

# Influences on Occupational Identity through Trans and Gender Diverse Identity: A Qualitative Study about Work Experiences of Trans and Gender Diverse Individuals

Robin C. Ladwig

**Abstract**—Work experiences and satisfaction as well as the feeling of belonging has been narrowly explored from the perspective of trans and gender diverse individuals. Hence, the study investigates the relationship of values, attitudes, and norms of occupational environments and the working identity of trans and gender diverse people of the Australian workforce. Based on 22 semi-structured interviews with trans and gender diverse individuals regarding their work and career experiences, a first insight about their feeling of belonging through commonality in the workplace could be established. Commonality between the values, attitudes and norms of a trans and gender diverse individuals working identities and profession, organization and working environment could increase the feeling of belonging. Further reflection and evaluation of trans and gender diverse identities in the workplace need to be considered to create an equitable and inclusive workplace of the future. Consequently, an essential development step for the future of work and its fundamental values of diversity, inclusion, and belonging will consist of the acknowledgement and inclusion of trans and gender diverse people as part of a broader social identity of the workplace.

**Keywords**—Belonging, future of work, working identity, trans and gender diverse identity.

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE future of work influences individuals' understanding of their occupational identity; hence, the changing workforce intertwines with various aspects of the social identity which contains individual working and gender identities [1], [2]. Diversity, inclusion, and belonging are highlighted aspects of the concept of the future of work. To avoid these concepts being reduced to empty phrases, it is of relevance to reflect considerations of gender diversity as a relational identity aspect in occupational contextualization of working identities. The relationship between occupational identities and trans and gender diverse identities appear to have been a bidirectional influence. Consequently, this bidirectional influence shapes the individual self and implies unresolved effects for management and organization practices as well as policy in a wider societal context.

The aim of the research is to understand the experiences of trans and gender diverse (TGD) identities in the context of work and career development which might result in a general

Robin C. Ladwig is with the University of Canberra and Faculty of Business, Government & Law, Canberra, ACT 2617 Australia (e-mail: robin.ladwig@canberra.edu.au).

prediction for the future development of occupational identity. Furthermore, enablers and barriers ought to be identified for TGD individuals to perceive their aspired occupation, to be their authentic self at work or to follow their chosen career development. Hence, identified factors might be related to support mechanisms of developing a healthy and satisfying work identity.

22 TGD people of various occupations and demographic backgrounds have participated in the semi-structured interview in Australia. The data have been analyzed based on a critical grounded theory coding scheme including additional computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software.

One of the outcomes of the interview analysis shows that aspects and developments of TGD identities are influential in the development and management of work and social identity. Participants choose their workplace or shape their career development based on their identity values which have to be reflected or represented in the occupation or organization they participate in. Thus, the acknowledgment of TGD identities and the accommodation of basic human rights by integrating broader flexibility of identity expression can lead to an increase in the feeling of belonging. The relation of individual and organizational values in reflection on gender diverse identities builds a fertile environment that benefits the organization and individual. While the individual gets the chance to be their self at work, authenticity increases overall productivity, creativity, innovativeness, and work satisfaction of the organization and other organizational members [3]. As there is limited literature focusing on TGD identities in interrelation with the working identity that explores the feeling of belonging, this study seeks to investigate the possibility of an existing influence on work satisfaction and belonging for TGD employees regarding values, attitudes, and behavior.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Identity is a fragmented postmodern construct that is defined by various social communities including performative discourse [4]. The communicative view is adapted as an epistemological lens to the social identity which describes a dialectic relationship between social-personal, internal-external, cognition-practice, agency-structure, and discourse-material [5]. Consequently, identity is the result of enactment and description which includes the situated discursive and

material structures as well as the responsive agency of the individual [5]. Simultaneously, the individual represents and embodies multiple identities of social performance [4]. The following sections elaborate on the self and its identities as well as the relationship between various identities and the working environment or organizational context as well as how identification relates to belonging.

#### *A. The Self and Its Identities*

Diverse forms of identities, social roles as well as intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural aspects form a unique composition of an individual self [1], [6], [7]. The individual identities and their inhibited beliefs and values are influenced by the intersectionality of identity categories [8]. Identity literature indicates that the different aspects such as gender identities and working identities are closely intertwined and bidirectional influenced to shape the individuals' self [9]-[13] which incorporates oneness and sameness with others simultaneously [14]. While oneness describes a differentiation to other individuals and group characteristics, sameness represents similarities with other group members as a foundation of belonging.

The self intersects with the personal identity of an individual such as idiosyncratic characteristics and the social identity [15]; thus, the self represents individual and collective meaning [16]. A person's identities may be distinguished between personal and social identity [5], [15], [17], [18] as well as role identity with further distinctions under each categorization [19]. The personal identity represents an internal aspect [5] and distinct a person from others as it is a unique collection of personal characteristics [20]. The social identity emerges from external aspects such as identity categories like age, social class, gender, ethnicity, or work professions [5]. Furthermore, expected values and norms in the applicable social environment are shaping the social identification and adaptation of the self [21]. A person's identity is also influenced by organizational and professional identities with the aim to become socially integrated via social identity [17]. Social identity is the sense of self of a person, how they see their selves and who they are. The sense of self or social identity is strongly influenced by the membership with certain groups and the distinction as well as dissociation with other group members who have distinct values and characteristics with the self [22]. Identity regulations could be either active such as the consciousness of action to regulate identity or passive such as routine and instinctive processes which are independent of reflective and conscious evaluation [5].

