure 1: Mediated Model including Work Identity Rigidity, Emotional Exhaustion, In-Role Performance, OCB, and Workplace Deviance in Study 3

Note: * p < .05, ** p < .01. Standardized coefficients are reported. Estimator = MLR, maximum likelihood parameter estimates with standard errors and chi-square test statistics that are robust to non-normality. Model fit indices showed good fit χ^2 (3, N = 100) = 4.218, p = .239 (TLI = .934; CFI = .980; RMSEA = .064; and SRMR = .037). The indirect effects of WIR on In-role Performance (estimate = -.090, 95%CI [-.139, -.004]) and OCB (estimate = -.086, 95%CI = [-.128, -.004]) were significant. The indirect effect of WIR on Workplace Deviance was only marginally significant (estimate = .080, 90%CI = [.006, .132]). We explained 16.3% of variance in Emotional Exhaustion (p = .019), 4.9% in In-role Performance (p = .270), 4.6% in OCB (p = .236), and 3.9% in Workplace Deviance (p = .303).

This study provided initial evidence for the predictive validity of the WIR scale by establishing its predictive qualities for supervisor-rated in-role performance, OCB, and workplace deviance through its positive relationship with emotional exhaustion. The expected relationship between WIR and workplace deviance only received marginal support.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The aim of this investigation was to develop and validate a scale to assess WIR, defined as the extent to which employees are reluctant and unwilling to change their work identity. The results of three studies indicate that WIR, of which the structure was established in Study 1 and validated in Study 2 and 3, can be measured reliably in both heterogeneous (Study 1 and 3) and homogeneous samples (Study 2) and across cultures (i.e., US and the Netherlands). Study 1 established construct validity by showing that WIR is associated with personality traits that capture the resistance to change in general and the inability to cope with change, strain in the form of emotional exhaustion, and problematic identification with the job. Study 2 provided initial evidence on contextual factors associated with WIR including profession and autonomy. Finally, Study 3 provided preliminary evidence for the scale's predictive validity by showing its negative association with supervisor rated performance through emotional exhaustion.

The research presented here contributes to the literature on identity, specifically the literature on identity-related change and identity work, by showing that WIR could help explain why some employees have more difficulty to construct, adapt, and change their identity at work than others. As identity is increasingly important in the work context (Ashforth et al., 2008) and the successful adaptation of one's identity is playing an increasingly important role in the adaptive performance of employees (Lee et al., 2015; Swann et al., 2009), having a reliable and valid measure that can be used to assess identity-specific differences between employees (Hogan & Roberts, 1996) is important. Research so far has focused on uncovering rich processes that explain how, why, and when employees change who they are at work (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; Brown, 2015; Winkler, 2016). However, little was known about why some individuals struggle more in this process than others, even though there is clearly pain associated with identity work (Maitlis, 2009; Winkler, 2016). Our work on WIR starts to bridge this gap and expands our understanding of how employees deal with identity-related change by showing that (for different reasons) employees may not have an equally favourable attitude to begin with, which affects their potential success in adjusting who they are at work.

This chapter also contributed to the literature on identity and identity work by providing some preliminary evidence for the potential consequences of unsuccessful identity-related change due to employees' reluctance and unwillingness to change (i.e., WIR) (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016), which were theorized

but not empirically supported so far (Cardador & Caza, 2012). Although there are indications that changing one's identity can be a struggle for employees (Brown, 2015; Winkler, 2016), little is known about the consequences of this struggle or the underlying mechanism. Our results provide preliminary evidence for the predictive qualities of WIR in explaining how an unfavorable attitude toward identity-related change may impede the performance of employees who score high on WIR. We argued, based on COR (Hobfoll, 1989), that the emotional reactions of and use of emotional resources of high WIR employees to protect themselves increases emotional exhaustion. We indeed found this relationship and emotional exhaustion, in turn, was negatively related to the supervisor-rated performance of employees. WIR may thus be a novel antecedent to the relatively well established relationship between emotional exhaustion, in-role or job performance (Cropanzano et al., 2003) and OCB (Bolino et al., 2015; Cropanzano et al., 2003). Moreover, emotional exhaustion received initial evidence as one mechanism that could explain the potential negative outcomes of unsuccessful identity work.

Limitations and avenues for future research

The studies in this chapter are limited by their cross-sectional nature. Although the multisource design in Study 3 limited common source bias by having supervisors rate employees' in-role performance, OCB, and workplace deviance both WIR and emotional exhaustion were measured at the same time and reversed causality cannot be excluded as an alternative explanation for the findings. WIR is defined as a relatively stable, but still malleable attitude rather than a fixed personality trait. This suggests that the experience of emotional exhaustion at work may also negatively influences one's WIR. However, following Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) cognitive phenomenological model of stress and coping, the way change is appraised by the individual likely influences coping more than the other way around. It is therefore more likely that the causality predominantly runs in the direction we proposed in Study 3, because WIR is presented as the unfavorable attitude towards identity-related changes that acts as a personal resource for coping with that change. Longitudinal research would, however, is needed to establish causal flow and to better understand how WIR is related to change and work outcomes over time.

