

**IDENTITY WORK IN RESPONSE TO ABUSIVE SUPERVISION: COGNITIVE
ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES FOR MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE**

MARLEE MERCER

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR
OF PHILOSOPHY

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
YORK UNIVERSITY,
TORONTO, ONTARIO

May 2026

© Marlee Mercer, 2026

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines how cognitive and contextual factors shape individuals' identity work in response to abusive supervision and how these processes influence employee motivation and performance. Drawing on narrative identity theory and identity-based motivation theory, the research adopts a mixed-methods framework to explain variation in how individuals interpret and respond to supervisory mistreatment. Although identity work has received increasing scholarly attention, less is known about how identity processes shape employees' responses to identity-threatening leadership experiences such as abusive supervision.

Study 1 employed a qualitative design using semi-structured interviews with 28 individuals who had experienced abusive supervision. Reflexive thematic analysis identified distinct identity work profiles shaped by differences in perceived cause of the abuse and perceived preparedness to cope with adversity. These findings clarified how individuals make sense of abusive experiences and amend their identities in response, highlighting contextual factors that contribute to divergent identity work strategies.

Study 2 quantitatively examined these relationships in a sample of 420 participants. Using structural equation modelling, the study tested whether abusive supervision predicted variations in sensemaking and whether these processes were associated with differences in motivation and work performance. Moderation analyses further examined whether causal attributions and perceived preparedness influenced these relationships. Results supported differential pathways linking identity-related processes to motivational and performance outcomes.

These findings advance theoretical understanding of identity work and abusive supervision by demonstrating how personal identity processes shape divergent motivational and

performance outcomes following supervisory mistreatment. This research contributes to organizational theory by integrating identity, motivation, and contextual attribution processes and offers practical implications for designing targeted interventions that support employee resilience following workplace abuse.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Past Definitions of Identity Work	264
Table 2. Dominant Identity Work Theoretical Perspectives	265
Table 3. Fischer et al.'s (2021) Moderating Factors in the Relationship Between Abusive Supervision and Performance	266
Table 4. Demographics of Participants in the Qualitative Study	278
Table 5. Categorizations of Groups in the Qualitative Study	281
Table 6. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample	296
Table 7. Descriptive Statistics	298
Table 8. Correlations	299
Table 9. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model Fit	300
Table 10. CFA Loadings and Reliability/Validity Indicators for Study Measures	301
Table 11. Descriptive Statistics, Interfactor Correlations, and Convergent Validity Indicators	304
Table 12. Structural Equation Model Fit Indices	306
Table 13. Direct Effects for the Partial Mediation Structural Equation Model	308
Table 14. Indirect Effects of Abusive Supervision on Outcomes Through Sensemaking	310
Table 15. Total Effects of Abusive Supervision on Outcomes	311
Table 16. Descriptive Statistics by Causal Framing Group	312
Table 17. Structural Equation Model Results for Hypothesis 3 (Moderation Test)	313
Table 18. Structural Equation Model Results for Hypothesis 4 (Moderation Test)	315
Table 19. Descriptive Statistics by Preparedness Group (Novices vs. Veterans)	317
Table 20. Structural Equation Model Results for Hypothesis 5 (Sensemaking $\times$ Causal Framing $\times$ Preparedness)	318
Table 21. Conditional Effects of Sensemaking on Goal Motivation at Work by Causal Framing and Preparedness	321

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Proposed Model of Identity Work	269
Figure 2. Tentative Model of the Contexts of Identity Work, Goal Setting, Motivation, and Performance	270
Figure 3. Process Model of Identity Work Following Abusive Supervision: A 2×2 Typology of Perception of Cause and Preparedness	282
Figure 4. Sensemaking Processes of the Four Qualitative Groups (Expansion of the Sensemaking Stage in Figure 3)	283
Figure 5. A Typology of Identity Work Processes Following Abusive Supervision Across Attribution and Preparedness Profiles	284
Figure 6. Differences in Goal Setting and Motivation in the Qualitative Study	285
Figure 7. Conceptual Model	321
Figure 8. Structural Equation Model Results for the Partial Mediation of Abusive Supervision, Sensemaking, and Outcomes	322
Figure 9. Simple Slopes Plot: Sensemaking x Causal Framing of Goal Motivation at Work ...	323
Figure 10. Three Way Interaction of Sensemaking x Preparedness	324
Figure 11. Preparedness Group Difference in Sensemaking	325
Figure 12. Additive Effects of Sensemaking and Preparedness on Motivation, Goals, and Performance	326

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
LIST OF TABLES	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND	1
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS	4
THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS	5
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	6
OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY	7
THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS	9
PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS	10
SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS	13
DEFINITION OF TERMS	15
CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW	19
INTRODUCTION	19
THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT	23
THE PROCESS OF NARRATIVE IDENTITY WORK	28
CURRENT MODELS OF IDENTITY WORK	32
DRIVERS OF IDENTITY WORK	35
CONTEXTUAL FACTORS THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO DIFFERENCES IN IDENTITY WORK	39
IDENTITY WORK IN ORGANIZATIONS	54
EFFECTS OF IDENTITY WORK	59
EFFECTS OF TRAUMA	62
SUMMARY	67
CHAPTER 3 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	70
QUALITATIVE PHASE	70
<i>Overview and Purpose of the Quantitative Phase</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Research Design</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Procedure</i>	<i>72</i>
<i>Data Collection</i>	<i>72</i>
<i>Participant Recruitment</i>	<i>73</i>
<i>Data Analysis Methods</i>	<i>74</i>
TPOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	79
QUANTITATIVE PHASE	81
<i>Overview and Purpose of the Quantitative Phase</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>Research Design</i>	<i>82</i>
<i>Procedure and Data Collection</i>	<i>83</i>
<i>Measures</i>	<i>86</i>
<i>Data Analysis Methods</i>	<i>90</i>
LIMITATIONS	92
CHAPTER 4 - QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS	97
MODEL OF IDENTITY WORK	97

PARTICIPANTS	98
EMERGENCE OF IDENTITY WORK PROFILES	99
OVERVIEW OF THE IDENTITY WORK PROFILES	102
SELF-REFLECTION/SENSEMAKING PROCESS	104
<i>Reflection on Privilege and Power Dynamics</i>	105
<i>Beliefs About Others</i>	109
IDENTITY WORK	116
<i>Restoration Oriented</i>	117
<i>Loss-Oriented</i>	130
MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE	139
<i>Long-Term Emotional Toll</i>	140
<i>Decoupling Personal and Professional Lives</i>	141
<i>Future Directions</i>	143
DISCUSSION	147
<i>Four Profiles</i>	148
<i>Motivation and Performance</i>	155
<i>Link to the Quantitative Portion of the Research</i>	156
SUMMARY	157
CHAPTER 5 – QUANTITATIVE HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT	159
CHAPTER OVERVIEW	159
CONCEPTUAL MODEL	160
HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT	160
<i>Abusive Supervision, Sensemaking Efforts, and Motivational and Performance Outcomes</i>	160
<i>Moderating Conditions of the Sensemaking–Outcome Relationship</i>	165
<i>Moderating Role of Causal Framing</i>	166
<i>Moderating Role of Preparedness</i>	168
<i>Interactive Effects of Causal Framing and Preparedness</i>	170
CONCLUSION	171
CHAPTER 6 – QUANTITATIVE RESULTS	172
PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS	172
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CORRELATIONS	173
MEASUREMENT MODEL	174
<i>Confirmatory Factor Analysis</i>	174
<i>Structural Model Comparison and Mediation Structure Selection</i>	177
<i>Assessment of Common Method Variance</i>	178
TESTING OF HYPOTHESES	179
<i>Model Specification and Rationale</i>	179
<i>Hypothesis 1 and 2</i>	180
<i>Hypothesis 3</i>	184
<i>Hypothesis 4</i>	187
<i>Hypothesis 5</i>	192
SUMMARY	195
CHAPTER 7 – DISCUSSION	197
SUMMARY	197
<i>Sensemaking as the Core Mechanism Linking Abuse to Outcomes</i>	197
<i>Attributional Framing and Preparedness as Identity Work Orientations</i>	200
<i>Identity Work Profiles as Pathways to Motivation and Performance</i>	206
THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS	211
PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS	215
LIMITATIONS	217

CHAPTER 8 – CONCLUSION	219
REFERENCES	221
APPENDIX A: CONCEPTUAL FIGURES AND TABLE SYNTHESIZED FROM THE LITERATURE ..	256
APPENDIX B: STUDY 1 (QUALITATIVE STUDY) SUPPORTING MATERIALS	263
APPENDIX C: STUDY 2 (QUANTITATIVE STUDY) SUPPORTING MATERIALS	278

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Background

An individual's personal identity can have critical implications for organizations. It is a source of meaning (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003) that encompasses an individual's values, beliefs, and feelings (Funkenstein, 1993). It establishes certain norms that influence behaviour (Akerlof & Kranton, 2010). Adams and Marshall (1996) highlight five frequently noted functions of identity: a structure for self-understanding, meaning and direction through commitments (establishing objectives and values), a feeling of personal control and free will, congruence between different commitments and goals, and a sense of future by enabling recognition of potential.

Despite these essential functions, identity is seldom fixed. Identities are often unstable and vulnerable, imperiled by self-doubt and emotional instability (Gabriel, 1999), and are subject to ongoing negotiation, validation, and contestation by others (Humphreys & Brown, 2002) (Humphreys & Brown, 2002). Further, individuals' self-understandings are multidimensional and dynamic (Ashforth et al., 2008; Brown, 2015; Horton et al., 2014). Thus, individuals continually engage in identity work, the ongoing processes of constructing, maintaining, repairing, and revising a sense of self (Lepisto et al., 2015).

In the workplace, these identity processes become especially salient. Employees navigate an intricate system of social relationships that directly shape personal identity (Deetz, 1994). Because identity is continually negotiated through work roles, norms, and expectations, employees continually engage in identity work to construct, maintain, and protect valued senses of self in organizational settings (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016). Consequently, Tracy and Trethewey (2005) advised scholars to continue to investigate "the shifting, fluid, and potentially

liberatory identity tensions in a world in which people are accustomed to striving for a stable self” (p. 185).

Gap Spotting and Problematization

Despite substantial research on identity work, empirical studies have primarily emphasized social identity while comparatively neglecting how personal identity processes independently shape employees’ work experiences and outcomes (Ozyilmaz & Koc, 2022). Social identity refers to individuals’ self-definitions derived from group membership (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), whereas personal identity captures individuals’ unique attributes and self-conceptions (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Although emerging research has begun to consider personal identity in organizational contexts, for example by examining personality-based dimensions that interact with social identity (Ozyilmaz & Koc, 2022), existing research still inadequately explains how personal identity processes dynamically shape employees’ responses to identity-relevant events. As a result, unanswered questions remain regarding the individual and contextual factors, such as identity centrality, prior experiences of threat, and leadership behaviour, that shape these divergent responses and influence how identity work ultimately translates into workplace behaviours.

Understanding such variation is critical, as identity work affects both external behavioural displays and internal psychological coherence (Ibarra & Petriglieri, 2010). A stable personal identity has been linked to increased engagement, lower burnout (Luyckx et al., 2010), stronger confidence, and improved performance (Shaw & Timmons, 2010). Thus, it is essential to identify the contexts and mechanisms through which individuals engage in adaptive versus maladaptive identity work. This becomes particularly salient in workplace settings characterized by interpersonal mistreatment, where employees’ competence and worth may be directly

challenged (e.g., D'Cruz & Noronha, 2012). Examining identity work under such conditions provides a theoretically rich opportunity to understand how individuals reconstruct the self in response to devaluation.

One underdeveloped mechanism involves cognitive processes, in this dissertation referring to the appraisal and sensemaking mechanisms through which individuals interpret identity-relevant events (Lazarus, 1991; Weick, 1995). Cognitive processes are central to how people integrate self-perceptions and manage evolving identity narratives. For example, Conneely et al. (2020) show that identity continuity can be disrupted when cognitive processes that support self-coherence are impaired, highlighting the central role cognition plays in maintaining a stable sense of self. Yet the ways cognitive processes produce individual differences in identity work across diverse organizational contexts remain insufficiently explored.

Similarly, how distinctive identity work processes relate to employee behaviour has not been systematically investigated. Existing scholarship suggests that identity-relevant motives, such as self-enhancement, self-verification, and self-expansion, meaningfully shape motivation (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016), which in turn has direct implications for performance (Van Iddekinge et al., 2018). Nevertheless, research has not integrated these streams to examine how different identity work profiles may foster divergent motivational pathways and performance outcomes. Building on identity work theory (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; Lepisto et al., 2015), the present research conceptualizes identity work profiles as distinct patterns of cognitive and behavioural strategies individuals employ to interpret and reconstruct their sense of self in response to identity-relevant events. Because these identity processes shape how individuals evaluate goals, effort, and self-worth, they are likely to influence motivation. Given that

motivation is dynamic and goal-directed (Kanfer et al., 2017), exploring how identity work shapes goal setting and goal pursuit could substantially enrich the present understanding of the motivation process at work.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

This research investigates how individuals differentially engage in identity work, and how these distinct approaches relate to differences in motivation and performance. Specifically, it examines identity work profiles that emerge in response to abusive supervision, a workplace stressor that creates identity threat and triggers efforts to make sense of one's self in relation to a demeaning leader.

Identity work is inherently relational (Beech, 2008), involving both self-affirmation and self-questioning (Beech et al., 2016) through a process described as “coming together of inward/internal self-reflection and outward/external engagement - through talk and action” (Watson, 2008, p. 130). While identity work can arise from a wide range of significant life and career events (Bragelman, 2020; Carlone et al., 2014; Creek, 2013; Essers et al., 2013; LaPointe, 2013; Snow & McAdam, 2000), this study focuses specifically on abusive supervision due to its direct assault on an individual's competence, dignity, and sense of self (Liu et al., 2021; Schyns & Schilling, 2013; Tepper, 2000). Such treatment represents an identity threat that triggers self-protective and self-restorative processing (Petriglieri, 2011b; Hogg & Terry, 2000). Abusive supervision is a theoretically meaningful context in which identity threat is salient, and therefore it provides a useful empirical setting to examine identity work processes more broadly.

Accordingly, the current research addresses two main questions: i) What cognitive processes contribute to differences in identity work profiles when individuals face challenging or

abusive leadership? ii) How do distinct identity work profiles in response to abusive supervision relate to variation in employee motivation and performance?

Theoretical Foundations

This research seeks to gain a deeper understanding of how personal identity is created, changed, and rewritten in response to abusive supervision in organizational settings through participants' firsthand accounts. It adds to existing research efforts that aim to theorize identity work in organizations by narrating the self (e.g., Mallet & Wapshott, 2015; Winkler, 2018) by examining identity work under harmful and threatening workplace experiences, rather than primarily the career-transition or development contexts typically applying the narrative identity theory (e.g., Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; McAdams & McLean, 2013). Narrative identity theory provides a powerful lens for understanding how individuals make sense of themselves across past, present, and future (Watson, 2009a) and how interpretations of events shape identity development (Ergün, 2020). However, Booker et al. (2021) note that few studies link changes in identity narratives to meaningful outcomes following negative or disruptive events. This highlights the need for research examining how identity narratives evolve in response to harmful workplace events. Scholars have called for work that investigates how identity work unfolds when identity is threatened (Conroy & O'Leary-Kelly, 2014; Petriglieri, 2011b), how individual differences in cognitive processing contribute to divergent identity work pathways (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; Conneely et al., 2020), and how these pathways relate to organizationally relevant outcomes such as motivation and performance (Winkler, 2018; McLean et al., 2020). By addressing these gaps, this study advances narrative identity research by identifying distinct identity work profiles triggered by abusive supervision and by linking these profiles to differences in employee motivation and behaviour.

Further, Identity-Based Motivation Theory (IBM) will be utilized to examine how identity work relates to motivation and behavioural outcomes, given its focus on how identities are dynamically constructed and how situational cues influence both action-readiness and meaning-making (Oyserman, 2007, 2009; Oyserman et al., 2012). IBM addresses the scarcity of research explicating when and why identities translate into behaviour by demonstrating that motivation depends on how individuals interpret experienced difficulty, whether it is construed as a signal that a goal is important and identity-consistent, or as evidence that success is unlikely or identity-incongruent (Oyserman & Dawson, 2019; Schwarz, 2012). Through the lens of IBM theory, identity-relevant disruptions such as abusive supervision may alter how individuals interpret experienced difficulty and their sense of alignment with valued identities, shaping whether motivation toward work goals strengthens or diminishes.