The postmodern perspective claims that there are identities rather than one core self. These identities are subject to ongoing change in regards to discourse [19]. Gorz [23] outlines that people are embedded in social structures but the individual has a degree of freedom to respond to these determinations. Gender and work-related identities are constituted within the boundaries of society but do the individual can navigate through these constraints; before elaborating on these constrains gender identities and work-

related identities shall be defined.

#### 1) Gender Identities

Gender identity is one element of social identity [24]. Gender identities are constructed via a constant linguistic exchange and social performance [25]. Gender should be understood 'as a form of multiplicity that is both internal and externally differentiated' [26]. Through space, time, discourse and personal interaction, the inscription of gender identity may alter [26]. TGD identity shall be the umbrella term for various identity concepts and labels such as genderqueer, non-binary, agender, genderless, bigender, pangender, neutrons, genderfluid, sistergirl, brotherboy, trans man, trans woman and many more as well as multiple combinations of these labels. The population of TGD people is estimated between 0.1 and 1.1% of the world population [27] while newer studies estimate 4.6% of the Australian population indicate some form of gender variance [28].

Stryker et al. [29], as exemplary authors of trans studies, encourage an understanding of genders 'as potentially porous and permeable spatial territories (arguably numbering more than two), each capable of supporting rich and rapidly proliferating ecologies of embodied difference.' Theorists like Stryker [30] support the enrichment of embodied diversity which can or cannot be along the gender binary. The theoretical concepts and definitions are influential to transgender politics that are further 'informed by postmodern conceptions of subjectivity, queer understandings of sexuality and gender, radical politics of transgression, and the poststructuralist deconstruction of binaries (such as man/woman and mind/body)' [31]. Approximately 35% of trans people participating in a 2015 United States transgender survey are identifying as nonbinary [32]. In the present study, binary TGD or non-conforming people are interviewed as it allows a comparison of their work experiences.

#### 2) Work-Related Identities

It is crucial to distinguish the following terminology for further discussion: professional identity, organizational identity and identification, situational, as well as working identity. The occupational or working identity is affected by the individual meaning of professional, organizational, and situational identities and is further categorized under the social identity of an individual. The professional identity is representative for identifying with characteristics, values, and behavior of a profession and its roles such as teaching or accounting [33], [34]. Professional identity is a reflection of the professional work role including beliefs, attitudes, motivations, and experiences [35]. Furthermore, professional identity is influenced by individual self-identity and contextualized to the social and organizational environment such as the situational or organizational identity. The situational identity involves the dimension of the local institution or business a person works at [34] and includes the relationship with a department or work team. The organizational identity is the cognitive connection defined by characteristics, values and norms of the organization

representing its identity [36].

The social identity theory [37] describes social identification as a perspective of belongingness to a social or group classification that leads to either an actual or symbolic membership [36], [38]. The social identity theory discusses the role of identity in intergroup harmony and conflicts which needs to be distinct from the social categorization theory which implies the social-cognitive architecture of social identity processes [39]. Social identity theory was introduced by Tajfel and Turner in the 1970s in social psychology [22]. The identification with and membership of a group leads to the beneficial development of self-esteem for the individual [40]. Hence, social groups give a sense of belonging to the social world [40], also not every person has access or can become an insider of a specific group. A TGD employee might experience difficulties being included in various group activities by their cis-heteronormative colleagues as they are not conforming to the norm of cis-normativity or gender binary. Furthermore, situational and professional identities interact with organizational identity [41]. Working identities become constructed and reconstructed to ongoing change and development [35] by discursive regimes such as social norms which further are steering strategies of identity work by intertwining discourse, identity work and emotions [33], [42]. Nevertheless, [43] states that the intersection between the development of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) identities and career development has been neglected and demands further investigation through the lens of TGD identities in interrelation with work experience.

### *B. Relationality between the Individual and Organizations*

A strong social identification includes a feeling of belongingness via overlapping attitudes, values, and behavior which further correspond with organizational identification. Research has shown that organizational identification leads to an increase in performance and a decrease in turnover [36]. Research has demonstrated a positive effect between organizational identification and the self [21]. Group identification leads to an increase in self-esteem. An individual who experiences exclusion and misery at the workplace because they are not part of the group based on their gender identity or being able to represent as well as being accepted for their genuine self could lead to a decrease of self-esteem and job satisfaction. Organizational identification is related to the individual's organizational commitment, organizational and job satisfaction, organizational loyalty, general job involvement, work, and occupational attachment as well as role behavior [3].

#### 1) Identification

Identity can be understood as a fragmented postmodern construct that is defined by various social communities including performative discourse [4], [16]. The communicative view is adapted as an epistemological lens to the social identity which stresses a dialectic relationship between dualistic concepts as for example social-personal or internal-external [5]. Consequently, identity is the result of

enactment and description which includes the situated discursive and material structures and the responsive agency of the individual [5]. Simultaneously, the individual represents and embodies multiple identities of social performance [4].