Another limitation of the studies in this chapter is the lack of identity-specific outcomes, such as behaviors related to dealing with change which

was difficult to assess in the cross-sectional heterogeneous samples that were used. That the WIR scale, independent of specific cases of identity-related change, was associated with a number of personality traits that capture the unwillingness and inability to change in general across different samples as expected, suggests that WIR itself is also likely to be relatively stable. However, we would expect that WIR would explain even more variance when it comes to attitudes and behaviors directly related to changes affecting one's work identity, as those better align with the specificity of the WIR construct (Hogan & Roberts, 1996). Future research on WIR should therefore include behaviors more directly related to identity-related changes, for example identity work, because this would support the need for a construct like WIR that complements general personality traits that capture reluctance and inability to change. In addition, future research would benefit from studying WIR during (identity-related) change to explore which events potentially trigger WIR and its consequences.

Practical implications

This chapter provides organizations a way to facilitate successful identity-related change by highlighting why certain employees may struggle more with making such changes than others. Employees with a rigid work identity might be less likely to take part in change initiatives and less likely to succeed in changing their identity, because WIR as an unfavorable attitude towards such changes is associated with reluctance to engage with such identity changes, emotional reactions to them, and the (perceived) inability to deal with such changes. Helping employees who score high on WIR to successfully adjust their identity at work despite their unfavorable attitude is important, because identity work has been related to positive work outcomes such as in-role performance, workplace adjustment, job satisfaction, and employee health (cf. Lee et al., 2015; Swann et al., 2009).

In order to prevent negative outcomes, such as emotional exhaustion and subsequent lower performance, when employees need to change their work identity, it is important to take into account the WIR of employees and the emotional toll that they pay. Specifically, organizations could facilitate successful identity work through interventions aimed at providing resources to employees with a rigid work identity, which could include letting employees develop a growth mindset (Dweck, 2015; Paunesku et al., 2015), providing employees more autonomy to deal with change, helping employees to frame

their work as less central and internalized in their identity and using multiple identities to substitute and strengthen their self-concept (Caza & Wilson, 2009; Maitlis, 2009), or providing extra time and other resources that help employees to overcome the loss of emotional resources. Although these interventions need to be evidenced in future research, we hope to have provided a first step in this direction by enhancing our understanding of the differences between employees in their unfavorable attitude towards identity-related change, the related personality constructs and contextual factors, and the potential consequences for employee well-being and performance when changing who you are at work feels unbearable.

APPENDIX D: The Work Identity Rigidity Scale

Who we are at the workplace is defined by our roles (e.g., supervisor, colleague, expert, hairdresser), the groups we belong to (e.g., department, organization, gender), and our personal characteristics (e.g., hardworking, loner, team player, slacker).

As a result someone might describe themselves as follows: “at work I am a hardworking female consultant at [company name] who is a loner” or as “at work I am an intelligent young accountant at the tax department of [company name]”.

Similar to this example, please take a moment to complete the following sentence “at work I am …”

Please keep this sentence about who you are at work in mind in answering the below questions!

To what extent do you agree that the following statements apply to your work identity?

1. I get upset when I have to change my work identity.
2. I dislike changing who I am at work.
3. I get restless when I constantly have to change my identity at work.
4. I find it hard to change my work identity even if it is necessary.
5. Adjusting who I am at work makes me feel uneasy.
6. It costs me too much energy to change my work identity.

APPENDIX E: Pilot studies Work Identity Rigidity Scale

First pilot. A sample of *N* = 50 undergraduate students (M_{age} = 21; 74% male) with a part-time job (M_{hours} = 12.4) participated in the first pilot consisting of nine items for WIR (see Table). The results showed that the wording of some items was unclear, for example "I am convinced that I am the best version of myself at work" could be interpreted as both indicative of someone who always tries to adjust to be his/her best or as indicative of someone who thinks change is unnecessary. Based on these results the wording of the indicative items was adjusted.

Second pilot. A sample of *N* = 60 MBA students (M_{age} = 31; 65% male) with a full-time job (M_{hours} = 36.7; *SD* = 3.91) with an average tenure at their current job of 3.1 years (*SD* = 3.25) and *N* = 56 undergraduate students (M_{age} = 21; 58.9% male) with a part-time job (M_{hours} = 11.2; *SD* = 7.59) with an average tenure at their current job of 2.1 years (*SD* = 1.77) participated in the second pilot (online and on paper) consisting of eight items for WIR (see Table). We combined the two samples (*N* = 116), because an independent-samples T test showed no significant differences on the WIR items. Based on these results, we decided to write additional items that would better cover only WIR.

Third pilot. A sample of *N* = 18 MBA students (M_{age} = 29; 56.3% male) and *N* = 39 undergraduate students (M_{age} = 22; 71.8% male) participated in the third pilot consisting of 25 items (see Table). We again combined the two samples (*N* = 57), because an independent-samples T test showed no significant differences on the WIR items. These eleven items were used in Study 1 and formed the basis of the final WIR scale consisting of six items (see Appendix D).