However, in the context of IBM theory, existing research has primarily examined difficulty in goal-pursuit contexts, such as academic or health behaviours (e.g., Choi & Oyserman, 2024; Elmore et al., 2016), rather than in contexts of identity threat such as abusive supervision. As IBM scholars have noted, the theory has not yet been adequately utilized in the context of situations in which individuals must sustain identity following disruptive or harmful experiences (Oyserman & Dawson, 2021). Hence, the current research advances IBM theory by examining how abusive supervision, as a disruptive workplace event, alters perceptions of identity–goal alignment and interpretations of difficulty, thereby leading employees to either intensify their effort or disengage, with corresponding implications for performance.

Statement of Significance

This research contributes to the research in several ways. First, it aims to establish a foundational understanding of why individuals differentially respond to significant work life

events through their identity work and the behavioural and organizational implications thereof. The qualitative study will outline what cognitive processes lead individuals to differentially respond to abusive supervision through personal identity work. Next, the quantitative study will empirically investigate how different identity work profiles are associated with motivation and performance-related outcomes. Utilizing an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design and incorporating a wider range of lived experiences with identity-threatening workplace events (Nash, 2008) allows for a richer understanding of the causes of individual differences in the identity work process (Caza & Creary, 2016).

Research on psychological closeness suggests that the extent to which others are incorporated into the self-concept influences how their actions are interpreted and experienced as self-relevant (Cialdini et al., 1997). Applied to workplace contexts, greater perceived closeness to a leader may therefore shape how employees interpret and respond to that leader's behaviour. Further, abusive leaders hold power asymmetries that make employees feel replaceable and powerless, heightening their negative impact (Akinyele & Chen, 2024). Thus, a direct leader will likely play a significant role in shaping an individual's identity work. However, the role of followers' identities is not well-defined in abusive supervision–outcome relationships research thus far (Yu et al., 2016).

Overview of Methodology

This approach follows an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), in which qualitative findings are used to develop constructs and hypotheses that are subsequently examined through quantitative testing. First, a qualitative study will draw on Narrative Identity Theory to identify identity-work profiles that emerge following abusive supervision and to examine the contextual factors that contribute to variability in these profiles.

Then, a quantitative study will apply IBM theory to test whether the identified identity-work profiles are associated with differences in motivation and performance outcomes. In doing so, the qualitative phase provides conceptual grounding and profile development, while the quantitative phase empirically tests the relationships generated from the qualitative findings.

The exploratory sequential mixed-methods design involves a qualitative phase of data collection and analysis followed by a quantitative phase (Fetters et al., 2013). This approach is well-suited for the present research given that, although collective-level identity work has received substantial empirical attention, most research on intrapersonal and interpersonal identity work remains largely conceptual (Epitropaki et al., 2017). Moreover, the impact of leadership behaviour is complex and multifaceted, and scholars have recommended mixed-methods designs to capture these dynamics more comprehensively (Mumford, 2011). Despite this, studies examining leadership behaviour have predominantly relied on quantitative methods (Kim et al., 2019), which provide valuable summative insights but often overlook rich temporal and process-oriented information (Dinh et al., 2014).

A mixed-methods design expands the scope of investigation across phases and levels of analysis (Greene et al., 1989; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). By integrating qualitative and quantitative components, the study can simultaneously address exploratory and confirmatory questions (Byrne & Humble, 2007). Importantly, mixed methods leverage the complementary strengths of each approach while offsetting their limitations (Greene et al., 1989). In this research, merging qualitative narrative accounts with quantitative model testing will offer deeper insight into how individuals make sense of abusive supervision, how contextual variation shapes their identity work, and how these differences translate into distinct motivational and performance outcomes.

Theoretical Implications

The current research advances the theory of personal identity work in the workplace. Brown (2020) described identities in the organizational field as “nascent, emergent, and pluri-paradigmatic” (p. 22). Similarly, Caza et al. (2018) argue that identity work scholarship is theoretically, terminologically, and empirically fragmented, calling for stronger integration across occupational and organizational contexts. Further, current empirical findings on identity are less generalizable and can seldom be applied directly to work settings (Lepisto et al., 2015). Westen and Graça (2024) note that research on identity work pays insufficient attention to identity tensions faced by underrepresented groups. Nevertheless, identity remains integral in organizations, with significant implications for behaviour and decision-making, as well as individuals’ capacity to develop and maintain stable workplace relationships (Oliver, 2015).

Domain specificity, such as one’s identity within an organization, is an important context to consider, given that identity centrality (Sellers et al., 1998) suggests not all dimensions of identity contribute equally to psychosocial and health outcomes (Meca et al., 2015; Brittian et al., 2013). Identity processes tied to one’s career exert a stronger influence on psychosocial adjustment than broader, global identity considerations (Vosylis et al., 2018). More recently, Mumtaz (2024) emphasizes that identity centrality plays a critical role in shaping both adaptive and maladaptive psychosocial trajectories at work, demonstrating that threats to highly central work identities can lead to detrimental outcomes. This underscores the importance of considering identity-specific mechanisms when examining employee experiences and organizational consequences.

This research has significant implications for identity exploration overall as well. Abusive supervision, like other life events, can be considered a turning point or self-defining

memory (McLean et al., 2007), or otherwise a “fork in the road” which changes an individual’s life course and can have significant implications for individual’s life choices (Jun & Kyle, 2011). Establishing or strengthening an identity helps individuals create a “roadmap” to understand which choices are aligned with an individual’s apparent “true self” (Waterman & Schwartz, 2013). However, while identity scholarship has long emphasized that identity synthesis guides individuals toward choices aligned with a coherent sense of self (Schwartz et al., 2005; Waterman & Schwartz, 2013), the literature provides relatively little understanding of how identity is actively reconstructed in response to work-based threats (Obling, 2022). Therefore, this upcoming study offers broader implications for advancing identity work research by highlighting identity work as the mechanism through which individuals navigate and transform their sense of self following negative organizational experiences, leading to divergent outcomes.

Practical Implications

This research offers significant practical implications for both human resource strategy and leadership practice. Identity work is not merely an internal, individual process, but is continually shaped by contextual forces such as leadership behaviour, HR systems, and organizational culture (Brown, 2015; Petriglieri, 2011a). When leaders and HR practices enable employees to sustain a valued sense of who they are, such as through autonomy-supportive performance systems, inclusive job design, and emotionally supportive communication, identity work can function as a motivational resource, as individuals are motivated to maintain identities that satisfy core psychological needs (Vignoles et al., 2006; Deci et al., 2017) that can lead to greater work engagement, performance, and retention (Ibrahim et al., 2021; Walsh & Gordon, 2008). However, identity work can also reflect attempts to cope with identity threats introduced by leadership behaviours or organizational changes (Petriglieri, 2011b; Petriglieri et al., 2018).

Abusive supervision, stigmatizing work practices, and inconsistent communication can trigger defensive identity work that protects the self but weakens collaboration, trust, and performance (Ashforth & Kreiner, 2014; Järventie-Thesleff & Tienari, 2016). This highlights identity work as a key mechanism that explains how leadership and HR decisions shape employee well-being and drive organizational outcomes. Rather than focusing solely on the practices organizations adopt, leaders must attend to how employees interpret those practices and whether they affirm or disrupt core identities.

Importantly, this perspective recognizes that identity work is individualized. Employees do not experience or respond to the same practices in the same way. Their interpretations depend on existing identities, personal resources, and the meaning they assign to organizational events (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Miscenko & Day, 2016). As a result, the same leadership action or HR initiative may promote engagement and commitment for some employees while provoking withdrawal or resistance in others. By identifying how different employees make sense of identity threats and engage in identity work, this research provides organizations with actionable insights into designing leadership practices and HR systems that prevent harm while also unlocking diverse strengths across their workforce. This variability is particularly evident in the context of abusive supervision.

Not all employees react similarly to abusive supervision (Decoster et al., 2013). The “ability of (some) adults in otherwise normal circumstances who are exposed to an isolated and potentially highly disruptive event... [to] maintain relatively stable, healthy levels of psychological and physical functioning” reflects resilience (Bonanno, 2004, p. 20). In fact, only 33% of the variance in abusive supervision scores in previous research can be attributed to supervisors’ actual behaviour, while differences in subordinates’ perceptions and measurement

error account for the remaining 67% (Wang et al., 2019). These findings demonstrate substantial variability in how abusive supervision is perceived and experienced across individuals, shaped by personal characteristics and contextual factors. Understanding the mechanisms through which identity work produces these varied responses is therefore essential. Doing so has important implications for supporting employees' long-term well-being and career success, even when they experience harmful and unjust leadership.

Identity work is also central to the motivational consequences of workplace experiences. Motivation is widely acknowledged as a key driver of performance (Van Iddekinge et al., 2018) and has implications for knowledge sharing (Nguyen et al., 2019), organizational citizenship behaviour (Widarko & Anwarodin, 2022), persistence and well-being (Howard et al., 2021), and job satisfaction (Homberg et al., 2015). Yet motivation research has only recently begun to acknowledge that work experiences support or threaten motivation depending on whether they sustain or undermine identity (Deci et al., 2017; Miscenko & Day, 2016). The current research advances motivation scholarship by examining how personal identity work shapes motivation, particularly under conditions of abusive supervision where identity threats are heightened. This identity-motivation linkage helps explain why employees exposed to similar supervisory behaviour can exhibit vastly different performance outcomes. Understanding these dynamics allows organizations to design motivational systems and relational practices that reinforce employees' valued identities, especially during difficult leader-employee interactions.

Finally, this perspective suggests that organizations have a role not only in preventing identity threats but also in actively supporting identity reconstruction and development. Employees make sense of their past, present, and future selves through narrative processes, or emplotment, which help them set goals and define meaningful action (Polkinghorne, 1991;

Ricoeur, 1992; Dauenhauer, 1998). Through culture, language, and tailored development practices, organizations can help employees integrate challenging experiences into a coherent and empowering identity narrative that drives adaptive work motivation and performance. Past research indicates that organizations can successfully support employees through identity work interventions (Aaltio & Wang, 2015), providing a promising avenue for leadership development and HR design. By understanding employees' identity work processes, organizations can craft environments and practices that foster meaningful motivation and long-term performance for both individuals and the organization.

Social Implications

The current research examines how abusive supervision disrupts employees' identity work, given that abusive treatment represents a clear injustice to subordinates (Zellars et al., 2002). Extensive evidence highlights the harmful consequences of abusive supervision, including negative attitudes, impaired well-being, and reduced life satisfaction (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; Tepper, 2000). Abusive leaders can create hostile and psychologically threatening environments (Tepper, 2000), undermine employees' confidence and self-esteem (Tepper, 2007), and use intimidation and manipulation to suppress employee voice (Lam & Xu, 2019). Beyond workplace performance outcomes, such experiences may erode individuals' broader sense of agency, belonging, and trust in authority, with potential spillover effects into family life, community engagement, and societal norms surrounding power and leadership. By examining identity as a central mechanism, this research contributes to understanding how sustained exposure to unjust treatment at work may shape not only organizational behaviour but also broader patterns of social well-being and institutional trust.

While abusive supervision often leads to negative consequences, some individuals show adaptive or even constructive responses. Research on post-traumatic growth has found that trauma can, in certain circumstances, lead to positive effects on identity outcomes. Maitlis (2009), for example, discovered that musicians who experienced career-ending injuries developed new, fulfilling identities, demonstrating growth rather than decline. Similarly, Vogel and Bolino (2020) proposed that employees who experience abusive supervision may emerge more confident, take on new roles, and model more supportive leadership behaviours. Yet it remains unclear why some individuals challenge negative identities imposed by abuse while others internalize them (Vough et al., 2020). Distinguishing these responses is critical not only for understanding identity processes following harmful leadership but also for recognizing how patterns of authority and mistreatment may become normalized within broader social systems. By clarifying these mechanisms, this research contributes to conversations about the social consequences of unjust power, including how exposure to abusive treatment may shape individuals' sense of agency, trust in institutions, and expectations of leadership beyond the workplace. Understanding when individuals internalize harm versus resist and reconstruct their identities has implications for societal well-being, as it speaks to how communities reproduce or challenge inequitable power structures.

Finally, because individuals' identities are also present outside of the workplace, identity disruptions caused by abusive supervision may have implications for individuals' personal lives and impact how they perceive themselves within their families and close relationships. A damaged identity may reduce emotional presence, relational engagement, and motivation to invest in family roles, consistent with research that highlights that workplace strain and identity disruption can spill over into family functioning (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Conversely,

adaptive identity work may foster strengthened relational functioning, consistent with research suggesting that constructive meaning-making following adversity can deepen interpersonal relationships (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). Thus, workplace injustice may have ripple effects that influence not only organizational outcomes but also the quality of family and community life.

Definition of Terms

Given the significant variations in the definitions assigned to crucial terms within the literature, it is necessary to establish clear descriptions for several concepts.

Personal identity: Personal identity refers to the aspects of the self that distinguish one individual from others and provide a sense of uniqueness (Ashmore et al., 2004). It represents a “sense of self built up over time as the person embarks on and pursues projects or goals” (Hewitt, 1997, p. 93). Personal identity also reflects an inner sense of sameness and continuity of character across time and situations (Erikson, 1959). Personal identity constitutes the individual answer to the question “Who am I?” and may be formed implicitly or through explicit, deliberate meaning-making (Vignoles et al., 2006). It exists on a continuum ranging from identity synthesis, where individuals successfully integrate different aspects of the self, to identity confusion, where this integration is disrupted or incomplete (Schwartz, 2001; Schwartz et al., 2025).

Identity work: Many definitions of identity work can be found in the literature, some of which are identified in Table 1 and can be found in Appendix A. For this research, the most commonly utilized definition in the literature is used, namely, the definition by Svenningsson and Alvesson (2003), which is “...people being engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness.” (p. 1165). This definition is employed as it provides a versatile

conceptualization that can be applied to diverse contexts, and its significant influence has contributed to shaping the field of identity work research.

 Insert Table 1 about here

Abusive supervision: The current research defines abusive supervision as “subordinates’ subjective assessments of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviours, excluding physical contact” (Tepper, 2000, p. 178).

Sensemaking: Sensemaking refers to the process by which individuals interpret and construct meaning from uncertain or disruptive events (Weick, 1995). It involves noticing cues, selecting relevant information, and creating explanations that guide action (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014). Sensemaking is grounded in identity, as individuals draw on who they are and who they want to be when making meaning of situations (Weick et al., 2005). Through this process, people transform uncertainty into understanding to respond in ways that are coherent and purposeful (Sandberg & Tsoukas, 2020).

Motivation: Motivation refers to the internal processes that energize, direct, and sustain behaviour toward the achievement of valued goals (Pinder, 2014). It reflects both the degree of effort and commitment individuals apply in pursuing their work and personal goals (Greenaway et al., 2015) as well as the reasons underlying that effort, ranging from internalized interest and personal importance to externally driven pressures or rewards (Tremblay et al., 2009). Motivation is therefore a multidimensional construct capturing how intensely individuals strive toward goals and why they choose to invest effort, making it a critical determinant of performance and well-being at work.

Performance: Performance refers to employee behaviours and outcomes that contribute to organizational goals. It encompasses *work effort*, which is the intensity, persistence, and energy employees apply in performing their tasks, and *work quality*, meaning the effectiveness, accuracy, and standard of the completed work (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010).

Dissertation Overview

This dissertation is organized into seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the research problem, outlines the theoretical foundations, and presents the statement of purpose and research questions. It also discusses the significance of the study, its theoretical, practical, and social implications, and defines key terms used throughout the dissertation.

Chapter 2 includes a literature review, beginning with the theoretical development of identity work and narrative identity processes. It examines current models and drivers of identity work, contextual factors that shape variability in identity responses, and identity work within organizational settings. The chapter also reviews literature on abusive supervision, the effects of trauma, and the consequences of identity work, culminating in a synthesis of the theoretical gaps addressed by the present research.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology, describing the exploratory sequential mixed-methods design. The qualitative study is detailed first, including research design, data collection, and analytic procedures. Next, the quantitative study is discussed, including research design, measures, data analysis strategies, and methodological limitations.

Chapter 4 presents the qualitative findings. It introduces the emergent model of identity work, describes participant characteristics, and outlines the identified identity work profiles. The chapter examines sensemaking processes, identity work orientations, and associated motivational

and performance implications, and concludes with a discussion linking the qualitative findings to the quantitative phase.

Chapter 5 develops the quantitative hypotheses and presents the conceptual model derived from the qualitative findings. It outlines the proposed relationships among abusive supervision, sensemaking, attributional framing, preparedness, and motivational and performance outcomes.

Chapter 6 reports the quantitative results, including measurement validation, structural model testing, and hypothesis evaluation.