Identification could be described as state or process. Identification as a stage represents the identification with an organization or group. Identification as a process is the ongoing negotiation of social processes and norms. Identity negotiation is embedded in the social environment of society, group backgrounds or organizational settings [2]. The self or the mind comes to existence through the internal and external dialectic of identification which refers back to embodied individual space-time coordinates of human relationships [44]. 'The human body is simultaneously a referent of individual continuity, an index of collective similarity and differentiation, and a canvas upon which identification can play' [44]. Hence, identification has to be considered as a state or process.

Individuals present themselves accordingly to the social context of the organization or work environment. People may project a 'public self' [45] to shape and please an audience impression or to represent 'ideal selves' [5] to construct a person they would like to be. Identity regulations could be either active such as the consciousness of action to regulate identity or passive such as routine and instinctive processes which are independent of reflective and conscious evaluation [5]. The ideal self is an optimum a person wants to achieve according to the social norms and values attached to the situation and the development of such characteristics. The ideal self is reassured through social regulation and normalization in a dynamic process of identity regulation and identity work [5]. Identification is a balance act as it might be led to over-identification or under-identification with negative consequences for individual satisfaction and self-esteem [17].

The complexity of individual existence is embedded in three orders: the individual, interactional, and institutional level. The institutional level includes organizations that can be described as task-oriented and organized collectives or groups [44]. A person can identify themselves on different levels inherent to the organizational identification. The personal level represents the identification with their own career. The social level extends the identification to various subgroups such as the team or department a person works in. The third and higher-level categories could be the organization as a whole or a profession that the individual identifies with [46]. 'The combined effects of context, change over time, and relational roles and responsibilities' [35] construct and reconstruct the working identity [4]. Organizational identification is perceived as sameness with and belonging to an organization [21]. Individuals who are identifying with an organization tend to interpret their place within the institution with a similar lens of values, ideology and culture than their organization [20].

Organizational identification is the overlap between the individual values, attitude, and behavior system of the individual and the organization they are situated at. While the organizational identity implies the internal shared meaning and behavior patterns, the corporate identity is the external

representation and perception of an organization [47]. The individual tries to navigate through social norms and external requirements by modifying the self-presentation [45] while these various identities coexist. If an external threat is increasing such as the loss of a job or rejection of application the response of the individual becomes more compliant to the social norms and expectations to reduce the negative consequences [45]. Belonging to an organization – organizational identification is vital for the success of an organization [21] and the well-being of the individual worker which why the concept of belonging shall be the focus of the next section.

## 2) Belonging

Belonging together with social support is basic human need as the fundamental forces driving a person's career aspirations [48]-[50]. Belonging is defined as the individual experiences of integration and personal involvement in environments or systems [50] such as organizations. The simultaneity of belonging and uniqueness is shaped as 'individuals constitute their identities in delineation from others, while at the same time creating a sense of belonging' [51]. Consequently, the individual might be internalizing the central core values of the organization into their central identity features [52]. Organizational identity is either overlapping with personal identity including norms, values, and goals to increase job satisfaction and resulting in a feeling of belonging [52]. Hence, the feeling of belonging can emerge for the individual as they are part of or fit into the organization as organizational characteristics becoming part of the individual self-concept. Queer identities are negotiated along the situated belongingness of an individual within an organization. Organization inherent gender norms are disciplining bodies of TGD workers [53]. With the decrease of self-esteem and sense of belonging, the feeling of stress and victimization rises [54] for the TGD individual which further can lead to an extraction of the workplace. The study about female-to-male transgender employees in Australia by [55] found that the feeling of safety and belonging lessened if participants experienced transphobia in their workplace. Hence, belonging should be fostered through explicit support for multivariate diversity [56].

Another significant aspect of belonging is interrelation with job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is defined as 'attitudes toward specific aspects of the concrete job and tasks one has to perform' [52]. The study by Srivastava and Madan [3] established that the stronger the complimentary overlap between self-identification and organizational identification is the higher the chances are to experience job satisfaction and to be resilient to negative working aspects.

## III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objective of the study is to understand the relationship between the two social identity subcategories of gender identities and working identities in contextualization of professional or organizational values and norms as well as situational work culture. Furthermore, it is of interest how employees, especially TGD individuals construct and

reconstruct their social identity of organizational identification. An additional objective is to analyze the enablers and barriers experienced by TGD individuals and further understand if these individuals identify with the organizational identity such as support of leadership and management or the integration of organizational group or subsection identification. It is proposed that a complementary relationship between the person's working and gender identity with the values, attitudes, and norms of a profession, organization or workplace are leading to an increasing sense of belonging for the individual. This paper shall specifically focus on the sense of belonging experienced by trans and gender individuals in the context of organizational identification.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research approach of semi-structured interviews [57] has been chosen to empower the voices of TGD people [58], who, according to the literature, hardly had the opportunity to share their insights [59]. Grounded theory has evolved since the foundational work by Glaser and Strauss (1967) was first published [57]. Pragmatist philosophical tradition is influential on the grounded theory approach which leads to the development of different standards of grounded theory dependent on the underlying research paradigms [58]. The critical grounded theory aligns with principles of critical realism and combines the focus on the process, structure, and social relation that shape outcomes and events as well as on the human perspective [59]. The study has been initiated by experiences and observation [58] of the critical issue of a missing understanding of the work experiences for TGD people in Australia. The study seeks to initiate change for an inclusive and equal work environment as well as emancipation for the TGD voice in the occupational context.