Results of Pilot Studies 1, 2, and 3 for the Development of the Work Identity Rigidity Scale

Pilot Study 1: Items[1]	*M*	*SD*	EFA	α if item deleted
I am interested to know how others experience me at work (R)	5.24	1.19	.821	.569
I often use self-reflection to improve my work identity (R)	4.76	1.17	.829	.567
My work identity is dependent on the situation (R)	4.52	1.43	.587	.653
I enjoy adjusting my work identity based on feedback from others (R)	4.14	1.55	.674	.708
I get upset when I have to change my work identity				
I dislike changing who I am at work				
I do not need feedback on my work identity, because I know best				
I am who I am at work regardless of the situation				
I am convinced that I am the best version of myself at work				

Items dropped based on the recommendations for scale development of Hinkin (1998)

Pilot Study 2: Items[2]	*M*	*SD*	EFA		α if item deleted
I dislike changing who I am at work	4.61	1.36	.776		.506
I get upset when I have to change my work identity	3.75	1.42	.819		.498
I am who I am at work even if the situation requires me to change	4.04	1.55	.560		.516
I dislike feedback on my work identity, because I know best	5.31	1.22		.729	.547
I adjust my work identity based on feedback from others (R)	4.62	1.30		.843	.562
I am interested to know how others experience me at work (R)	*Items dropped based on the recommendations for scale development of Hinkin (1998)*				
I often use self-reflection to improve my work identity (R)					
My work identity can change if this is needed (R)					
Pilot Study 3: Items[3]	***M***	***SD***	**EFA**		**α if item deleted**
I am who I am at work even if the situation requires me to change	4.05	1.58	.463		.843
I get upset when I have to change my work identity	4.60	1.43	.658		.816
I dislike changing who I am at work	3.86	1.48	.686		.825
I get restless when I constantly have to change my identity at work	3.67	1.31	.716		.845
I find it hard to change my work identity even if it is necessary	4.32	1.28	.734		.835
Adjusting who I am at work makes me feel uneasy	4.32	1.23	.834		.836
It costs me too much energy to change my work identity	4.23	1.27	.749		.830
Who I am at work can be very different in different situations (R)	4.77	1.23		.659	.841
Who I am at work is flexible (R)	5.00	1.17		.884	.840
I am open to change my work identity (R)	4.81	1.23		.764	.833
I change who I am at work based on the situation	4.75	1.06		.825	.843
I am interested to know how others experience me at work (R)	*Items dropped based on the recommendations for scale development of Hinkin (1998)*				
I dislike feedback on my work identity, because I know best					
I often use self-reflection to improve my work identity (R)					
My work identity can change if this is needed (R)					
I adjust my work identity based on feedback from others (R)					
It costs me little effort to change who I am at work (R)					
I change my work identity if the situation requires me to (R)					
My work identity never changes					
I would rather keep my work identity stable					
I change my work identity based on the expectations of others					
Feedback motivates me to improve my work identity (R)					
I believe that who I am at work changes during my career (R)					
I strongly value my work identity the way it is					
I have strong feelings about who I am at work					

[1]Note: *N* = 50. KMO Measure of sampling adequacy = .683. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity sig. = .000. Total Variance Explained = 53.98%. α = .69; [2] Note: *N* = 116. KMO Measure of sampling adequacy = .637. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity sig. = .000. Total Variance Explained = 51.81%. α = .58; [3]Note: *N* = 57. KMO Measure of sampling adequacy = .700. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity sig. = .000. Total Variance Explained = 57.68%. α = .85 (factor 1 α = .84; factor 2 α = .80). These eleven items from pilot studies 3 were used in all studies in Chapter 4.

APPENDIX F: Examples of Work Identity

"At work I am" …. (Sample of responses from Study 1)

An individual who takes my job seriously but does not take it home.

A social butterfly.

The lone manager of the geography section.

A hard working individual who goes beyond my own job to help others finish theirs.

Exhausted.

A dedicated organized and self-sufficient project manager.

In charge of how my days will go and how much work I will accomplish.

An experienced and respected it director.

Happy to be there and able to help students learn new things daily.

A compassionate counselor who carries others problems with me daily.

A talented young analyst respected by her peers and often asked to take on the most challenging assignments because my superiors know that I can handle the pressure.

Hard worker.

Responsible for maintaining all home insurance policies for the agency and also any new business for home insurance that comes in or generate myself

A man who takes his job seriously but likes to keep it light hearted with my staff a man that knows what I do makes a difference in the lives of others The go to guy.

A bubbly motivated and hardworking server who enjoys meeting new people.

A hard working bored male underwriter for a workers comp department.

The one that makes sure everything gets done right.

Intelligent and like to help others but I work from home so I do not have a team to work with (it can be lonely).

A strong woman with a lot of knowledge.

A jack of all trades.

A small timid female who struggles in a world of men.

A cheerful team player

A leader of people who are somewhat un-employable and I am looking to leave.