Finally, Chapter 7 includes the discussion, highlights theoretical and practical contributions, notes limitations, and proposes directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

As Patrick Rothfuss (2010), author of *The Name of the Wind*, noted, "... everyone tells a story about themselves inside their own head. Always. All the time. That story makes you what you are. We build ourselves out of that story" (p. 657). Rothfuss was referring to personal identity. The conception of individual identity derives from psychology and psychoanalysis and has long been used to explain how individuals create a self-image or mental model of themselves (Erikson, 1968). Owens et al. (2010) similarly defined personal identity as "a unique individual with self-descriptions drawn from one's own biography and singular constellation of experiences" (p. 479). However, there remains uncertainty in pinpointing what is encompassed within an individual's personal identity and why individuals differentially internalize particular identities. Current theories do not fully explain why specific individuals might internalize a personal identity while others do not (DeRue et al., 2009).

Research on identity has distinguished personal identity from social identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Personal identity encapsulates an individual's unique attributes, whereas social identity reflects group membership and the display of shared team attributes (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Additional scholarship differentiates three foci of self with discrete motivations and foundations of self-worth: individualized self-identity, emphasizing personal traits; relational self-identity, grounded in close relationships (Brewer & Gardner, 1996); and collective social identity based in membership in broader collectives and social categories (Brickson, 2013). For the purposes of the current research, personal identity work is specifically explored.

Debates persist regarding whether individual identities are unified or fragmented, stable or fluid, and motivated primarily by positive meaning-making or defensive functions (Brown,

2015). Increasingly, identity is understood as malleable and continuously shaped through individuals' informational and communicative efforts (Lepisto et al., 2015). The stance of the current research aligns with this position: identity is not static but a continuing process.

At some point, individuals encounter incursions into their desired identities (Knights & Clarke, 2014) and must respond by preserving, defending, revising, or reconstructing their sense of self (Petriglieri, 2011b). These active responses constitute identity work, defined as individuals' efforts to construct, maintain, repair, or strengthen their identities (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). Identity work takes a process perspective: it is concerned with "doing" rather than merely "being" (Pratt, 2012).

Although sometimes used interchangeably with identity construction (Pratt, 2012), identity work and identity construction differ. Identity work is typically triggered by threats to coherence and distinctiveness and represents an immediate response to disruption (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016). Identity construction encompasses broader motives and longer-term developmental processes across the life span (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016). The current research focuses specifically on the immediate identity work that emerges in response to abusive supervision as individuals seek to restore coherence.

Identity work occurs in pursuit of self-continuity and wholeness (Brown, 2015) and is shaped by both internal reflections and external social experiences (Watson, 2009a). As identity is situated, individuals adopt and reinforce identities through their interactions with others (Stone, 1962). In contemporary organizations, work has become a primary site of identity expression and meaning making (Petriglieri, 2020). Relational experiences with supervisors shape how employees define themselves in relation to their work context, influencing their

identification and, in turn, norm-consistent and discretionary workplace behaviours (Götz et al., 2020).

Abusive supervision, defined as sustained displays of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviour toward subordinates (Tepper, 2000), is one such threat. Goffman (1959) noted that organizations not only demand certain behaviours from members but also impose expectations about who individuals should be. Abusive supervision enforces these messages punitively, shaping a negative self-identity among those subject to mistreatment (Tedeschi, 2001). It undermines individuals' self-concept (Aquino & Douglas, 2003) and can lead to experiences of dehumanization and self-objectification (Sainz & Baldissiri, 2021). Yet the role of identity work in shaping how employees respond to abusive supervision remains underexplored. Moreover, because a core indicator of leadership effectiveness is the ability to motivate followers (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007), examining identity work in this context is imperative for understanding how abusive supervision influences downstream outcomes such as motivation and performance. Despite increasing recognition that identity is dynamic and requires continuous effort, research has only recently begun to examine how identity work unfolds amidst ongoing interpersonal challenges at work (Obodaru, 2017). Leader behaviour represents one of the most powerful sources of identity threat because supervisors influence employees' sense of value, competence, and future potential (Petriglieri, 2020; Liu et al., 2023). Yet identity work scholarship has struggled to explain why the same disruptive experience leads some individuals to engage in protective coping while others use it to strengthen or redefine their sense of self (Caza et al., 2018; Miscenko & Day, 2016). Understanding identity work as a personalized response to abusive supervision is therefore essential for explaining its implications for motivation and performance.

Accordingly, this research seeks to address two key questions: (1) what cognitive processes contribute to differences in identity work profiles following abusive supervision, and (2) how these distinct identity work profiles relate to variation in employee motivation and performance. The literature reviewed below builds toward these questions by clarifying how identity disruption occurs and how identity processes lead to differences in motivational and behavioural outcomes.

To organize the literature reviewed below, Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework guiding this dissertation. The framework integrates identity-threatening circumstances, identity drivers, contextual influences, forms of identity work, and identity work outcomes. Each section of the literature review develops elements of this framework.

 Insert Figure 1 about here

Figure 1 conceptualizes identity work as a process initiated by identity-threatening circumstances that activate identity motives/drivers. These drivers are shaped by contextual conditions that influence how abuse is interpreted and what forms of identity work are viable. Identity work is then expressed through cognitive, discursive, physical, and behavioural processes that take different functional forms, resulting in divergent outcomes ranging from restored coherence to weakened identity, disengagement, or post-traumatic growth. Study 1 examines the cognitive processes that differentiate movement through the threat–driver–process components (RQ1), and Study 2 tests how the resulting identity work profiles relate to motivation and performance outcomes (RQ2).

Theoretical Development

This dissertation draws on two complementary theoretical foundations to explain the processes and outcomes of identity work following abusive supervision: narrative identity theory and IBM theory. This section develops the theoretical logic underlying the central pathway in Figure 1, explaining how abusive supervision disrupts identity narratives and how reconstructed identities shape motivation and performance. Narrative identity theory provides the foundation for understanding how individuals make meaning of disruptive leader behaviour and reconstruct their identities over time, which informs both the qualitative exploration in Study 1 and the conceptualization of identity work in Study 2. To justify this choice, it is necessary to briefly situate narrative identity theory within the landscape of identity work theories and clarify why alternative perspectives are insufficient for explaining identity work following abusive supervision. To explain how reconstructed identities translate into motivation and performance outcomes, Study 2 also draws on IBM theory. Before outlining IBM, it is valuable to contrast it with traditional motivation frameworks. Together, these perspectives allow for an integrated explanation of identity work as both a meaning-making process and a motivational mechanism.

In combination, these frameworks form a sequential explanatory model. Narrative identity theory clarifies how individuals interpret and reconstruct identity following abusive supervision (RQ1), while IBM theory explains how these reconstructed identities shape action-readiness, effort, and performance outcomes (RQ2). Thus, identity work connects cognitive sensemaking to motivational and performance-related consequences.

Study 1: Narrative Identity Theory. This section first situates narrative identity theory within broader identity work perspectives before explaining why it is suited to examining identity work following abusive supervision. To situate narrative identity theory within identity

work research overall, Table 2 summarizes the leading theoretical perspectives identified by Caza et al. (2018), along with their core motivations and processes. The motivations and processes are also listed. Meanwhile, alternative research identified role theory, social identity theory, psychodynamic theory, dramaturgical/symbolic theory, critical theory, and narrative identity theories as the predominant theories. In role theory (Ashforth, 2000), identity is based on the occupation of a role and the expectations of that role (Stets & Burke, 2000). Social identity theory is a theory of intergroup relations and the social self (Hogg et al., 1995). Concerning identity, psychodynamic theory posits that people fight anxieties through unconscious defence mechanisms (Freud, 1936). Critical theory contends that identity work involves how institutions attempt to control individuals, which results in individuals' engagement in identity work (Kärreman & Alvesson, 2004). However, these theories downplay personal identity, personal agency, or both (Brown, 2020; Caza & Creary, 2016). Dramaturgical/symbolic theory studies how individuals enact who they are in social interactions through objective symbols (Callero, 2003); however, this theory is difficult to analyze (Brown, 2020) and has been criticized for being an inadequate and piecemeal theory of society and social interaction (Gronbeck, 1980).

 Insert Table 2 about here

Although these perspectives have advanced identity research in important ways, they place limited emphasis on personal agency and meaning-making following identity disruption (Brown, 2020; Caza et al., 2018). They are less equipped to explain how individuals actively reinterpret their self-concept when it is disrupted by harmful interpersonal dynamics, such as abusive supervision (Tepper, 2000; Petriglieri, 2011b). Because abusive supervision threatens not only workplace roles and group membership but also one's core sense of self (Ashforth &

Schinoff, 2016; Tepper, 2007), a theoretical lens is needed that accounts for how individuals make meaning of disruptive experiences over time and reconstruct a coherent self-narrative (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014). Narrative identity theory offers this unique contribution (Eakin, 2006; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Watson, 2009b).

Building on this foundation, narrative identity theory maintains that identity work occurs through storytelling. Beech et al. (2012) contended that narrative identity work entails story writing. This research focuses mainly on linear dimensions of narrative, meaning that it explores the identity work of an individual as they progress and how they make sense of themselves as a unified and consistent individual through the past, present, and future in different social contexts (Watson, 2009b). Narrative identity is considered a form of self-experience (Eakin, 2006). Experiences are incorporated into one's story to foster a coherent sense of self (Linde, 2001). Through narration, individuals negotiate and re-negotiate their identities, defining who they are and are not compared to significant others (Bamberg, 2009). Identity narratives result from the interaction between internal factors and external impacts and are always "in progress" (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Narrative identity theory aligns with the current research that explores how individuals work on and change their self-story following abusive supervision and dehumanization. By conceptualizing identity work as narrative reconstruction following disruption, narrative identity theory provides the framework to address Research Question 1, which concerns the cognitive processes that differentiate identity work profiles in response to abusive supervision. These reconstructed identity narratives also form the conceptual basis for the sensemaking processes examined in Study 2.

Study 2: Motivation and Performance. To introduce IBM theory, this section first reviews traditional motivation frameworks before outlining IBM's identity-based processes and

their relevance to abusive supervision. Early motivation research in the workplace drew on content theories focused on what motivates individuals. For example, Taylor's Theory of Scientific Management (1911, 1947) framed workers as needing close supervision and task simplification. Maslow (1954) proposed a hierarchy of needs in which motivation increases as progressively higher-level needs are met, and Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory distinguished between motivators (e.g., job interest) that promote satisfaction and hygiene factors (e.g., pay, safety) that prevent dissatisfaction. These foundational approaches emphasized intrinsic job factors but assumed motivation was stable across individuals and contexts.

In contrast, traditional process models of motivation explored how motivation operates. The Hawthorne studies (Mayo, 1933) revealed that social factors such as communication and sense of being valued influenced motivation and performance. Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory proposed that motivation depends on expectations that effort leads to valued outcomes. Although influential, these approaches have been critiqued for limited methodological rigor and insufficient attention to contextual meaning (Killian & Wenning, 2018).

However, these traditional theories primarily address what motivates people without explaining how individuals interpret and respond to workplace experiences that either support or threaten who they are. Because abusive supervision involves personal identity threat and meaning disruption, a theoretical approach is required that explicitly considers identity-driven motivation. IBM theory offers such a lens (Oyserman et al., 2007; Oyserman, 2009).

IBM theory proposes that motivation is shaped by the identities that become salient in a given context, and individuals are motivated to act in ways that are consistent with those identities (Oyserman et al., 2015). The motivational power of any situation depends on how individuals interpret its relevance to who they are, whether they feel capable of acting

congruently with the salient identity, and how they perceive the difficulty of taking action. IBM identifies three dynamic motivational processes: action-readiness, interpretation of difficulty, and dynamic construction of identity (Oyserman, 2009).

Action-readiness refers to the tendency for salient identities to activate behavioural readiness and focus attention on identity-congruent cues (Oyserman et al., 2015). Dynamic construction asserts that although identities are relatively stable, the aspects of identity that matter in a moment depend on situational cues, meaning that identity and behaviour emerge from the immediate context rather than fixed memory (Oyserman et al., 2017). Finally, interpretation of difficulty influences whether effortful action is viewed as a sign of importance when identity-congruent, or as a cue that the behaviour is not “for me” when identity-incongruent (Oyserman et al., 2010).

Although IBM acknowledges identity construction over time, the current research focuses on identity work, defined as the immediate, active efforts individuals use to maintain coherence and meaning following disruptive leader behaviours. This distinction ensures alignment between IBM’s motivational processes and the present focus on coping responses to abusive supervision.

Within IBM, when workplace experiences are interpreted as identity-congruent, effort is meaningful and motivating; however, when experiences threaten identity coherence, effort may feel futile or misaligned with the self. In this study, sensemaking leads to identity work whereby individuals attempt to restore identity coherence and behave in an identity-congruent manner following abusive supervision.

Consistent with prior applications in short-term contexts (e.g., Adelman et al., 2017; Elmore & Oyserman, 2012; Elmore, 2014), IBM theory provides a compelling explanation for

how the immediate context can shape identity salience, meaning-making, motivation, and behavioural outcomes. As individuals navigate identity threats at work, such as those posed by abusive supervision, their motivation and performance will depend on whether they can sustain identity-consistent action despite such challenges.

Therefore, identity-based motivation theory serves as the theoretical foundation for Study 2, explaining how identity disruption leads to differential motivation and performance outcomes across individuals. Alongside narrative identity theory in Study 1, IBM theory enables an integrated explanation of how identity disruption is first interpreted and reconstructed and then translated into differential motivational and behavioural outcomes. Whereas narrative identity theory explains how individuals interpret and reconstruct identity following abusive supervision (RQ1), IBM theory explains how these reconstructed identities translate into variation in motivation and performance outcomes (RQ2). Together, these theories act as the conceptual backbone of Figure 1, which integrates identity-threatening circumstances, identity work processes, and motivational and performance-related outcomes.

The Process of Narrative Identity Work

To address Research Question 1, what cognitive processes differentiate identity work profiles, it is necessary to examine identity work as a narrative meaning-making process. The following section outlines the core mechanisms of narrative identity work relevant to the present research. This section develops the central process component of Figure 1, examining how identity work unfolds once activated by identity-threatening circumstances and shaped by contextual conditions.

Personal identities are the most elementary type of identity and are accumulated through an individual's distinctive biography and experiences (Owens et al., 2010), as well as personal

qualities that provide unique forms of identity expression (Elsbach, 2009). Narrative identities also depend on cultural identity resources, including societal “master narratives,” which simultaneously empower and constrain identity construction (Clarke et al., 2009). Identity work is both personal and social, crafted relationally and co-authored with audiences (Humphreys & Brown, 2002), and impression management is an inherent component of public identity-related work (Schlenker, 2003). Individuals use these attributes and knowledge to create or repair identity narratives, such as creating cohesive pathways linking past and current experiences (Beyer & Hannah, 2002) or repairing a threatened “good worker” identity following workplace bullying (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008). A multitude of scholars note that self-narratives communicate and help establish an individual’s personal identity (e.g., Bruner, 1990; Lave & Wenger, 1991; McAdams, 1996).

A defining feature of narrative identity work is that storytelling does not only describe an experience but actively transforms it. As Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) contend, “narrating the self changes the self” (p. 150). Thus, narrating is not about passively recounting experiences. It is an active process of extracting meaning from everyday events to understand oneself in ways aligned with salient identity motives (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016). Narratives amalgamate fragmented experiences into coherence and promote sensemaking amid ambiguity (Boje, 2001; Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001). When individuals integrate master narratives, their identities are preserved; however, when they contest such narratives, they begin to craft alternate pathways for self-definition (McLean et al., 2019). Thus, narratives highlight desired storylines and buffer past mistakes, often through “before-and-after” plots (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010, p. 141). Narrative identity work can also serve motives of identity repair during turning-point events (Haikola, 2025).

A second core mechanism of narrative identity work is its temporal structure. Narrative identities are perpetually in-process (Bruner, 1991) and often act as “transition bridges” (Ashforth, 2000). For example, Felix (2023) found that new CEOs actively engaged in storytelling to revise their identity narratives when transitioning into leadership roles. Shipp and Jansen (2011) assert that narratives often start “in the middle,” as individuals make sense of the present by reflecting on the past and imagining possible futures (p. 77). Therefore, narratives are simultaneously retrospective and prospective, constructed to achieve self-continuity, self-expression, self-verification, and self-enhancement. Because of their future-focused nature, narratives are closely tied to possible selves, which shape how individuals imagine future identity trajectories (McLean & Pasupathi, 2012). Desired selves often inspire action, as do the identity narratives that shape them (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003).

In addition to temporal reconstruction, narrative identity work is also relational and power laden. Identity work entails the negotiation of identities across multiple levels of interaction (Kane, 2010). A persistent challenge lies in maintaining an internal sense of authenticity while also gaining external approval from valued others (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004). For Giddens (1991), identity work is a biographical project through which individuals integrate their beliefs with those of significant others (Liu & Kozinets, 2022). Challenges arise in the case of “stigma identity work,” whereby individuals strive to repair and protect their self-image (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008), although such repair can sometimes enable counter-narratives that reinforce normalcy, choice, and autonomy (Liu & Kozinets, 2022). These efforts often represent quests for meaningfulness (Ricoeur, 1991), yet may falter or fail (Knights & Clarke, 2014), particularly when harmful narratives imposed by others contaminate redemptive identity plots (McAdams & McLean, 2013).