### A. Data Collection

The study conducted 22 semi-structured online interviews with TGD individuals from various states in Australia. The participants represent a broad spectrum of TGD identities such as trans masculine, trans feminine, genderqueer, non-binary, genderless, genderfae, agender and a combination out of various labels concerning trans and gender diversity. Their age alters from early 20 years to over 60 years, representing a multi-cultural as well as multi-national background. Participants are at a variety of stages in their career pathway or level of work experiences and have encounters in numerous industry sectors as well as professions.

The semi-structured interviews ran for approximately 1.5 hours. They were hosted online due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. The research received ethical approval and the participants were given informed consent. Interview questions and prompts were created about the topic of gender identity, work experience, and career development as well as the relationship aspect of their TGD identities in the context of workplace culture and structures. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The recording has been deleted after the transcripts were sent to the participants for member-

checking to empower the voices of the individuals and their narrative [60]. The participant-reviewed interview transcripts have been analyzed via a critical grounded theory approach with the additional support of the qualitative data analysis computer software package, NVivo.

### B. Data Analysis

The member-checked transcripts were analyzed following the critical grounded theory approach which includes a two-phased coding process [59], [61], [62]. The grounded theory approach has been chosen as previously no qualitative research about the work experiences of the working identity of TGD individuals has been conducted [63], [64]. The theoretical framework has been added after the data analysis to avoid bias during the interview process [62].

After the transcription, the researchers familiarized themselves with the content by rereading the transcripts several times and starting initial coding after the approval of the participants regarding the correctness of their transcript [61]. Initial coding included In-Vivo, process and initial codes. The initial coding process contained a recoding and thematization of the previous codes by categorizing them to information about enablers and barriers as well as additional insights [65]. In-Vivo codes have been further categorized in communality, innovation, insider, and signifier [66]. The second coding cycle includes axial and focused coding [65] as well as structuring cases [61], [62]. Over the whole process,

memo-writing has been a vital instrument to identify significant insight [66]. The data analysis showed that the freedom of gender identity expression is interwoven with the level of working identities and its overlapping values, attitudes, and behaviors as elaborated in the following.

### V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings indicate that a sense of belonging increases if the working identity is supported and complementary with the person's profession, organization, and work environment. This supports thinking in the academic literature about organizations that had a powerful focus on diversity, equity, and inclusivity which are supported and enacted by leadership and management lead to an increasing sense of belonging to the organization under the condition of being yourself [20], [51]. Hence, it implied that diversity, inclusion, and equity are some of the core values of the organization and should be represented in various policies, structures, and activities [46]. Individuals who identify strongly with an organization tend to interpret their place within the institution with a similar lens of values, ideology, and culture than their organization [20]. Thus, it leads to a feeling of safety and welcoming for the participants, they could thrive and focus on their work [3], [21].

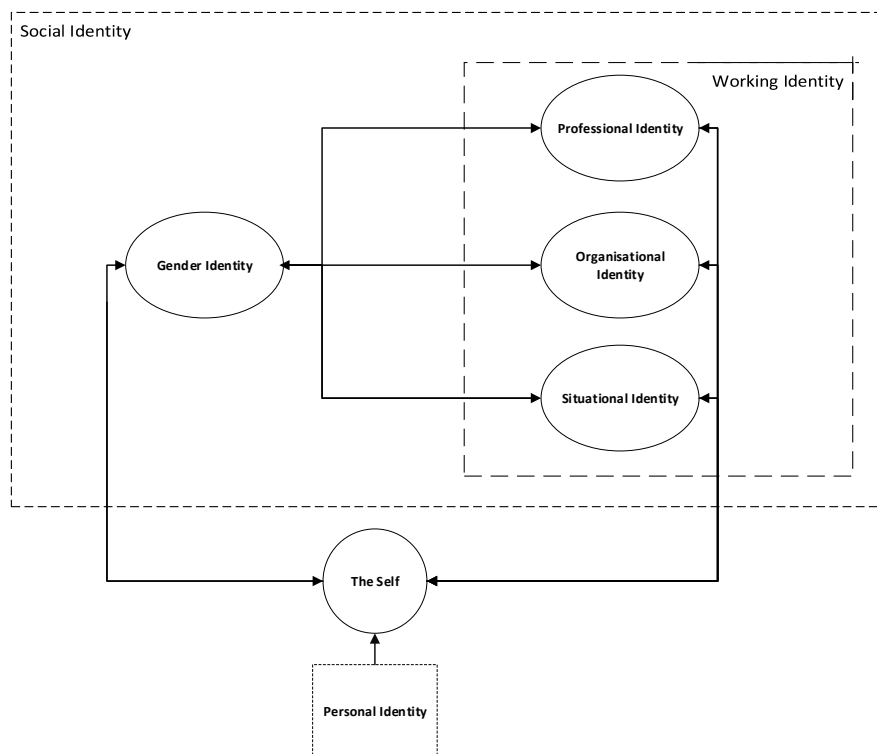


Fig. 1 The interrelation between gender identity, working identity and the self

Fig. 1 outlines the various levels of involvement between distinct social identities such as gender identity, professional identity, organizational identity, and situational identity [44].