Importantly, narrative identity work can translate into behavioural consequences. Self-reflection through narration shapes behaviour by reinforcing identity-consistent actions (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016). McAdams's (2013) developmental model suggests that individuals first enact roles and behavioural patterns before these experiences are progressively integrated into more agentic and narrative forms of identity. Personal identity is constructed through narrative and related patterns of self-presentation that guide how individuals act. However, when these narratives are threatened, individuals may engage in identity repair but also risk profound identity disruption, leading to changed behavioural responses like withdrawal, accommodation, or silence (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008). In abusive contexts, these processes may be further distorted, as individuals' environments are reshaped, altering perceptions of acceptable behaviour and influencing who they believe themselves to be within that context (Rostron, 2022).

However, narrative identity work is not always restorative, especially when there are power asymmetries such as abusive supervision. For example, Croft et al. (2015) found that despite identity work facilitating some interpersonal conflict resolution, nurse managers remained emotionally impacted by the loss of a professional identity. Further, Kira and Balkin (2014) propose a curvilinear relationship between identity alignment and well-being, indicating that alignment is only beneficial up to a point. Accordingly, identity work is not inherently restorative; when individuals attempt to repair identities amid harmful power dynamics, such as abusive supervision, efforts may become exhausting, conflictual, and even damaging rather than resilience-building. For instance, Lind et al. (2024) demonstrated that agency and communion themes in narrative identity predict long-term well-being and depression trajectories, underscoring the health implications of narrative identity work.

Collectively, these mechanisms clarify how identity work unfolds as a cognitive and narrative process following identity threat. By highlighting temporal reconstruction, relational negotiation, and meaning-making under power asymmetries, this section helps explain what cognitive processes differentiate identity work profiles in response to abusive supervision. Specifically, it suggests that differences in how individuals narrate, interpret, and integrate disruptive events may give rise to distinct identity work pathways. Because narratives shape future-oriented possible selves and interpretations of effort and difficulty, differences in narrative identity work are likely to carry forward into motivational processes and behavioural outcomes. Thus, the cognitive mechanisms outlined here provide the foundation for understanding both how identity work differs within individuals and the subsequent consequences.

Current Models of Identity Work

To further clarify the theoretical gap underlying Research Question 1, the current section examines how existing models conceptualize identity work and where they fall short in explaining patterned responses to identity threat. This section corresponds to the central “Identity Work Processes” component of Figure 1. Although prior research has examined the process of identity work, the broader scholarship remains conceptually fragmented. Existing models differentiate identity work by form, strategy, or function, yet few offer an integrated explanation of how identity work unfolds following organization-based identity threats. As Brown (2015) observes, identity work research varies widely in methodology, theoretical framing, and findings, making synthesis difficult. Nonetheless, even fragmented “local theories” contain meaningful adjacencies worthy of integration (Cushman, 1990, p. 599). Accordingly, the following section reviews existing models of personal identity work to clarify their contributions, limitations, and points of convergence.

One stream of research categorizes identity work by its functional purpose, while another focuses on how identity work is enacted. Early conceptualizations distinguished between identity work based on its function. Examples include affirming, accepting, resisting, limiting, sensemaking, and reconciling identities (Brown, 2015). Additional research highlights the form identity work takes. Cognitive identity work involves mentally interpreting and evaluating one's identity (Killian & Johnson, 2006). Discursive identity work refers to verbal expression through storytelling, tone, and language (Allen, 2005). Physical identity work relies on bodily presentation (Courpasson & Monties, 2017) and impression-managing objects (Elsbach, 2009). Behavioural identity work includes actions that alter or maintain one's identity (Ashforth et al., 2007). Lepisto et al. (2015) integrated these processes into identity adding, retaining, and subtracting, enhancing, stabilizing, or removing identity elements.

Beyond function and form, a third stream highlights strategic tactics individuals utilize when trying to engage in identity-relevant interactions. Koerner (2014) proposed four forms of courage-based identity work: (1) endurance, maintaining identity despite constraints, (2) reaction, repairing identity after error or threat, (3) opposition, strengthening identity through resistance, and (4) creation, developing new identities through risk-taking. Knapp et al. (2013) similarly described managing encounters, selective interactions, recategorization, disassociation, and evoking consideration, together enabling social boundary management. Alvesson and Willmott (2002) added homogenizing, differentiating, and personalizing as positioning strategies that regulate similarity and uniqueness in organizations.

A fourth perspective looks at the defensive or adaptive responses identity threats elicit. Petriglieri (2011b) proposed six identity threat responses: derogation, concealment, importance change, meaning change, identity deletion, and positive distinctiveness. More recently, Irehill et

al. (2024) showed that young managers experiencing age-based legitimacy threats adopt tailored identity work practices to claim authority.

In addition to these structural and strategic approaches, narrative scholars focus on how identity work unfolds through storytelling processes. Identity work is also narrative in nature, especially during role transitions. Felix (2023) introduced “storytelling identity work,” demonstrating how leaders construct and refine provisional narratives and evaluate their authenticity and acceptance among audiences. Identity talk, defined by Snow and Anderson (1987), further illustrates narrative tactics including distancing, embracement, and fictive storytelling.

Finally, emerging research highlights that identity work is context-sensitive, varying across relational and institutional environments. For instance, Tyler and Abetz (2019) described three parental identity work strategies (authenticity–acceptance, expectations–support, and contentment–improvement) in LGBTQ family contexts. Knox et al. (2021) found entrepreneurs engage in reflective identity work aligning evolving roles with self-conception amid uncertainty. Together, these studies illustrate how identity work varies based on situational affordances and constraints. However, while these perspectives identify diverse forms and tactics of identity work, they provide limited explanation for why individuals exposed to similar identity threats adopt systematically different identity work responses.

Although valuable, existing research often lacks precision in specifying how and why identity work strategies differ across contexts (Brown & Toyoki, 2013). Much of the field still categorizes identity work as loosely connected processes rather than differentiated forms with distinct triggers or consequences. As such, no coherent model explains how identity work unfolds following organization-based identity threats such as abusive supervision, presenting a

critical theoretical gap this research seeks to address. This fragmentation highlights the need to understand the cognitive processes that generate distinctive and patterned identity work profiles. Addressing this gap is central to Research Question 1, which seeks to identify the cognitive processes that differentiate identity work responses following abusive supervision. Moreover, clarifying these profiles lays the groundwork for examining how distinct identity work pathways relate to variation in employee motivation and performance (Research Question 2). Figure 1 responds to this fragmentation by integrating these different conceptualizations of identity work into a process model that explains how identity-threatening experiences give rise to differentiated identity work profiles and their subsequent motivational consequences.

Drivers of Identity Work

Having established the need for a process model of identity work, this section elaborates the “Drivers of Identity Work” component of Figure 1, clarifying why identity work is activated following identity-threatening circumstances such as abusive supervision. While the previous section highlighted limitations in existing models of identity work, the present section examines the motivational and cognitive forces that activate identity work following identity-threatening circumstances such as abusive supervision. Understanding these drivers is essential for addressing Research Question 1, as variation in identity work profiles may stem from differences in how individuals experience identity motives, threat intensity, and perceived discrepancies in self-understanding.

Identity work is not continuously engaged, but instead is triggered when individuals experience tension, disruption, or threat to a valued sense of self. The following section reviews motivational and contextual drivers that prompt individuals to engage in identity work. A narrative self-interpretation acts as a mediator between two opposite sides of the identity: the

idem, meaning an objective criterion of identification that is generally permanent, and the ipse, meaning the sense of identity that is temporally constructed with the passing of time and experience (Ricoeur, 1991). When too much tension grows between idem and ipse identities, identity work occurs as internal self-reflection and external influences challenge the prevailing unified life story. This tension illustrates how identity work is often activated by internal discrepancies in self-understanding.

One major category of drivers concerns the pursuit of positive identity meaning. Lepisto et al.'s (2015) review found several main motives for individuals engaging in identity work: distinctiveness, authenticity, continuity, belonging, self-esteem, self-efficacy, coherence, and meaning. Gupta et al. (2023) synthesized evidence suggesting that individuals are motivated to engage in identity work for empowerment, growth and transformation as well as dealing with exclusion and role-integration. While some research highlighted one motive, identity work often included multiple motives working together or opposingly. The motives were activated depending on the situational strength and contextual change (Lepisto et al., 2015).

A considerable portion of the identity literature is based on a belief that individuals engage in identity work to pursue positive meaning (Gecas, 1982). Positive identities include those that are appreciated or beneficial (Dutton et al., 2010) and are related to capability, resilience, and excellence (Kreiner & Sheep, 2009). Thus, individuals with stigmatized identities can reframe their beliefs about the self and protect positive self-meanings (Kreiner et al., 2006a). One study found that young adults negotiated their personal identities when considering traditional gender expectations in contrast to newer outlooks that highlight gender equality (McLean et al., 2017). As another example, Ogbu (2004) found that ethnic minorities aimed to

fight off undesirable identities attributed to them due to their race while also evading “acting White.”

In addition to aspirational motives, identity work is frequently triggered by perceived identity threats, or otherwise “experiences indicating potential harm to the value, meanings, or enactment of an identity” (Petriglieri, 2011, p. 644), which are pervasive in modern society and have garnered scholarly attention across fields such as psychology, management, and political science (e.g., Boyce et al., 2007; Leigh & Melwani, 2022; Lyons et al., 2017; White et al., 2018). Identity threats are considered “ubiquitous,” as most individuals at some point in their life will face a loss of a cherished sense of self (Conroy & O’Leary-Kelly, 2014; Petriglieri, 2011). George et al. (2023) developed a cross-context scale showing threats to identity value, meaning and enactment function as key triggers of identity work across personal, social and work settings. Threats to identity are also linked to precarious dignity, stratified social structures, and neoliberal imperatives to prove oneself (Luckmann & Berger, 1964).

Importantly, identity threats do not operate only at a cognitive level but also conjure emotional reactions that intensify identity work (Winkler, 2018). Numerous studies highlight this contention, for example, in the context of managers feeling role dissatisfaction. Thomas and Linstead (2002) found that feelings of instability, ambiguity, and self-doubt resulted in middle managers re-thinking their identities. Alternate studies found that frustration led to identity work (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003; Sveningsson & Larsson, 2006). General workplace bullying has also been found to be an emotional experience that causes rigorous identity work (D’Cruz & Noronha, 2012). The studies that note emotions associated with the process of identity include dread, apprehension, anguish, consternation, devastation, reservation, and frustration. Therefore, it is typically negative emotions involved in identity work (Winkler, 2018). Moreover, narration

is a powerful means by which individuals explore themselves during periods of uncertainty and conflict (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003).

A final category of drivers concerns major life transitions and structural disruptions. Periods of transition or disruption further intensify identity work needs. Narrative theories are particularly useful for comprehending identity work in the context of transitions or unexpected events. In terms of change, one study discussed American military members and their transition to civilian life. This process entailed narrative identity work to reshape the stories of who they are. In this transition, individuals reorganize narrative characters by establishing I-positions (e.g., 'I as an officer,' 'I as a father,' 'I as a friend') (Grimell, 2017). Identity work is also shaped by relations of power, as individuals controlled by dominant discourses may strive to retain agency to adapt, subvert, and resist these controls (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Fleming & Spicer, 2003). Another study discovered that when women were diagnosed with breast cancer, it stimulated self-identity work as work roles, relationships, and routines were significantly interrupted and changed. These women tried to develop novel stories to reconcile altered self-narratives with their work identity. They aimed to shape future relations and alternate life priorities (Trusson et al., 2021).

As depicted in Figure 1, these drivers suggest that identity work is most likely to be activated when individuals experience identity motives, identity threat, emotional disruption, and power asymmetry, conditions that are often characteristic of abusive supervision. However, individuals may differ in how they interpret and respond to these triggers. Understanding these activation mechanisms is central to explaining the cognitive processes that differentiate identity work profiles following abusive supervision. Moreover, because these drivers vary in emotional intensity and felt controllability, they may shape whether identity work ultimately translates into

divergent motivational and performance outcomes. Importantly, differences in the type and intensity of identity drivers may shape not only whether identity work is activated, but also the form it takes. Thus, variation in drivers provides one mechanism through which distinct identity work profiles may emerge (RQ1).

Contextual Factors That May Contribute to Differences in Identity Work

Building on the preceding discussion of identity work drivers, this section develops the contextual aspect of Figure 1, which identifies the social, relational, and individual conditions that shape how identity work unfolds. Although identity-threatening circumstances and motivational drivers activate identity work, they are embedded within social, relational dynamics and organizational systems, and dependent on individual cognitive-emotional resources. These contextual factors help explain why individuals exposed to similar abusive supervision experiences may engage in different sensemaking pathways and develop distinct identity work profiles (Research Question 1). Furthermore, because these contextual influences shape perceived controllability, agency, and available resources, they may also lead to divergent motivational and performance outcomes (Research Question 2).

Much of the literature treats identity work strategies as uniform responses to specific contexts, despite acknowledgments that important differences likely exist. These acknowledgments, however, are often brief comments or relegated to future research recommendations rather than the main focus of inquiry. For example, Brown (2015) argued that “different peoples, times and contexts will yield different results, which are themselves prone to multiple interpretations” (p. 30), highlighting the diversity of identity work. Similarly, Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) noted that scholars have given insufficient consideration to how individuals construct distinct identities or diverge from socially established pathways. Kreiner et al. (2006a)

likewise suggested that future research should examine heterogeneity in identity work by considering factors such as personality, occupational characteristics, tenure, and age. Despite these calls, systematic investigation into how and why individuals differ in identity work remains underdeveloped.

To clarify these sources of heterogeneity, contextual influences are organized into three domains. First, social identity positions, including gender, race, class, religion, and culture, shape the meanings attached to identity and influence the types of identity threats individuals encounter. Second, relational and organizational contexts, including interpersonal dynamics, occupational structures, and destructive leadership, shape the situational conditions under which identity work is activated. Third, individual cognitive and emotional processes, such as identity resources, attribution styles, and emotion regulation, influence how individuals interpret identity threats and whether they engage in adaptive or maladaptive forms of identity work. These domains collectively illustrate that identity work is not a uniform response to adversity. Instead, it is a dynamic process shaped by the intersection of social position, relational environment, and psychological processing. Each domain is examined below.

Social Identity Positions

The first domain concerns social identity positions, which shape the types of identity threats individuals encounter and the strategies available for navigating them. This domain is examined through identities such as gender, class, race, ethnicity, religion, and culture.

Gender. Gender is one of the most frequently examined social identity positions influencing how identity threats are experienced and managed. Early work by Marcia (1980), based on identity status theory, suggested that although men and women undergo similar identity exploration processes, they often define themselves in different domains. He argued that women

tended to rely more on interpersonal relationships and external validation when forming their identities and that identity development might take longer for women than men. However, these assumptions have been widely debated (Cramer, 2000; Kroger, 1997). Contemporary research nonetheless continues to show that women's identity work is often more relational, contextually embedded, and responsive to social boundaries compared to men's (Ely & Meyerson, 2010; Jordan, 1997). Such differences may stem from gendered career narratives and expectations that shape how individuals understand and negotiate their identities (Ashcraft, 2006; LaPointe, 2013). More recent research continues to demonstrate that women must often undertake more effortful identity work in professional settings due to ongoing gendered evaluation and legitimacy constraints, whereas men's identity work aligns more easily with occupational norms (Ely & Meyerson, 2010; Ibarra et al., 2013).

More recent work also highlights that sexual and gender minorities face distinct identity demands due to stigmatization and the need to manage visibility across different contexts. For example, Colosi et al. (2022) found that LGBTQ+ individuals engage in uniquely complex identity work online, using social media as a safer space to explore and express identities that may not be accepted offline. Similarly, research demonstrates that non-binary and transgender individuals frequently engage in continuous identity negotiation and boundary management due to social misrecognition and shifting external expectations (e.g., McGuire et al., 2019; Trinh & Faulkner, 2023). These patterns illustrate how structural positioning leads to differences in the necessity and intensity of identity work.

Social Class, Race, Ethnicity, Religion, and Culture. Beyond gender, other intersecting social identity positions further shape the necessity and form of identity work. The sociocultural context in which identity work occurs can meaningfully shape both its need and form. Identity

work must be understood relative to broader historical and societal trajectories (Brown, 2022) and represents an ongoing negotiation of the self across positioned contexts (Kitzie, 2019). Culture is central to this process: national and cultural systems socialize individuals into distinct identity scripts and expectations (Srinivas, 2013), yet empirical work unpacking how identity work varies across cultural settings remains sparse (Brown, 2015; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008).