The working identity is constituted by the professional, organizational, and situational identity. The degree of overlapping values, attitudes, and behavior between the

working identity and the self either supports the TGD person in their confidence at work to express their gender identity [52] or leads to the mechanism of covering up the TGD identity [45]. If it becomes unsafe or is not possible to express their TGD identity without facing repercussions, the interview participants took various steps of career adjustment to improve their working environment as it otherwise led to enormous distress [54]. Most of the participants have adopted strategies to show their merit or skills and talents rather than being assessed by their gender identity.

Table I illustrates the degree of complementary values, attitudes, and norms for the individual with the professional, organizational, or situational context in their work environment. Diversity and belonging seemed to attune with the increase of positive interrelation between gender and working identities [17]. Interview participants who described high satisfaction with their workplace, team, and profession are more likely to freely choose how they would like to express their gender identity in their field of occupation. Participants like JJ, Tyler, Moses, and Ben feel respected and acknowledge in the workplace independent or based on their TGD identities. Tyler for instance underlines the significance of valuing diversity in the workplace for their satisfaction: ‘Which I think honestly ties back into the fact that the workplace culture put on a lot of emphasis on like tolerance and diversity like I had hiring and practices where they were specifically like, they put actively effort into hiring people who weren’t white because they want to have a diverse workplace. So, there was already a workplace encouraging that sort of thing.’

The opposite experience is represented by interview participants who encounter immense issues with their profession that is closely related to their gender identity and overall well-being and safety [17], [54]. For instance, Socks tries to establish their gender identity in the workplace of their profession that is mechanics. Mechanics seem to be highly male-dominated and representative of hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity could include an aggressive male-stereotypical standpoint against queer people [67]. Such values and attitudes as well as the resistance of their manager and team members to change to the correct pronouns for Socks show that their values and gender identity have no place in the profession of mechanics or their organization. Consequently, Socks is demoralized: ‘I am just demoralized about it, at this point, I just come in and I go home.’ Socks wants to leave the profession to work in the pharmaceutical industry. According to [36] and [52], if there is not considerable commonality of values and attitudes between the organization and the individual, it leads to an increase in turnover. Eli would like to work as a teacher but in their state, the profession is intertwined with Christian and anti-queer values. Hence, Eli feels not safe to proceed currently with a career in teaching and had to join an organization that has diversity measurements such as policies in place. Eli states: ‘I think it was the two main things, that I have to change my career dream because of queerness and having to think of safe workplaces as the number one goals as again your dream job

or work of choice because we don’t have a choice.’ Eli’s example demonstrates the social norms within the profession of teaching does not represent their identity and therefore becomes unsafe for them to proceed with this career pathway for now.

TABLE I  
 LEVEL OF COMPLEMENTARY ACCOUNT WITH WORKING IDENTITIES

Participant	Professional Identity	Organizational Identity	Situational Identity
Ben	x	x	x
JJ	x	x	x
Tyler	x	x	x
Moses	x	x	x
CS	o	x	x
Seth	x	o	x
Raine	x	o	x
Peter	x	o	x
Nathan	x	o	x
Charlie	x	o	x
Holly Potter	o	o	x
Jack Hippocampus	x	o	o
Adele	o	o	o
Taiga Tagish	x	-	x
Lailoken’s Daughter	x	x	-
Eli	-	o	x
Romana	x	-	o
Sam	x	-	o
Alex	o	-	o
Ann	o	o	-
Cameron	-	-	o
Socks	-	-	-

x = commonality with profession, organization, and/or work environment; o = tolerable differences or minimum of commonality with profession, organization, and/or work environment; - = discrepancies with profession, organization, and/or work environment

If an organization has a broad representation of diverse individuals because they are embedded with the organizational values, people are more likely to be encouraged to bring their whole gender identity to the workplace because they feel safe to do so and worry less about the acknowledgment of their merit. Charlie shares their enthusiasm: ‘It was fantastic. So, that was when I first signed up for the job, but it turned out we had a couple of non-binary people, a trans man, a trans binary woman, a bunch of gays, lesbian, bi people, and I was “This is the most inclusive place I have ever worked!”’ Charlie further demonstrates that diversity and inclusion lead to an increase in belonging and work satisfaction as their working identity value system corresponds with the organization’s values [50].

Although not all working identities are perfectly compatible with the organizations and consequently a need for improvement persists, most interview participants reported a high-level of work satisfaction [3] as their immediate team shares similar values and are open about their gender identities or even have strong allyship present. Taiga Tagish highlights the importance of such allyship: ‘It is good, a sense of community and you are not alone even if your neighbor has different issues that they are grappling with.’ This could lead

to the assumption that if the immediate team or department is inclusive and shares similar values and attitudes, imperfections in the organization can be overlooked or are less impactful.