Recent scholarship demonstrates that forms of privilege and marginalization can meaningfully shape identity work processes (Westen & Graça, 2024). Individuals from lower social class backgrounds, for example, may face heightened identity threats in the presence of classed status symbols and habitus (Gray et al., 2018). Research on the plurality of working-class boyhoods further illustrates how young men's pursuit of social mobility leads to an ongoing negotiation of gendered and familial roles (Stahl et al., 2025). These dynamics are frequently compounded by race, ethnicity, and religion, as systemic discrimination produces persistent forms of alienation for people of colour, requiring additional legitimacy labour and identity repair (Affolter, 2014; Wingfield, 2021). Racialized workers may continue to be treated as "perpetual foreigners" (Rivera et al., 2010), prompting repeated identity negotiation in professional settings (Clair et al., 2012; Hatmaker, 2013).

Religious minority identities can also provoke identity tensions when workplace norms reflect dominant cultural expectations. Individuals with visible religious signifiers may engage in identity work to balance authenticity with perceived organizational fit (Hélot et al., 2020). Taken together, this research suggests that culture is not a separate category, but a fundamental context through which social class, racial, ethnic, and religious identities shape both the necessity for identity work, and the strategies individuals employ. Further investigation is needed to

understand how these intersecting cultural positions drive variation in identity work across global work environments.

Relational and Organizational Contexts

While social identity positions shape exposure to threat, relational and organizational contexts determine how those threats occur in day-to-day interactions. The second domain concerns relational and organizational contexts, which shape how identity threats are interpreted and sustained over time.

Interpersonal and Social Context. Research has underexamined the relational nature of identity work, despite theoretical claims that identity is social and co-constructed (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; Petriglieri, 2011). Miscenko and Day (2016) argued that leadership and identity research has paid limited attention to how identities are dynamically shaped through ongoing relationships and situated interactions over time. Similarly, scholars increasingly recognize that contextual social cues and interpersonal evaluations shape identity-related experiences at work, which can trigger identity-relevant coping and self-regulation processes (Hall et al., 2018).

Empirical studies such as Gray et al. (2018) show how relational experiences, like microaggressions faced by first-generation college students, trigger identity threats, yet the identity work processes that follow remain insufficiently understood. Relational differences may also reflect variations in the presence, quality, and history of relationships that shape identity maintenance and change over time. For instance, individuals integrate aspects of close others' experiences into their own narratives (Sims, 2005), and early interactions can leave "deep traces" that inform internal dialogues and future self-interpretations (Wertsch, 1991). More recently, scholars have highlighted how social evaluations led to outcomes such as identity stability, coherence, and change (Davis & Love, 2017; Petriglieri, 2011). Relational resources such as

validation, recognition, and belonging provided by leaders or colleagues also function as identity resources, and their loss can threaten individuals' ability to sustain valued identities (Caza et al., 2018; Petriglieri & Stein, 2012). This research highlights that identity work is a relational process, yet empirical research examining how interpersonal dynamics shape these processes remains limited.

Occupation and Work Settings. Differences in occupation and work settings can shape identity work processes by altering the nature of identity demands, threat exposure, and opportunities for narrative reconstruction. For example, Pratt et al. (2006) found that physicians in life-and-death environments engaged in constrained identity play due to limited autonomy and high professional stakes. Yet the degree to which members of the same occupation share similar identity work strategies remains insufficiently understood. As Brown (2015) noted, we remain “almost wholly ignorant” (p. 31) about whether identity work processes cluster by occupational grouping. Scholars have similarly called for research examining occupations with varying identity demands, ranging from highly identity-central roles (e.g., clergy, elite professionals) to jobs with weaker identity expectations (Kreiner et al., 2006b; Walsh & Gordon, 2008).

Work settings further lead to differences in identity work by shaping perceptions of the “self” and “other.” For instance, in multinational corporations, intersecting cultural norms and national stereotypes may complicate identity positioning, especially when individuals negotiate minority or marginalized identities (Ailon-Souday & Kunda, 2003; Vaara & Tienari, 2007). The extent to which individuals identify with their organization also matter. Stronger organizational identification can amplify the motivation to protect a threatened identity (Petriglieri, 2011) and heighten the emotional investment in identity work (Caprar et al., 2022).

Recent research highlights those occupational structures, such as gig work, precarious employment, and platform-mediated behaviour, create identity challenges, including role fragmentation, instability, and reduced access to identity-affirming social interactions (Aroles et al., 2019; Petriglieri et al., 2018). Employees in high-impact or mission-oriented roles may engage in different identity work strategies to reconcile idealized professional identities with the organizational realities (Atewologun et al., 2017). Thus, occupational and work-setting differences play a role in shaping how individuals perceive identity threats and the strategies they use to manage them.

Abusive Supervision. Within relational and organizational contexts, leadership represents a particularly powerful source of identity affirmation or threat. Abusive supervision represents a relational context that may produce different forms of identity work depending on how it is appraised and integrated into the self-concept. Among leadership forms, destructive leadership, particularly abusive supervision, represents a potent identity-threatening environment. Unlike more general organizational stressors, abusive supervision threatens employees' sense of worth, legitimacy, and belonging, and thus it is likely to activate identity-relevant appraisal processes that classify experiences as identity opportunities or threats (Bataille & Vough, 2022). Abusive supervision is a destructive form of leadership that encompasses a range of hostile and demeaning behaviours, including intimidating, bullying, and publicly humiliating subordinates; withholding deserved development or promotion opportunities; displaying aggressive body language; taking unwarranted credit while shifting blame; assigning tasks intended to ensure failure; lying and undermining; and engaging in demeaning treatment or the silent treatment (Tepper, 2000). A defining feature of abusive supervision is that such

behaviours occur repeatedly and consistently over time, rather than as isolated incidents, creating an enduring context of interpersonal mistreatment.

Beyond defining abusive supervision and its identity-threatening nature, this section examines three main issues. First, it considers the perceptual and appraisal-based nature of abusive supervision. Second, it reviews the variability in its effects by highlighting moderating conditions that shape employee responses. Third, it synthesizes research on mediating mechanisms, with particular attention to motivational processes central to the present research.

It is also important to recognize that abusive supervision is conceptualized as a perceptual phenomenon. That is, abuse is determined by how subordinates interpret and appraise supervisory behaviour (Goute et al., 2021), meaning the same behaviour may be experienced as abusive by one employee but not another, or assessed differently across situations. Indeed, behaviours and perceptions are analytically distinct (Banks et al., 2021), and employees' subjective interpretations play a critical role in shaping whether and how identity threat emerges in response to harmful leadership. Because abusive supervision is subjectively interpreted, it does not uniformly activate identity threat. Differences in appraisal processes may lead individuals to engage in different forms of identity work.

Leaders hold influential positions within an organization and significantly impact individuals' work lives (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). The proximity and power of their role can affirm or threaten followers' identity, especially when harmful or dismissive conduct is perceived (Bataille & Vough, 2022). Abusive supervision can also undermine psychological needs and professional identity, resulting in adverse psychological and behavioural consequences (Yao et al., 2025). However, emerging evidence shows that abusive supervision encompasses

distinct forms, such as active-aggressive versus passive-aggressive mistreatment, that may elicit different patterns of identity threat appraisal among followers (Liang et al., 2025).

Importantly, the effects of abusive supervision are not uniform. For example, in Fischer et al.'s (2021) systematic review, it was discovered that the correlation between abusive supervision and employee deviance ranges from $-.15$ (Sungu et al., 2020) and $.74$ (Tröster & Van Quaquebeke, 2020), and the correlation between abusive supervision and counterproductive behaviour ranged from $-.26$ (Ahmad et al., 2019) to $.71$ (Goswami et al., 2020). These differences can be due to methodological designs, but they could also indicate that other variables must be considered when investigating the relationship between abusive supervision and employee outcomes (Fischer et al., 2021).

To explain this variability, scholars have examined moderating conditions between abusive supervision and employee outcomes. Much of this research has focused on demographic characteristics, personality traits (e.g., neuroticism, conscientiousness), leader-member exchange, employee empowerment, and individual differences such as motivation, anger, and psychological strain (Fischer et al., 2021). Early scholarship demonstrated that abusive supervision does not affect all subordinates uniformly. For example, Tepper et al. (2000) found that the impact of abusive supervision on counterproductive work behaviour was contingent on subordinate diligence, such that employees low in diligence exhibited stronger negative reactions. Conversely, conscientiousness buffered some of the harmful effects of abusive supervision on performance.

Additional work has explored motivational and self-regulatory mechanisms as moderators. Lian et al. (2014) showed that employees lacking both the capacity and motivation for restraint were more likely to engage in supervisor-directed aggression after experiencing

abusive supervision. Punishment-based motivation emerged as a particularly strong driver of retaliation, while self-control served as an important protective factor that reduced retaliatory tendencies.

More recently, Fischer et al.'s (2021) systematic review identified a wider range of moderating variables, spanning individual, relational, and contextual domains, that condition how abusive supervision translates into outcomes such as performance, deviance, and well-being. These variations suggest that abusive supervision is a contextual factor whose impact on identity work depends on how it is interpreted, regulated, and integrated into the self-concept. These moderators are summarized in Table 3.

Insert Table 3 about here

Beyond moderators, research has increasingly focused on mediating mechanisms. Fischer et al.'s (2021) systematic review specified six overarching categories of mediators: affective, relational, motivational, cognitive or social-cognitive, identification-based, and behavioural. For instance, Guo et al. (2024) examined how abusive supervision leads to patient-directed service sabotage in healthcare via workplace rudeness as a mediator, with work ethics acting as a moderator. Similarly, Gümüştas and Karataş Gümüştas (2023) investigated how burnout mediates the link between abusive supervision and organizational citizenship behaviour, with organizational identity moderating this indirect effect. Despite these advancements, the specific processes through which destructive leader behaviour impacts followers remain only partly understood (Mawritz et al., 2012), and although recent work (e.g., Xiao et al., 2024) has begun to unpack such processes, additional process-based investigation is needed. Moreover, abusive

supervision research largely overlooks how some individuals may recover from abusive supervision and overcome its harmful effects.

Among the potential mediating mechanisms, motivation is particularly central to the present research. Past findings indicate that experiencing abusive supervision can lead to either a decrease or complete absence of motivation. It often results in less intrinsic motivation, less personal significance of activities, and less alignment with personal goals (Ronen & Donia, 2020). Yet research is limited on the motivational mechanisms by which abusive supervision results in adverse outcomes and is mainly focused on intrinsic motivation (Zhang et al., 2014) and thus considers only a segment of motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005). The scarcity of research investigating the impact of abusive supervision on varied motivational positions related to work outcomes is a significant gap in the literature (Ronen & Donia, 2020).

Recent studies begin to address this gap. For instance, Ma and Yang (2023) found that employees' passion for inventing mediates the effect of abusive supervision on creativity; Guo (2024) uncovered that workplace rudeness mediates the link between abusive supervision and service sabotage in a healthcare context; and Zhou (2024) demonstrated that team proactive behaviour mediates the relationship between abusive supervision in project teams and project performance/creativity. These findings show that the mediating mechanisms extend beyond just intrinsic motivation and require further investigation and added insights. Together, relational and organizational contexts shape how identity threats unfold in everyday work interactions. In the case of abusive supervision, differences in relational histories, organizational identification, and contextual support may influence whether identity threats are appraised as interpersonal, systemic, controllable, or uncontrollable. These differences are critical for understanding how distinct identity work profiles emerge and why responses to abusive supervision vary.

Individual Cognitive and Emotional Processes

While relational and organizational contexts shape the external conditions that may foster identity threats, individuals differ in how they interpret and respond to those conditions. The third domain concerns individual cognitive and emotional processes that shape how identity threats are interpreted and managed. While many personal attributes may influence identity work, this section focuses on several key mechanisms that are particularly relevant to how individuals appraise threat, regulate emotion, and sustain motivation following identity disruption. These include identity resources, attribution style, cognitive biases and self-schemas, emotional regulation and emotional intelligence, and self-efficacy.

Identity Resources. Identity resources may lead to differences in identity work. Identity resources refer to assets that an individual can use to establish or maintain an identity position, such as difficult-to-achieve status, specific skills or expertise, networks, or organizational backing (Beech et al., 2008). Individuals with low risk, little opportunity, and few resources thus have limited reason or capability to undertake identity work. In contrast, those with low risk but high resources can engage in identity work, although they may lack the impetus. Identity work tends to become more effortful and effective when risk and opportunity are high (Beech et al., 2008). Importantly, more recent research shows that organizational support for identity work, perceived encouragement, opportunities to reflect and display multiple identities, functions as a key resource that influences engagement in identity work (Jean et al., 2024).

Beyond work settings, individuals also accumulate resources through non-work domains, including hobbies, evening courses, identity-based networks, which allow for experimentation and formation of identity positions until these can be publicly enacted (Ibarra & Petriglieri, 2010; Jean et al., 2024). Recent research also demonstrates that identity configurations shape the

formation and composition of professional networks, which impacts the reach and diversity of network ties (Ingram, 2023). These differences in identity-relevant network resources may condition how individuals engage in identity work across contexts, shaping when identity work is undertaken and the forms it takes.

Cognitive Processes. Finally, the focus of the present research, differences in individual personality, cognitions, emotions, and personal attributes, though often overlooked in existing research, may significantly influence variations in identity work. The present research focuses on these factors. Cognitive processes play a key role in identity work: the frameworks individuals rely upon influence how they perceive themselves, their roles, and their relationships within organizations (Brown, 2017). For example, in educational contexts, Burri et al. (2017) found that cognitive processes, specifically the imagination of self and others, are essential in forming the identity of language teachers, enabling them to envision potential selves and engage in identity work that is empowering.

One important cognitive mechanism influencing identity work is attribution style. Eryigit and Kerpelman (2011) observed that different attribution styles affect exploration and commitment activities during identity formation: individuals with more adaptive attribution styles engage in more positive forms of identity work, whereas maladaptive styles may hinder the process.

In addition to attribution tendencies, cognitive schemas and biases influence how identity threats are processed. Cognitive biases, systematic errors in thinking, also distort self-perceptions and identity construction. For instance, confirmation bias may cause individuals to favour information that aligns with existing self-beliefs, reinforcing potentially inaccurate identities (Stafford et al., 2018), and in professional settings, those with strong professional identities may

process information differently than those with weaker identities (Wang et al., 2017). Individuals who hold more flexible self-schemas, involving cognitive frameworks that allow their identity to evolve, are better able to adjust to identity disruptions and engage in constructive identity work, whereas those with rigid schemas resort to defensive or avoidance strategies (Felix et al., 2023).

Beyond cognitive appraisal, emotional regulation capacities shape whether individuals can engage constructively in identity work without becoming overwhelmed. Emotional regulation is another key cognitive-emotional process relevant to identity work. Emotional regulation provides the capability to engage in identity work without becoming overwhelmed by negative emotions. Cognitive reappraisal, where individuals reinterpret negative experiences, supports constructive identity work (Falakolaflaki & Hormozi, 2015). Similarly, emotional intelligence (EI), the capacity to perceive, understand, and manage emotions, plays an important role in identity work: individuals with higher EI are better prepared to navigate complex aspects of identity development (Maher & Winston, 2017). These findings highlight the importance of emotional and cognitive factors in the identity work process.

Finally, beliefs about personal agency and capability, such as self-efficacy, shape whether individuals persist in identity reconstruction following threat, thereby contributing to differences in identity work outcomes. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to be more resilient, persistent, and proactive in exploring their identities and committing to identity-related goals (Lile, 2015). Meanwhile, low self-efficacy often leads to avoidance behaviour and reluctance to engage in identity work. Caza and Creary (2016) and Pasupathi (2003) note that self-efficacy and personality traits may differentially drive identity work, and both recommend further research into these dynamics.

Importantly, recent research adds nuance to this perspective. For example, a longitudinal study found that a strong sense of coherence, reflecting cognitive stability, meaning-making, and resourcefulness, moderated the impact of compassion fatigue on professional identity and engagement in healthcare workers (Zhang et al., 2023). Further, the interaction between attribution styles and emotional regulation can shape the cognitive landscape of identity work: individuals with a negative attribution style may experience heightened emotional distress, impairing emotion regulation and creating a cycle of negative identity work. Conversely, adaptive attributional styles can support emotional coping and facilitate more constructive identity development processes (Larsen, 2018).

Taken together, these individual cognitive and emotional processes help explain why identity work does not unfold uniformly across individuals. Differences in attribution styles, emotional regulation, identity resources, and self-efficacy may shape how abusive supervision is appraised. These variations directly inform Research Question 1 by identifying cognitive processes that may underlie distinct identity work profiles. Additionally, because these processes influence persistence, agency, and perceived controllability, they provide a foundation for understanding how identity work translates into divergent motivational and performance outcomes (Research Question 2).