Taiga Tagish and Lailoken's Daughter are examples of a strong appreciation of their work that focuses less on them as a person or their gender identities. In Lailoken's Daughter's words: 'I don't like blowing my own trumpet huge amount, I tend to want to sell the actual item itself, the thing that I am created not me.' Some of the participants raised concern about people knowing about their TGD identities before they could demonstrate their skills and work engagement like Ben: 'I still would worry like how they judge me.' People do not expose their trans status to avoid judgment and would rather be appreciated for their work than for their gender identities such as Seth elaborates: 'People who only know me as I am now and how they perceive me now if they Google me or they look up my name or whichever they find all these, your past presence, and I am not so much worried about being outed so much, I just don't like them seeing me that I think that would change people's perception.' Wieland [5] stated that the ideal self is shaped by social regulation and normalization. Seth invested identity work to build a self-confident and proud person which should not be diminished by cis-normative judgment.

If the person's gender values or identities do not correspond with the organizational values and/or professional values, people mask when interacting with other company members or customers the expected social norm of binary gender and cis-normativity [53]. Socks, when visiting other locations, or Adele, when fulfilling customers' expectations: 'I think there is usually an expectation from my clients, "you are one or the other, come on."' The ideal self is an optimum a person wants to achieve according to the social norms and values attached to the situation and the development of such characteristics. The ideal self is also honored with positive recognition of groups [42]. While it is sometimes possible to continue working in this position of needed masking and adaptation to social gender-binary norms in the workplace, some participants take action to improve their situation. Adele, for instance, starts their independent law firm to partially escape the heterosexist and cis-normative misogyny at their previous workplaces.

Overall, the commonality of individual values, attitudes, and behaviors might have to correspond with the ones represented in the profession, organization, and immediate working environment to establish belonging. Even so, minor inconsistencies can be tolerated by the individual, less than a minimum of two identity commonalities may call for action. Depending on the severity it might lead to a person changing their career development or workplace to increase their safety and feeling of belonging. Safety is a precondition before belonging can emerge which seems to be highly underestimated by the most organization. Further consequences and future research shall be discussed in the last paragraphs.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The influences on a person's work satisfaction and feeling of belonging are infinite. The research tries to explore the interrelation between individual values, attitudes, and behavior incorporated in gender and working identities with professional, organizational, and situational values, attitudes, and norms. This study argues that the individual values, attitudes, and behavior of social identities such as gender identities and working identities have to have a relational commonality with the values, norms, and attitudes of the profession, organization, and working environment to increase work satisfaction and shape a feeling of belonging. Safety is a significant factor in the foundation of belonging. Social support is influential on stress [20] and means for TGD diverse people an increase of resilience if they have social, peer, or collegial support.

Further research should evaluate the specific influence or grading of professional, organizational, and situational identity in relationship with gender identities as the present study only indicates a first insight rather than causality or effect. Based on the findings, the study recommends an increasing awareness and evaluation of organizational values and norms to engage with TGD talent and nurture the feeling of belonging for employees independent of their gender identities.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article and furthermore declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication. The author offers their sincere thanks for the constructive comments of the reviewers and reflective considerations of Dr Raechel Johns, Dr Jennifer Loh, and Dr Michael Walsh.

## REFERENCES

- [1] J. Z. Spade and C. G. Valentine, *The kaleidoscope of gender: Prisms, patterns, and possibilities*. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press. 2008.
- [2] J. Acker, *Gendered organizations and intersectionality: Problems and possibilities*. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal, vol. 31,3, 2012, pp. 214-224.
- [3] S. Srivastava and P. Madan, *The relationship between resilience and career satisfaction: Trust, political skills and organizational identification as moderators*. vol. 29,1, 2020, pp. 44-53.
- [4] S. F. Akkerman and P. C. Meijer, *A dialogical approach to conceptualizing teacher identity*. Teaching and Teacher Education, vol. 27,2, 2011, pp. 308-319.
- [5] S. M. Wieland, *Ideal selves as resources for the situated practice of identity*. Management communication quarterly, vol. 24,4, 2010, pp. 503-528.
- [6] L. A. Mainiero and S. E. J. A. o. M. P. Sullivan, *Kaleidoscope careers: An alternate explanation for the "opt-out" "revolution"*. vol. 19,1, 2005, pp. 106-123.
- [7] J. Acker, *Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations*. Gender & society, vol. 4,2, 1990, pp. 139-158.
- [8] S. A. Shields, *Gender: An intersectionality perspective*. Sex roles, vol. 59,5-6, 2008, pp. 301-311.
- [9] T. J. Watson, *Managing identity: Identity work, personal predicaments and structural circumstances*. Organization, vol. 15,1, 2008, pp. 121-143.
- [10] S. Sveningsson and M. Alvesson, *Managing managerial identities: Organizational fragmentation, discourse and identity struggle*. Human Relations, vol. 56,10, 2003, pp. 1163-1193.
- [11] L. Ramarajan and E. Reid, *Shattering the myth of separate worlds*:

- Negotiating nonwork identities at work*. Academy of Management Review, vol. 38,4, 2013, pp. 621-644.
- [12] K. L. Ashcraft, *The glass slipper: "Incorporating" occupational identity in management studies*. Academy of management review, vol. 38,1, 2013, pp. 6-31.
- [13] P. G. Cummins and I. O'Boyle, *Leading through others: Social identity theory in the organizational setting*. Organization Development Journal, vol. 32,3, 2014, pp. 27-39.
- [14] N. L. Young, *Identity Transformations*. Annals of the International Communication Association, vol. 31,1, 2007, pp. 224-272.
- [15] B. E. Ashforth and F. Mael, *Social identity theory and the organization*. Academy of management review, vol. 14,1, 1989, pp. 20-39.
- [16] S. J. Tracy and A. Trethewey, *Fracturing the real-self→ fake-self dichotomy: Moving toward "crystallized" organizational discourses and identities*. Communication theory, vol. 15,2, 2005, pp. 168-195.
- [17] G. E. Kreiner, E. C. Hollensbe, and M. L. Sheep, *Where Is the "Me" among the "We"? Identity Work and the Search for Optimal Balance*. The Academy of Management Journal, vol. 49,5, 2006, pp. 1031-1057.
- [18] B. E. Ashforth, K. M. Rogers, and K. G. Corley, *Identity in organizations: Exploring cross-level dynamics*. Organization science, vol. 22,5, 2011, pp. 1144-1156.
- [19] A. D. Brown, *Identities and identity work in organizations*. International journal of management reviews, vol. 17,1, 2015, pp. 20-40.
- [20] S. A. Haslam and N. Ellemers, *Social identity in industrial and organizational psychology: Concepts, controversies and contributions*. International review of industrial and organizational psychology, vol. 20,1, 2005, pp. 39-118.
- [21] C. Jones and E. H. Volpe, *Organizational identification: Extending our understanding of social identities through social networks*. Journal of Organizational Behavior, vol. 32,3, 2011, pp. 413-434.
- [22] L. Holck, S. L. Muhr, and F. Villeseche, *Identity, diversity and diversity management: On theoretical connections, assumptions and implications for practice*. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal, vol. 35,1, 2016, pp. 48-64.
- [23] A. Gorz, *Critique of economic reason*. London & New York: Verso Trade. 1989.
- [24] T. Thanem and L. Wallenberg, *Just doing gender? Transvestism and the power of undoing gender in everyday life and work*. Organization, vol. 23,2, 2016, pp. 250-271.
- [25] K. A. Cerulo, *Identity construction: New issues, new directions*. Annual review of Sociology, vol. 23,1, 1997, pp. 385-409.
- [26] S. Linstead and A. Pullen, *Gender as multiplicity: Desire, displacement, difference and dispersion*. Human Relations, vol. 59,9, 2006, pp. 1287-1310.
- [27] K. Sawyer, C. Thoroughgood, and J. Webster, *Queering the gender binary: Understanding transgender workplace experiences, in Sexual orientation and transgender issues in organizations*, T. Köllen, Editor, Springer: Cham 2016, pp. 21-42.
- [28] A. S. Cheung, S. Y. Leemazq, J. W. Wong, D. Chew, O. Ooi, P. Cundill, N. Silberstein, P. Locke, S. Zwickl, and R. Grayson, *Non-binary and binary gender identity in Australian trans and gender diverse individuals*. Archives of sexual behavior, vol. 49,7, 2020, pp. 2673-2681.
- [29] S. Stryker, P. Currah, and L. Moore, *Introduction; Trans-, Trans, or Transgender? Women's Studies Quarterly*, vol. 36,3/4, 2008, pp. 11-22.
- [30] S. Stryker, *Transgender history, homonormativity, and disciplinarity*. Radical History Review, vol. 2008,100, 2008, pp. 145-157.
- [31] K. Roen, *"Either/or" and "both/neither": Discursive tensions in transgender politics*. Signs, vol. 27,2, 2002, pp. 501-522.
- [32] D. Cosgrove, C. Bozlak, and P. Reid, *Service Barriers for Gender Nonbinary Young Adults: Using Photovoice to Understand Support and Stigma*. Affilia, vol. 0,0, 2020, pp. 1-20.
- [33] S. N. Khapova, M. B. Arthur, C. P. M. Wilderom, and J. S. Svensson, *Professional identity as the key to career change intention*. Career Development International, vol. 12,7, 2007, pp. 584-595.
- [34] C. Day and A. Kington, *Identity, well-being and effectiveness: The emotional contexts of teaching*. Pedagogy, culture & society, vol. 16,1, 2008, pp. 7-23.
- [35] V. O'Reilly, M. McMahon, and P. Parker, *Career development: Profession or not?*, vol. 29,2, 2020, pp. 79-86.
- [36] L. C. Prieto, *Proactive personality and entrepreneurial leadership: exploring the moderating role of organizational identification and political skill*. Academy of Entrepreneurship Journal, vol. 16,2, 2010, pp. 107-121.
- [37] K. D. Elsbach, *An expanded model of organizational identification*, in *Research in organizational behavior*, R.I. Sutton and M. Staw, Editors, Elsevier Science/JAI Press 1999, pp. 163-199.
- [38] J. E. Stets and P. J. Burke, *Identity theory and social identity theory*. Social psychology quarterly, vol. 63,3, 2000, pp. 224-237.
- [39] D. Abrams and M. A. Hogg, *Social identity and self-categorization*, in *The SAGE Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping and Discrimination*, J.F. Dovidio, M. Hewstone, P. Glick, and V.M. Esses, Editors, The SAGE handbook of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination 2010.