In sum, identity work is shaped by the interaction of social positioning, relational context, and individual cognitive-emotional processes. These factors influence how identity threats are appraised, whether individuals experience themselves as prepared or ill-equipped to respond, and how they interpret the origins of abusive supervision. By identifying these differences, this section lays the groundwork for examining patterned identity work profiles and for understanding how those profiles relate to differences in employee motivation and performance.

These contextual factors illustrate that identity work is shaped by intersecting structural and psychological conditions. As reflected in Figure 1, contextual influences moderate the pathway from identity threat and drivers to specific identity work forms, shaping the likelihood that individuals follow different identity work trajectories. These contextual influences may also shape the subsequent outcomes by affecting whether identity work is sustained, exhausting, restorative, or disengaging. In this way, contextual conditions not only shape the form of identity work (RQ1) but also influence how those forms translate into motivation and performance outcomes (RQ2).

Identity Work in Organizations

Extending the contextual factors discussed above, this section situates the components of Figure 1 within organizational contexts where identity work frequently unfolds. Although identity work occurs across life domains, workplaces represent a particularly powerful site for identity construction, disruption, and reconstruction due to their structured hierarchies, relational interdependence, and evaluative systems. Understanding identity work in organizations clarifies why abusive supervision constitutes a unique identity-threatening circumstance and why variation in identity work profiles may have consequential motivational and performance implications. Accordingly, this section reviews identity work in organizational settings.

As noted above, relational and organizational contexts shape the identity work processes individuals engage in. Organizational settings shape not only the kinds of identity threats individuals encounter but also the resources available for repair, validation, and reconstruction. Because the present research focuses on workplace identity disruption, it is necessary to examine how identity work has been conceptualized within organizations and how abusive supervision influences these personal identity processes. To clarify how organizations shape identity work,

this section reviews how identity work has been examined across organizational contexts, considers how harmful workplace interactions activate identity work, and distinguishes between collective and personal identity processes to highlight the gap addressed in the present research.

Identity work stemming from organizational practices or occurrences has been conducted specifically on the analysis of NASA (Schwartz, 1992), young professionals (Ibarra, 1999), striking flight attendants (Dahler-Larsen, 1998), American patrol officers (Van Maanen, 2009), Canadian police officers (Workman-Stark, 2025), accountants during a merger (Van der Steen, 2022), amongst others (Brown, 2015).

Further, the notion that narratives matter in understanding organizations and organizing has been highlighted in many organizational studies (e.g., Martin et al., 1983; Fineman & Gabriel, 1996; Czarniawska, 1998, 1999). Research has also highlighted how different organizational contexts could lead to identity work processes, such as actions that challenge, call into question, or diminish one's sense of competence, dignity, or self-worth (Aquino & Douglas, 2003), employees perceiving they are not valued, respected or have low standing (Henderson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2012), identity strain, work-identity stigma, identity maturation and organizational indifference (Workman-Stark, 2025), and reorganized and remote work environments triggering identity recalibration (Tomo & Mangia, 2025). Recent research also shows that transitions in professional settings can lead to identity work, especially when individuals must restore coherence between their personal and organizational identities (Sawatsky et al., 2024). Additionally, employees may experience nested and conflicting identity demands across multiple organizational units, which can complicate identity work unless clear support and identity-affirming practices are present (Rovetta et al., 2025). Employees' perceptions that their organization supports identity development can also shape the likelihood of

engaging in identity work (Jean et al., 2024). While these studies that focus on specific contexts of identity work are insightful and informative, they are highly specific and contextual.

While organizational structures and narratives shape identity broadly, harmful interpersonal dynamics represent a particularly powerful trigger of identity work. In a study of general workplace bullying, Mishra et al. (2020) found that a significant theme that emerged was “enhancing personal identity.” Individuals actively tried to amend their identity in response to workplace bullying, otherwise known as identity work. Schwalbe and Mason-Schrock (1996) contended that identity work is “a requirement for social life” and “there is simply no maintaining any activity system without identity work.” The authors also noted that identity formation is “the cornerstone of social life” (p. 122). However, this study focused on workplace bullying in general and did not investigate the dyadic relationship between an abusive leader and a subordinate and the power dynamic at play (Lian et al., 2014). Thus, further research is needed to understand the process of identity work in the workplace following abusive supervision and how personal identity might change over time. Moreover, the extent to which interpersonal mistreatment triggers identity work can vary across individuals. Employees may differ in whether they perceive identity work as viable or supported in their work setting, which can influence the degree to which they engage in identity work after adversity (Jean et al., 2024). Further, individuals facing identity threats sometimes must rely on informal or personal narratives to restore identity when organizational structures do not support recovery (Sawatsky et al., 2024).

While bullying research demonstrates that interpersonal mistreatment can trigger identity work, it does not capture the hierarchical dynamics and power asymmetries inherent within an abusive supervision relationship. Abusive supervision represents a distinct and more enduring

relational context that may activate different forms of identity work. Lord et al. (1999) discussed the relationship between leaders working on self-concept or the salient part of the self-concept. They stated that leaders create short-term changes in followers by impacting their working self-concept and long-term changes via the development of chronic schemas. Their succeeding work (e.g., Lord & Brown, 2001; Hannah et al., 2009) discussed how leaders influence values that impact follower identities and act as role models for follower identity construction. Identity negotiation and self-verification were prevalent (Swann et al., 2009). Though this research is insightful and offers insight for the current research, it is not about identity work or abusive leaders in particular.

Recent work shows that abusive supervision can generate significant identity threat by undermining an individual's sense of worth and belonging, prompting efforts to protect or reconstruct a coherent self-view (Liang et al., 2025). Such leader mistreatment can undermine employees' identities, which in turn shapes maladaptive workplace behaviour (Liu et al., 2018).

Related research has examined how abusive supervision shapes follower identity (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). However, these studies primarily focused on collective identities, including professional groups, work groups, departments, and the organization (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). This distinction is central to the present research, which shifts attention from collective identity alignment to the personal identity following identity-threatening leadership. Research has largely neglected the personal identity distinct from the social identity (Ashforth et al., 2016) and how interpersonal relationships might shape an individual's personal identity (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). However, both personal (Aquino & Douglas, 2003; Lind & Tyler, 1988) and collective identity (Lind, 1997) are impacted by poor treatment. This distinction is important as personal identity focuses on the individual's identity that is uniquely theirs and not shared with other

group members (Turner & Onorato, 1999) and relays the fundamental beliefs and values that individuals hold (Burke & Stets, 2009).

In a study by Huang et al. (2024) following abusive supervision, participants in China with strong relational self-concepts preserved their identity-consistent self-image. They presented themselves in positive and socially desirable ways toward coworkers and the leader. However, this study specifically investigated self-image maintenance and how individuals present themselves to coworkers and leaders with reputation management in mind. The present research advances a distinct focus in that the process of identity work will not only consider reputation and how an individual is attempting to portray themselves to others but also how they come to terms with beliefs about themselves and who they are following such a significant negative event such as abusive supervision. This highlights a clear need to better understand how individuals internally navigate who they are in the aftermath of abusive supervision.

In sum, existing organizational research demonstrates that identity work is shaped by organizational structures, workplace transitions, interpersonal mistreatment, and leadership influence. However, much of this work emphasizes collective identity alignment or external reputation management rather than internal personal identity work. As a result, research offers only limited process-based understanding of how individuals engage in personal identity work following identity-threatening leadership. The present research addresses this gap by examining identity work as an intrapersonal, narrative reconstruction process following abusive supervision. By clarifying how organizational contexts shape identity disruption and the resources available for repair, this section establishes the conditions under which different sensemaking pathways and identity work profiles may emerge. It also highlights why those profiles may lead to different motivational and performance outcomes.

Effects of Identity Work

Having examined the drivers and contextual conditions of identity work, it is also important to understand its consequences. This section develops the outcomes component of Figure 1 by examining the consequences of identity work in organizational settings.

Understanding these divergent consequences is central to Research Question 2, which examines how distinct identity work profiles relate to variation in employee motivation and performance. Because Research Question 2 examines how identity work profiles relate to variation in employee motivation and performance, it is necessary to review what identity work tends to produce in organizational contexts and under what conditions it supports engagement versus withdrawal. This section therefore synthesizes identity work outcomes and highlights why identity work can either mobilize or constrain motivation and performance depending on the form it takes. First, it considers how identity work can restore and strengthen identity coherence. Second, it explores how identity work influences workplace motivation and performance. Third, it discusses conditions under which identity work becomes fragmented or resource-depleting.

The outcomes of identity work vary depending on the form it takes, the resources available, and the surrounding relational context. Identity work is often triggered by threats to a valued sense of self, leading individuals to reestablish coherence, authenticity, belonging, and esteem (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Petriglieri, 2011). Through these efforts, individuals aim to protect or construct identities that are personally meaningful and socially validated (Brown, 2015; Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016). The most commonly cited outcome of identity work is the resolution of identity tension or threat stemming from conflicting identities (e.g., Carrim & Nkomo, 2016; Croft et al., 2015; Lewis, 2013) or competing discourses, ultimately leading to integration or reconciliation (e.g., Hodgson & Paton, 2016). Identity work has also been found to

strengthen identity (e.g., Brown, 2017; Mallett & Wapshott, 2015), which increases the likelihood of consistently enacting that identity (Ashforth, 2000).

Beyond restoring identity coherence itself, identity work has important implications for workplace functioning. Identity threats can impair employees' willingness to engage in collaborative and discretionary behaviours such as knowledge sharing (Peng, 2022), and identity misalignment can diminish proactive behaviours that support individual performance (Wang et al., 2024). Yet identity work may also bolster authenticity and reduce negative affective experiences when threats arise (Bedyńska & Żołnierczyk-Zreda, 2015; Pachankis, 2007), enabling sustained engagement in identity-congruent behaviours. For instance, Frandsen (2015) found that call centre employees used distancing to buffer against negative occupational images while maintaining performance in customer roles (Caza et al., 2018). Because identity work is cognitive, discursive, physical, and behavioural, its implications extend beyond individuals and shape relational and organizational outcomes (Caza et al., 2018). Indeed, increases in performance associated with identity work can contribute to broader organizational success (Beech & Johnson, 2005; Creed et al., 2010; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010), and the relationship may be reciprocal, with performance gains further strengthening identity commitment (Styhre, 2012).

In addition to influencing performance outcomes, identity work shapes motivational processes. Identity work has been shown to support motivation when stronger organizational identification increases engagement in discretionary behaviours (Nexhip et al., 2024; Wegge et al., 2006). Engaging in deeper identity work can enhance motivation and effort (Samaranayake, 2021), and identity development has been conceptualized as foundational for sustaining internal motivation beyond external incentives (Silitshena, 2022). Additionally, research grounded in

IBM theory demonstrates that motivation depends on whether identities are experienced as actionable and valued (Oyserman & Dawson, 2019). For example, task framing that emphasizes identity importance increases readiness to pursue goals aligned with that identity (Smith & Oyserman, 2015). This highlights that identity certainty may drive different motivation trajectories.

Although identity work is frequently framed as restorative and growth-enhancing, its outcomes are not uniformly positive. Under certain conditions, identity work can fragment rather than integrate the self. It can become effortful and draining, particularly when threats persist or resources are limited. Identity work may lead to weakened (Gendron & Spira, 2010), split (Gutierrez et al., 2010), damaged (Cowen & Hodgson, 2015), or unclear identification (Kärreman & Alvesson, 2004; Caza et al., 2018). Chronic identity repair efforts can deplete personal resources and reduce motivation (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010), and different forms of identity work can produce different behavioural outcomes depending on situational constraints (Vough & Caza, 2017). Identity-infused behaviours may even result in negative motivational outcomes when such behaviours are not valued or rewarded (Oyserman et al., 2007). When expectations for identity development are unclear, the process becomes vague and unstructured, undermining performance (McLean et al., 2019). As such, identity work is a dynamic and context-dependent process with widely divergent outcomes.

These divergent consequences are particularly consequential in abusive supervision contexts, where identity threats are chronic rather than episodic. Under abusive supervision, identity repair efforts may become prolonged and resource-depleting, increasing the likelihood that employees disengage rather than reconstruct a coherent and motivating self-concept (Beech, 2011; Clarke et al., 2009). Occupational identity threats following relational mistreatment can

trigger avoidance-oriented coping, reduced proactive engagement, and diminished collaborative behaviours (Peng, 2022; Wang et al., 2024). In such contexts, identity tensions sparked by abusive supervision may redirect employees toward compliance, withdrawal, or self-protection rather than performance-oriented goals, ultimately contributing to burnout and reduced effectiveness (Manzi et al., 2021; Shewach et al., 2019). This suggests that understanding how abusive supervision leads to differences in identity work is critical for explaining differential motivational and performance outcomes.

In sum, identity work outcomes are contingent. As illustrated in Figure 1, identity work does not lead uniformly to restoration or decline. Instead, the motivational and performance outcomes that follow are likely to depend on the specific identity work pathway undertaken. Some forms support coherence and engagement, whereas others lead to fragmentation and negative outcomes. This contingency highlights how identity work profiles following abusive supervision are associated with differences in motivation and performance trajectories. These divergent consequences suggest that identity work profiles characterized by coherence, agency, and future-oriented meaning-making are likely to align with identity-based motivational processes that sustain effort and performance. In contrast, profiles marked by fragmentation, defensiveness, or depletion may weaken identity-based action-readiness and undermine performance. This logic directly informs Research Question 2.

Effects of Trauma

While the previous section discussed the general consequences of identity work, some identity-threatening experiences can produce more extreme psychological disruption. This section explains a severe form of identity-threatening circumstance depicted on the left side of Figure 1. While not all experiences of abusive supervision rise to the level of trauma, sustained

and severe mistreatment may produce trauma-like psychological disruption that alters identity coherence. Examining trauma-based responses clarifies why identity work processes may diverge across individuals (Research Question 1) and why downstream motivational and performance consequences may range from decline to post-traumatic growth (Research Question 2).

While prior research has demonstrated that identity work may either restore coherence or exacerbate strain, abusive supervision can lead to psychological disruption to the point that employees experience trauma responses. To better understand these more severe identity consequences, the trauma literature is examined in relation to abusive supervision. This section first reviews evidence linking abusive supervision to trauma-related psychological disruption. It then considers how trauma fragments identity and shapes meaning-making processes, while also highlighting the potential for post-traumatic growth. Finally, it integrates these divergent outcomes to form the framework guiding the present studies.

Research has identified a plethora of adverse effects of abusive supervision, including subordinate psychological distress, work-life conflict, emotional exhaustion, and paranoia leading to aggression (Aryee et al., 2008; Carlson et al., 2012; Chan & McAllister, 2014; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; Tepper, 2007; Tepper et al., 2017). Abusive supervision may also be internalized, lowering self-esteem and diminishing employees' perceived value within the organization (Farh & Chen, 2014; Vogel & Mitchell, 2017). Multiple studies have further linked abusive supervision to indicators of impaired psychological well-being, including depression (Tepper et al., 2007) and impaired self-regulation (Thau & Mitchell, 2010).

Relatedly, studies on workplace bullying and post-traumatic stress show that approximately 86% of victims report clinically significant post-traumatic stress symptoms

(Leymann, 1992; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002). These effects may be even more pronounced in the case of abusive supervision given the central role leaders play in subordinates' work lives. Indeed, identity-based impairments associated with abusive supervision (Burton et al., 2011; Lian et al., 2014) closely mirror trauma-related disruptions (Berntsen & Rubin, 2007; Janoff-Bulman, 2010). Trauma can occur when an event negatively alters identity definitions and undermines one's capacity to cope or mentally distance themselves from the experience (Limberg et al., 2011; Haruvi-Lamdan et al., 2018; Dell'Osso et al., 2019; 2022), fragmenting identity over time and heightening vulnerability to future traumatic outcomes (Dell'Osso et al., 2019).

Traumatic experiences often represent a "nuclear episode" in a person's life narrative (McAdams, 1996, p. 308). They activate self-structures relevant to threat appraisal (Markus & Wurf, 1987), fundamentally influencing how individuals construe themselves (Dutton et al., 2010). Janoff-Bulman (2004) argued that trauma shatters basic assumptions that the world is safe and just, that others are benevolent, and that the self is worthy. In abusive supervision contexts, employees may begin to define themselves through the lens of victimization (Tepper et al., 2015), contributing to post-traumatic stress reactions such as PTSD (van der Kolk, 2003), complex PTSD (Herman, 1992), acute stress disorder (Bryant & Harvey, 2000), and adjustment disorders (Horowitz, 2011), which often manifest similarly (Vogel & Bolino, 2020). These trajectories reflect a pathological evolution wherein cumulative stress continues to erode resilience (Dell'Osso et al., 2019).

Importantly, abuse-related meaning-making typically evolves once individuals are no longer subject to the abusive leader. Retrospective appraisal enables victims to reconsider the severity and intent of the abuser's actions, forming causal attributions that influence self-concept

and future work attitudes (Masood et al., 2024). Masood et al. (2024) identified two primary clusters of identity-relevant outcomes: proactive lessons reflecting strengthened self-awareness and endurance, and reactive lessons characterized by self-protection and lingering emotional scars. These findings illustrate how retrospective and prospective sensemaking jointly shape divergent identity outcomes.

While trauma may fragment identity and erode resilience, it can also serve as a catalyst for identity transformation. As Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) describe, certain individuals respond to trauma with post-traumatic growth, emerging with increased clarity of purpose and psychological strength (Jayawickreme & Blackie, 2014). Such growth reflects enhanced ego strength (Erikson, 1982) and strengthened beliefs in one's ability to manage future adversity (Bandura, 1997). Through this process, traumatic events may be transformed from "contamination sequences" into "reclamation sequences" in personal narratives (McAdams et al., 2001), supporting a shift from victim identity to survivor identity (Berntsen & Rubin, 2007; Neimeyer, 2004). Identity work plays a central role in this shift by helping individuals reorient away from vulnerability and toward novel, growth-related identities (Maitlis, 2009; Wehrle et al., 2018; Maitlis, 2020).

Trauma outcomes are not dichotomous. Rather than resulting in either decline or growth, individuals often experience both simultaneously. Instead, they often co-occur as people simultaneously struggle with harm and pursue meaning from the same event (Linley & Joseph, 2004; Dell'Osso et al., 2019). Whether a traumatic work experience results in pathological decline or positive transformation depends on available personal and contextual resources, including coping strategies and social support (Dell'Osso et al., 2014; Stratta et al., 2015; Carmassi et al., 2015; 2018). Cognition is also vital in promoting growth (Zoellner & Maercker,

2006). While intrusive rumination sustains distress, purposeful and reflective processing can help individuals extract positive meaning (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004; Groleau et al., 2013). Active engagement with memories of the abuse, combined with efficacy in one's ability to cope (Janoff-Bulman, 2004), can illuminate new possibilities and restore a durable sense of agency (Vogel & Bolino, 2020). Thus, abusive supervision may function as a significant turning point in identity reconstruction, either fragmenting or strengthening identity depending on how individuals make meaning of the experience.

In sum, the trauma literature reinforces that identity work following abusive supervision can result in fragmentation or growth depending on cognitive processing and contextual resources. Trauma is a heightened form of identity threat that intensifies identity work activation, shapes cognitive processing pathways, and amplifies the likelihood of fragmentation or transformative growth. This research supports Study 1's focus on identifying the cognitive sensemaking processes that differentiate identity work profiles and Study 2's focus on how these profiles relate to motivation and performance outcomes.

Integrative Synthesis

The preceding sections reviewed identity-threatening circumstances, specifically abusive supervision, identity drivers, contextual moderators, cognitive-emotional processes, and motivational outcomes. These streams together suggest a process model in which abusive supervision is appraised through contextual and cognitive lenses, leading to differentiated forms of identity work that shape motivational and performance trajectories. To synthesize these insights, Figure 2 presents a preliminary conceptual framework derived from the literature. This framework integrates antecedent conditions, identity work processes, and downstream outcomes, and served as a sensitizing structure guiding the qualitative inquiry.

 Insert Figure 2 about here

Figure 2 illustrates how identity-threatening circumstances are filtered through relational appraisals, available resources, and cognitive-emotional processes, which shape distinct identity work response patterns. These response patterns, in turn, influence meaning-making, goal orientation, and motivational and performance outcomes. The model is conceptualized as process-oriented rather than strictly linear, acknowledging that identity work and motivation may unfold dynamically over time.

Consistent with its role as a literature-derived framework, Figure 2 also informed the development of broad themes used for Study 1 interview questions, including participants' interpretations of abusive supervision, the resources and constraints shaping their responses, the cognitive and emotional processes they engaged in, and the strategies they used to manage their identities.

Summary

Research has long established that individuals continually construct narratives about themselves. These evolving stories form the foundation of personal identity, shaping self-concept and guiding behaviour. Increasingly, identity is understood as malleable, continuously developed through individuals' informational and communicative efforts (Lepisto et al., 2015). Whereas social identity relates to an individual's group memberships and the characteristics tied to those groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), personal identity emphasizes self-definitions based on unique life experiences (Owens et al., 2010).

When circumstances challenge an individual's personal identity, they may engage in identity work, a process of revising, reaffirming, or reshaping the self in pursuit of continuity and wholeness (Brown, 2015). Identity work is shaped through internal reflection and external social

interactions (Watson, 2009a) as individuals attempt to understand who they are following identity-threatening experiences. Notably, identity work serves as a central domain for identity expression and meaning-making (Petriglieri, 2020), making organizations a primary context in which identity work unfolds.

This research specifically examines identity work following abusive supervision, a form of destructive leadership characterized by ongoing hostility and demeaning treatment (Tepper, 2000). Such abuse undermines individuals' self-concept (Aquino & Douglas, 2003) and can lead to feelings of dehumanization and self-objectification (Sainz & Baldissiri, 2021). In these circumstances, identity threats demand immediate cognitive and behavioural responses to restore a sense of self (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016). Narrative identity theory and identity-based motivation theory provide useful frames for understanding these dynamics.

Narrative identity theory highlights that people make sense of themselves by crafting coherent self-stories over time (McAdams, 1996). Abusive supervision can disrupt these narratives, generating distress and, at times, post-traumatic symptoms (Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002). Yet, as individuals process these experiences, adverse events can also catalyze post-traumatic growth by fostering new narratives of resilience and strength (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

These identity processes have important consequences for workplace behaviour. IBM theory proposes that salient identities influence goal-directed actions and meaning-making (Oyserman, 2009). In response to abusive supervision, employees may engage in identity work that helps restore coherence and maintain motivation. These efforts may support productivity in some cases, but in others identity disruption can hinder performance or well-being. For example,

Croft et al. (2015) found that even when identity work facilitated conflict resolution among nurse managers, the loss of a valued professional identity continued to have emotional consequences.

Identity work is not uniform. Its form and effectiveness depend on organizational context; personal factors such as cognition, emotional regulation, and resources; and the strategies individuals employ, including narrative reframing and resilience-building. While identity work has been widely examined, research has paid limited attention to individual differences in how people experience and respond to identity threats. Many studies imply variation exists but stop short of examining its mechanisms or outcomes in depth. As Brown (2015) notes, “different peoples, times and contexts will yield different results, which are themselves prone to multiple interpretations” (p. 30). Cognitive processes in particular shape how individuals interpret their roles and relationships at work (Brown, 2017), yet their role in divergent identity trajectories remains underexplored. Figure 1 synthesizes these insights into an integrated process model linking identity-threatening circumstances, identity drivers, contextual moderators, identity work processes, and divergent outcomes.

Deeper investigation into why individuals engage in different forms of identity work will enhance understanding of how employees navigate adverse workplace environments. Accordingly, this dissertation addresses two research questions. Research Question 1 asks: *What cognitive processes contribute to differences in identity work profiles when individuals face challenging or abusive leadership?* Building on narrative identity theory, Study 1 examines how employees interpret identity-threatening supervision and identifies patterned sensemaking pathways that differentiate identity work profiles. Research Question 2 asks: *How do distinct identity work profiles in response to abusive supervision relate to variation in employee motivation and performance?*

CHAPTER 3 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative Phase

Overview and Purpose of the Quantitative Phase

Study 1 (Qualitative Phase) uses a qualitative design to examine the contextual and cognitive conditions under which individuals engage in identity work following abusive supervision. This phase serves a theory-building function within the mixed-methods research program by exploring the processes through which abusive supervisory experiences lead to divergent identity responses across individuals. Consistent with qualitative inquiry, Study 1 was not designed to test predefined hypotheses but to inductively generate conceptual distinctions and mechanisms that could later be examined using quantitative methods. Given the limited understanding of how employees interpret, make meaning of, and respond to supervisory abuse, an inductive qualitative approach was necessary to capture the complexity of these lived experiences.

The purpose of this phase was to identify the cognitive antecedents, contextual influences, and identity-related mechanisms that shape variation in identity work responses. Rather than testing hypotheses, Study 1 aimed to inductively uncover patterns in how individuals interpret and respond to abusive supervision. The findings clarified distinct contextual profiles and identity-related processes that informed the theoretical propositions examined in Study 2. Specifically, insights from the qualitative analysis, together with relevant prior research, informed the development of theoretically derived hypotheses linking abusive supervision to motivational and performance outcomes.

Research Design

Individuals embark on a multitude of identity journeys that vary based on personal factors, life skills, and situational circumstances (McAlpine, 2012). Narrative identity theory

contends that people employ various strategies to resolve perceived identity inconsistencies (Taylor, 2005). In many cases, individuals attempt to maintain a positive and virtuous sense of self by constructing and collecting stories about who they are (Wright et al., 2012). Thus, some may engage in positive identity work that facilitates productive behaviour, even after experiencing abusive supervision. However, there remains insufficient understanding of the specific factors that lead to these divergent identity work processes. Advancing this understanding would enable researchers to better explain the discrepant effects of abusive supervision across subordinates.

Qualitative research enables scholars to interpret patterns while acknowledging the complexity and nuance of human experience (Braun & Clarke, 2019a). It provides a way to access individuals' personal interpretations of their workplace realities through an in-depth exploration of internal cognitive and emotional processes (Willig, 2013). Within the social sciences, qualitative methodologies are increasingly recognized as essential because they offer a "deeper understanding of social phenomena and dynamics" (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 385). Identity work is best examined qualitatively because it involves personal meaning-making and self-interpretation (e.g., Watson, 2008; Alvesson & Willmott, 2002) and is highly subjective, shaped by individualized meaning-making, histories, and contextual resources. Further, in the context of abusive supervision, this phenomenon often results in concealed or stigmatized experiences that require qualitative approaches to surface (e.g., Rafferty & Restubog, 2011). Therefore, a qualitative approach is necessary to uncover the previously unexplored cognitive processes that explain why individuals differentially engage in distinct identity work profiles following abusive supervision. Such processes are inherently interpretive and meaning-based, making them difficult to detect using quantitative designs alone. Accordingly, research question

1 asks: What cognitive processes contribute to differences in identity work profiles when individuals face challenging or abusive leadership? The qualitative phase focuses specifically on identifying these cognitive antecedents of identity work variation. Although additional downstream mechanisms may shape how identity work translates into behavioural outcomes, the present research focuses specifically on motivation and performance. These outcomes are only briefly considered in Study 1, as their relationships are examined more directly in Study 2.

Procedure

In Study 1 (Qualitative Phase), ethical approval was obtained from York University's Research Ethics Board, and all participants provided informed consent prior to participation. Participants were identified through purposive sampling and recruited via professional networks and online postings (see Participant Recruitment section below for details). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with individuals who had experienced abusive supervision. Questions were developed based on existing theory. The primary researcher gathered rich descriptions of participants' experiences of abusive supervision, how these harmful occurrences motivated individuals to modify or reinterpret their beliefs about themselves, their perceived justification for why they engaged in identity work following abuse, and the behaviour that followed.

Data Collection

For Study 1 (Qualitative Phase), purposive sampling was utilized to recruit individuals with first-hand experience of abusive supervision within the past two years. This non-probability sampling strategy is particularly useful when knowledgeable participants are needed to provide deep insight into a targeted phenomenon (Tongco, 2007). As Patton (1990) emphasizes, purposeful sampling seeks "information-rich cases for study in depth" (p. 169), and Bernard (2002) similarly argued that such participants are more capable of discussing their experiences

thoroughly and meaningfully. Specifically, criterion sampling, as a subtype of purposive sampling, was used to identify individuals who met the inclusion criteria for this study (Palinkas et al., 2015).

To be eligible for participation, individuals were required to: (1) be at least 18 years of age; (2) be able to communicate effectively in English to ensure their ability to articulate their experiences during the interview process; and (3) report having experienced abusive supervision within the past two years, defined in accordance with Tepper's (2000) conceptualization as "subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact" (p. 178). The two-year timeframe was selected to balance recency of recall with the likelihood that participants had sufficient time to reflect meaningfully on their experiences. Participation was voluntary, and individuals were assured they could withdraw at any time without penalty. Interested individuals contacted the researcher and were screened via email to confirm that they met the inclusion criteria prior to scheduling an interview.

Participant Recruitment

Recruitment occurred through the researcher's personal and professional networks, including direct email outreach, as well as public postings on LinkedIn and relevant Reddit forums. A total of 28 participants were interviewed, representing a purposeful range of ages, professions, demographic backgrounds, and geographic locations to capture diverse perspectives.

Interviews were conducted for approximately 45 minutes to one hour in a semi-structured format. Interview questions addressed experiences of abusive supervision, identity work strategies, organizational support and context, leadership styles, emotional reactions, coping mechanisms, behaviours, and self-perceptions. Prior to full implementation, five pilot interviews

were conducted to assess and refine the flow and suitability of interview questions. These pilot interviews helped evaluate question sequencing, point out potential redundancies, and ensure that the prompts associated with questions produced nuanced and rich accounts of participants' experiences with abusive supervision and identity work processes. Minor refinements were made after the pilot interviews, including streamlining demographic questions, reducing overlap across sections to decrease redundant questioning, and enhancing the clarity and focus of prompts related to sensemaking, attribution, and identity work. As these changes did not significantly alter the core content or focus of the interview protocol, the pilot interviews were included in the final analysis. All interview questions are provided in Appendix B.

Interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent and transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Signed consent forms were collected prior to each interview. To protect participant confidentiality, identifying information was removed from transcripts and stored separately from the data, using ID codes rather than names. All digital data was password-protected and securely stored.

Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously. Interviews continued until thematic saturation was reached, meaning that additional interviews no longer produced new insights related to participants' sensemaking processes, identity work responses, or contextual interpretations of abusive supervision (Guest et al., 2006). During the later stages of data collection, new interviews reinforced previously identified patterns and did not offer additional themes. Thus, by 28 interviews it was clear that sufficient depth and variation had been achieved to support robust thematic development.

Data Analysis Methods

In Study 1 (Qualitative Phase), data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis within a constructivist epistemological framework. The fundamental belief driving this phase of the research is that individuals who have experienced supervisory abuse are the authorities of their own lived experiences (Masood et al., 2021). Therefore, the analysis adopted a constructivist epistemological stance, recognizing that meaning is co-constructed through personal interpretation and the influence of social and organizational contexts (Braun & Clarke, 2019b). Constructivism argues that individuals construct meaning through interactions with their environments rather than merely discovering an objective reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This is important in the present context for capturing participants' interpretations and sensemaking processes. Further, constructivism acknowledges that multiple realities can coexist, and that each individual's interpretation is a valid account of their experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In Study 1, reflexive thematic analysis was used to address the first research question: the cognitive processes that lead individuals to differentially engage in identity work following abusive supervision. Thematic analysis was selected because it is particularly effective for examining subjective perceptions, emotional reactions, and sensemaking processes embedded in lived experiences (Guest et al., 2011), including workplace identity disruption (Heydarian, 2016). It provides analytical flexibility while allowing for rich interpretation of complex and sensitive workplace phenomena, such as abuse and coping (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis enables researchers to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns of meaning, making it appropriate for investigating how individuals construct and communicate their lived experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Further, unlike methodology-bound approaches such as grounded theory or interpretive phenomenological analysis, reflexive thematic analysis offers theoretical and methodological flexibility (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019a), making it compatible with a

constructivist epistemology. This aligns with the goal of understanding nuanced differences in identity work strategies among those who experience abusive supervision.

Using an inductive approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006), transcripts were examined iteratively to identify recurring themes and patterned meanings across cases. Codes were developed inductively from participants' narratives rather than created a priori, and themes were compared across transcripts to identify clusters of co-occurring patterns. The analytic process involved multiple iterative cycles of coding, categorization, and comparison across participants' accounts to identify patterns in sensemaking, identity work, and behavioural responses. The analysis also explored participants' perceptions of how these identity work profiles relate to motivation and performance outcomes, providing insights that inform and complement the subsequent quantitative stage of this mixed-methods study.

Consistent with Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke's (2006; Clarke & Braun, 2013) guidelines, the analysis followed six stages: (1) familiarization with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report.

Manual coding techniques were applied to analyze the data. This technique is in accordance with one school of thought that, while qualitative data analysis software such as NVivo offers advantages in data management and efficiency, limitations exist that support the use of manual coding. For example, Isangula (2024) noted that manual coding gives researchers a better opportunity to communicate and connect with the data, which is particularly important in understanding complex emerging phenomena. Maher et al. (2018) also contend that manual coding allows for more meaningful interaction with the data, as the physical processes of writing, arranging, and visually mapping data lead to deeper engagement and iterative sensemaking. This

approach allows researchers to refine emerging patterns over time. In contrast, Maher et al. (2018) note that software-based analysis may fragment the data and limit the researcher's ability to maintain a complete picture of participants' experiences. Finally, Zamawe (2015) notes several advantages of the manual approach, including that software-assisted approaches may risk distancing the researcher from the broader context of participants' narratives and may influence research design and analytic decisions. Given the interpretive and exploratory nature of this study, manual coding was therefore considered more appropriate to support deep engagement with participants' sensemaking and identity work processes.