- [40] M. A. Hogg and D. Abrams, *Social identity and social cognition: Historical background and current trends*, in *Social Identity and Social Cognition*, D. Abrams and M.A. Hogg, Editors, Wiley: Oxford 1999, pp. 1-25.
- [41] R. S. Livengood and R. K. Reger, *That's our turf! Identity domains and competitive dynamics*. Academy of Management Review, vol. 35,1, 2010, pp. 48-66.
- [42] S. Ahuja, H. Heizmann, and S. Clegg, *Emotions and identity work: Emotions as discursive resources in the constitution of junior professionals' identities*. Human Relations, vol. 72,5, 2019, pp. 988-1009.
- [43] C. McFadden, *Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender careers and human resource development: A systematic literature review*. Human Resource Development Review, vol. 14,2, 2015, pp. 125-162.
- [44] R. Jenkins, *Social identity*. London & New York: Routledge. 2014.
- [45] R. F. Baumeister, *A self-presentational view of social phenomena*. Psychological bulletin, vol. 91,1, 1982, pp. 3-26.
- [46] R. Van Dick, *My Job is My Castle: Identification in Organizational Contexts*, in *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology 2004*, C. Cooper and I. Robertson, Editors, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd: West Sussex 2003, pp. 171-203.
- [47] J. P. Cornelissen, S. A. Haslam, and J. M. Balmer, *Social identity, organizational identity and corporate identity: Towards an integrated understanding of processes, patternings and products*. British journal of management, vol. 18,S1, 2007, pp. S1-S16.
- [48] M. Peiperl and Y. Baruch, *Back to square zero: The post-corporate career*. Organizational dynamics, vol. 25,4, 1997, pp. 7-22.
- [49] Y. Baruch, N. Szücs, and H. Gunz, *Career studies in search of theory: The rise and rise of concepts*. Career Development International, vol. 20,1, 2015, pp. 3-20.
- [50] S. M. Barr, S. L. Budge, and J. L. Adelson, *Transgender community belongingness as a mediator between strength of transgender identity and well-being*. Journal of Counseling Psychology, vol. 63,1, 2016, pp. 87.
- [51] G. Winker and N. Degele, *Intersectionality as multi-level analysis: Dealing with social inequality*. European Journal of Women's Studies, vol. 18,1, 2011, pp. 51-66.
- [52] R. Van Dick, O. Christ, J. Stellmacher, U. Wagner, O. Ahlswede, C. Grubba, M. Hauptmeier, C. Hochfeld, K. Moltzen, and P. A. Tissington, *Should I stay or should I go? Explaining turnover intentions with organizational identification and job satisfaction*. British Journal of Management, vol. 15,4, 2004, pp. 351-360.
- [53] S. L. Muhr, K. R. Sullivan, and C. Rich, *Situated Transgressiveness: Exploring One Transwoman's Lived Experiences across Three Situated Contexts*. Gender, work, and organization, vol. 23,1, 2016, pp. 52-70.
- [54] T. Michl, K. Pegg, and A. Kracen, *Gender x Culture: A pilot project exploring the study abroad experiences of trans and gender expansive students*. Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad, vol. 31,2, 2019, pp. 32-50.
- [55] T. Jones, *Female-to-male (FtM) transgender employees in Australia, in Sexual Orientation and Transgender Issues in Organizations*, Springer 2016, pp. 101-116.
- [56] S. Dixon-Fyle, K. Dolan, V. Hunt, and S. Prince, *Diversity Wins, How Inclusion Matters*, McKinsey Co.: online. 2020, p. 56.
- [57] K. Charmaz, *The power of constructivist grounded theory for critical inquiry*. Qualitative inquiry, vol. 23,1, 2017, pp. 34-45.
- [58] V. Timonen, G. Foley, and C. Conlon, *Challenges when using grounded theory: A pragmatic introduction to doing GT research*. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, vol. 17,1, 2018, pp. 1-17.
- [59] C. Oliver, *Critical realist grounded theory: A new approach for social work research*. British Journal of Social Work, vol. 42,2, 2012, pp. 371-387.
- [60] D. G. Cope, *Methods and meanings: credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research*. Oncology nursing forum, vol. 41,1, 2014, pp. 89-91.
- [61] S. Kempster and K. Parry, *Critical realism and grounded theory, in Studying organizations using critical realism: A practical guide*, P.K.



- Edwards, J. O'Mahoney, and S. Vincent, Editors, Oxford University Press: Oxford 2015, pp. 86-108.
- [62] S. Kempster and K. W. Parry, *Grounded theory and leadership research: A critical realist perspective*. The leadership quarterly, vol. 22,1, 2011, pp. 106-120.
- [63] E. Dowers, C. White, K. Cook, and J. Kingsley, *Trans, gender diverse and non-binary adult experiences of social support: A systematic quantitative literature review*. International Journal of Transgender Health, vol., 2020, pp. 1-16.
- [64] C. McFadden, *Hiring discrimination against transgender job applicants—considerations when designing a study*. International Journal of Manpower, vol. 41,6, 2020, pp. 731-752.
- [65] J. Saldaña, *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. London: Sage. 2015.
- [66] K. Charmaz, *Constructing grounded theory*. 2 ed., Thousand Oaks: SAGE. 2014.
- [67] R. W. Connell and J. W. Messerschmidt, *Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept*. Gender & Society, vol. 19,6, 2005, pp. 829-859.