To enhance credibility and trustworthiness, the researcher maintained reflexive notes and engaged in iterative review of emerging patterns throughout the analytic process. Reflexive memos were used to consider assumptions and support analytic transparency, consistent with Patton's (1990) recommendations.

Coding began with first-cycle line-by-line coding of each transcript to capture meaningful segments of participants' narratives related to how they interpreted and responded to abusive supervision (Saldaña, 2021). These codes focused on participants' sensemaking processes, identity-related reflections, and outcomes following abusive experiences. Examples of first-cycle codes included realizing their resilience, attributing challenges to external factors, positive qualities of a worker, focusing on others to distract oneself, refusing to comply, voicing outrage, emotionally checking out, anger, helplessness, learned helplessness, seeking external validation, refusal to alter values, leaving to find greater value alignment, and acting in conflict with morals, among others. These lower-level codes reflected variations in participants' sensemaking processes, identity work responses, and behavioural reactions to abusive supervision. Initial coding was conducted using participants' own language where possible.

Verbatim quotes were retained during theme development to preserve the nuance of participants' meaning-making. This reflexive thematic approach recognizes that personal perspectives influence the analytical process while ensuring that participants' voices remain central (Terry et al., 2017).

Coding was conducted transcript-by-transcript, and earlier codes were iteratively refined as new interviews were analyzed. During second-cycle coding, conceptually related codes were grouped into broader categories through constant comparison across transcripts. This stage focused on identifying patterns in how participants explained the cause of the abuse, how they interpreted the experience in relation to their identity, and how they responded behaviourally or psychologically.

During this stage, the initial codes were organized into higher-order categories reflecting participants' sensemaking processes and identity-related interpretations of the abusive experience. These included patterns such as evaluating the triggering event, interpreting the motives or character of the supervisor, connecting the experience to broader beliefs about fairness or systemic barriers, reflecting on personal identity and values, and identifying emotional and behavioural responses such as rumination, withdrawal, resistance, or value affirmation.

Themes were reviewed against the full dataset to ensure they derived from multiple individuals rather than selective illustration. Through cross-case comparison, these categories were examined across participants to identify patterned similarities and differences in sensemaking processes and identity work responses. These patterns informed the identification of restoration-oriented and loss-oriented identity work strategies, which were further distinguished as active or passive responses. Identity work strategies included re-establishing the

self, values affirmation, setting personal boundaries, mindful self-presentation, hiding, derogation, and acceptance. Organizational motivation and behavioural outcomes were also explored, although these relationships are examined more directly in Study 2.

Thematic saturation was reached when additional interviews no longer generated new codes or conceptual insights related to participants' sensemaking processes, identity work responses, or interpretations of abusive supervision (Guest et al., 2006). The results of Study 1 form a theoretical model that informs the subsequent quantitative phase (Study 2). A more detailed explanation of how the identity work typology was derived from these analytic procedures is presented below.

Typology Development

Through an iterative process involving repeated cycles of coding, categorization, and constant comparison across cases (Neale, 2016), participants' narratives were examined to identify different identity work profiles. Building on the reflexive thematic analysis described above, participants' narratives were also examined to identify patterned configurations of meaning that formed the typology. Identification of these contextual patterns occurred concurrently with data collection, allowing emerging insights from earlier interviews to inform subsequent coding and comparison across cases.

Additional codes captured contextual conditions that were later examined but did not reveal consistent differences or patterned variation in identity work responses. These included whether participants experienced abuse individually (targeted) or as part of a group, whether alternative organizational support systems were present, and whether demographic factors such as cultural background, gender, or other personal characteristics shaped how participants

interpreted the situation. Other contextual factors considered included participants' level of work experience, career success, and perceived availability of alternative employment opportunities. Guided by the reflexive thematic analysis approach described earlier, coding focused on patterns of meaning related to participants' cognitive appraisals, emotional responses, identity work strategies, perceptions of causality and power, and subsequent motivational implications. The analysis aimed to identify both shared patterns across cases and meaningful differences in how individuals interpreted and responded to abusive supervision.

As coding progressed, similar codes were grouped together and refined through constant comparison. For example, codes related to questioning supervisors' motives, evaluating workplace norms, and interpreting organizational culture were grouped under broader concepts related to attributional interpretations of the abuse. Similarly, codes reflecting prior experiences with difficult supervisors, reflections on family or past work experiences, and discussions of coping strategies were categorized under participants' perceived preparedness to cope with the experience. Memos were used to document interpretations and track changes in coding.

Through ongoing comparison across cases, patterned differences began to emerge in how participants explained the cause of the abuse and in how prepared they felt to cope with adversity. These distinctions became evident as participants' narratives highlighted variations in sensemaking processes, rumination patterns, and identity work strategies. Through cross-case comparison, two dimensions (attributional framing and perceived preparedness) consistently emerged as structuring how participants interpreted and responded to abusive supervision.

Drawing on principles of typology development (Miles et al., 2014), cases were then systematically examined across these two dimensions to determine whether configurations of meaning and response clustered together. Following Miles et al.'s (2014) guidance, cases were

compared across these dimensions to identify recurring configurations of responses and assess how individual narratives aligned along each dimension. This analysis highlighted distinct combinations of attributional interpretations and perceived preparedness. Raw transcripts were revisited to ensure that groupings presented internal consistency in narrative patterns and clear differentiation from alternative configurations. Through iterative refinement, four identity work profiles emerged, each with a distinct combination of how participants explained the abusive experience and how prepared they felt to cope with it.

Alternative categorizations were explored, including grouping participants by emotional intensity or by specific identity work strategies alone. However, these approaches did not account as consistently for variation in how cognitive appraisals, sensemaking, and identity work took place. Analytic memos were used throughout to document emerging interpretations, track shifts in coding decisions, and refine distinctions between cases.

Quantitative Phase

Overview and Purpose of the Quantitative Phase

The quantitative phase examined whether the distinct identity work profiles and contextual distinctions identified in Study 1 were associated with differential motivational and performance outcomes. While the qualitative findings clarified how individuals interpret and respond to abusive supervision, Study 2 tested whether these identity-related processes translate into differences in work motivation and performance.

Building on the theory-generating insights from Study 1, Study 2 operationalized key constructs and evaluated the proposed relationships within a larger and more diverse sample. This phase tested whether abusive supervision predicts variations in sensemaking and identity work, and whether these processes, in turn, are associated with differences in motivation and

work performance. Additionally, Study 2 examined the moderating roles of causal attributions and perceived preparedness to determine whether contextual interpretations shape the strength of these relationships. Study 2 also strengthens the theoretical framework by assessing the generalizability and structural validity of the proposed relationships.

Research Design

Study 2 (Quantitative Phase) employs a survey-based quantitative design to expand the qualitative findings within a larger and more diverse sample, consistent with a sequential exploratory mixed-methods approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Mixed-methods designs are particularly important when a phenomenon is complex and insufficiently understood, and combining qualitative and quantitative approaches allows the strengths of one method to compensate for the limitations of the other (Venkatesh et al., 2013). Further, this sequential design supports methodological rigor through triangulation and improved validity (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009). A quantitative methodology is well-suited to evaluate these outcome differences because of its strength in identifying broader patterns, ensuring generalizability, and enabling comparisons across subgroups (Queirós et al., 2017; Alba, 2011).

Building on the findings of Study 1 (Qualitative Phase), the identity work profiles serve as a framework for categorizing participants in Study 2 (Quantitative Phase). This framework enables the examination of how survey items load into these profiles, revealing patterns that differentiate identity work responses based on participants' underlying assumptions and contextualized coping strategies.

Motivation and performance outcomes were selected due to their strong theoretical links with identity processes. IBM theory suggests that an individual's sense of identity plays an influential role in shaping motivation and behaviour (Oyserman, 2015). Identity work is goal-

directed and can stimulate behavioural change following workplace mistreatment (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008). Further, when individuals experience identity threat due to power imbalances, engaging in proactive identity work strategies can enhance their perceived identity and support more adaptive functioning (Mishra et al., 2020). Therefore, different identity work profiles are expected to elicit variations in motivation and performance outcomes.

In sum, by examining how distinct identity work profiles relate to motivation and performance, Study 2 strengthens theoretical understanding and provides practical pathways for organizations to support employees in maintaining a positive sense of identity following abusive supervision, thereby complementing and extending the insights gained from the qualitative phase.

Procedure and Data Collection

For Study 2 (Quantitative Phase), ethics approval was obtained from York University's Research Ethics Board, and all participants provided informed consent prior to participation. Prior to launching Study 2, a pilot study was first conducted with 20 participants recruited through personal contacts and social media postings to assess the clarity, usability, and expected time required to complete the survey. Pilot studies are utilized to test aspects of the study such as data collection procedures, recruitment and consent processes, and whether the selected outcome measures are understandable, reliable, and feasible for use in the target sample (Lancaster et al., 2004). Pilot participants completed the full questionnaire, reported the time it took, and provided feedback on any issues encountered. Members of the research committee also reviewed the pilot to identify ambiguities. Minor adjustments were made before launching the full study.

After revisions, recruitment occurred through the online research platform Prolific. In this study, purposive sampling was utilized. This method is especially useful when the goal is to obtain

information-rich data from individuals who have unique knowledge or experience related to the research topic (Etikan et al., 2016). Purposive sampling allows researchers to deliberately select participants based on characteristics that make them well-suited to offer meaningful insight into the phenomenon (Bernard, 2002). This technique is particularly appropriate when studying specialized experiences, such as abusive supervision, because it enables researchers to identify individuals who are proficient, knowledgeable, and well-informed about the topic (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Moreover, this approach is warranted because the broader population of individuals who have experienced abusive supervision cannot be enumerated, making probability sampling infeasible.

Data were collected through Qualtrics, and participants were recruited on Prolific. Online platforms provide reliable and valid data comparable to traditional sampling methods, making it useful for behavioural research (Buhrmester et al., 2018). Furthermore, Prolific provides high-quality data, reliable participant engagement, and diverse samples compared to other online platforms (Peer et al., 2017). Recent research comparing multiple online data collection platforms found that Prolific consistently produced among the highest-quality data, outperforming MTurk, Qualtrics, and SONA on attention, consistency and personality measure reliability (Douglas et al., 2023). Participants were compensated for completing the survey, consistent with Prolific's fair compensation guidelines. All responses were anonymous, and no identifying information was collected.

Eligibility criteria required participants to self-report experiencing abusive supervision within the past year. Survey methodology research has found an inverse relationship between recall period length and reporting accuracy, with longer recall windows increasing risks of forgetting and underreporting (Bhandari & Wagner, 2006). Accordingly, a one-year window was

selected to ensure that supervisor interactions and identity work responses were recent enough for participants to recall them with accuracy, to decrease the likelihood of retrospective bias. Studies in workplace mistreatment often assess construct prevalence using a one-year reference period, with several nationally representative surveys measuring reported exposure over the past year (e.g., Goh et al., 2022; Niedhammer et al., 2023). This differs from Study 1 (Qualitative Phase), which used a two-year window as the qualitative design relied on depth of narrative rather than measurement precision.

Participants were provided with Tepper's (2000) definition of abusive supervision and instructed to answer all questions with reference to the supervisor they identified. The survey assessed how individuals' identity work and sensemaking following abusive supervision relates to their motivation and work performance, and whether causal attributions or perceived preparedness impact this relationship. Information was collected through self-report surveys. Surveys allow for systematic data collection and are particularly well suited for testing theoretical models through structural equation modelling (SEM) (Groves et al., 2011). Self-report surveys are also appropriate when the goal is to understand individuals' internal states, perceptions, motivations, and subjective experiences, because these constructs cannot be directly observed (Fulmer & Frijters, 2009). All constructs were measured using validated self-report scales. Further, Study 2 employed a cross-sectional survey design as it allows information to be gathered within a short time frame while offering access to different outcomes and exposures (Rindfleisch et al., 2008). All instruments can be found in Appendix B.

A total of 420 participants completed the survey for Study 2, which took individuals on average 20 minutes to complete. This sample size was set to exceed minimum recommendations for SEM, which typically require at least 10–20 participants per estimated parameter or a minimum

of 200–400 participants for stable estimation (Kline, 2016). Larger samples increase model stability, improve power to detect indirect effects, and reduce estimation bias in complex models (MacCallum et al., 1999). Therefore, 420 responses ensured statistical power for multivariate analyses.

Following data collection, the dataset was cleaned. Cases were removed based on excessive missing data, failure of three attention checks, extreme scores on the social desirability scale, and responses inconsistent with Tepper's (2000) abusive supervision criteria, used as a secondary verification check. Because remaining missingness was minimal and missing at random (MAR) missing data were handled using full-information maximum likelihood (FIML) in the CFA and SEM analyses, which yields unbiased estimates and retains statistical power under MAR assumptions (Kline, 2016). After screening, 420 valid cases were retained for analysis. Following data screening and preparation, descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among study variables were examined.

Measures

Dependent Variables

Goal Motivation. Goal motivation was assessed using a modified version of the goal pursuit scale from Greenaway et al. (2015). The original items were adapted to reflect motivation toward personal goals in both workplace and non-work contexts, resulting in two three-item subscales: Outside-of-Work Goals and Work-Related Goals. A sample item from each subscale includes, “I put a lot of effort toward achieving my goals outside of work” *and* “I put a lot of effort toward achieving my goals at work.” Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). In the present sample, internal consistency

was high for both subscales (Work-Related Goals: $\alpha = .89$, CR = .89, $\omega = .89$; Outside-of-Work Goals: $\alpha = .90$, CR = .91, $\omega = .91$).

Work Motivation. Work-related motivation was assessed using the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS; Tremblay et al., 2009). This 18-item measure evaluates motivational regulation across six subtypes: Intrinsic Motivation, Integrated Regulation, Identified Regulation, Introjected Regulation, External, and Amotivation. Amotivation lies at the low end of the continuum, which reflects a state in which individuals either lack the intention to act or act passively (Tremblay et al., 2009). Sample items included, “Because I want to be very good at this work, otherwise I would be very disappointed.” Participants responded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“does not correspond at all” to 5 (“corresponds exactly”). In the present sample, internal consistency ranged from acceptable to strong across subscales ($\alpha = .78$ –.87). Amotivation demonstrated strong reliability ($\alpha = .83$, CR = .77, $\omega = .77$). External Motivation was measured using two items; therefore, reliability was assessed using the Spearman–Brown coefficient.

Performance. Work performance was assessed using two subscales from Kuvaas and Dysvik (2010): Work Effort and Work Quality. The Work Effort subscale contains five items measuring the extent to which employees exert effort and go beyond minimum job requirements (e.g., “I try to work as hard as possible”). The Work Quality subscale contains five items assessing the degree to which employees produce high-quality work (e.g., “The quality of my work is usually high”). Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). In the present sample, internal consistency was acceptable for both subscales (Work Effort: $\alpha = .85$, CR = .84, $\omega = .84$; Work Quality: $\alpha = .80$, CR = .80, $\omega = .80$).

Mediators

Sensemaking. Sensemaking was assessed using the Need for Sense-Making Short Form (Cantarero et al., 2022). This 7-item measure evaluates individuals' dispositional tendencies to search for meaning, interpret novel experiences, and seek purpose in their actions. A sample item includes, "I prefer to do things that are meaningful." Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("not at all") to 5 ("very much"), with higher scores reflecting stronger motivation to make sense of experiences. In the present sample, the scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .81$, CR = .82, $\omega = .82$).

Moderators

Perceived Cause of Abuse. To assess how participants interpreted the source of abusive supervision, a single forced-choice item was developed for this study. Participants indicated whether they primarily attributed the supervisor's abusive behaviour to characteristics of the supervisor as an individual (e.g., personality, emotions) or to broader organizational or societal structures (e.g., power systems, leadership culture). This item captures whether participants' explanations of the abuse reflect individual-level attributions or systemic attributions. This measure was used as a categorical grouping variable. Single-item indicators are acceptable when the construct is narrow, clearly defined, and unidimensional, and when face validity is high (Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2009). Given that there is not an existing validated measure assessing causal attribution in abusive supervision contexts and the theoretical importance of this distinction for identity work interpretation, this item was deemed appropriate. As a single-item categorical indicator, internal consistency reliability was not applicable.

Preparedness. The Proactive Coping Inventory (PCI; Greenglass et al., 1999) was used to assess individuals' proactive coping tendencies as an indicator of perceived preparedness to

deal with negative supervisory behaviour. Although designed to measure proactive coping rather than preparedness directly, proactive coping reflects the process of anticipating potential stressors and taking action in advance to manage them effectively, which aligns with feeling psychologically prepared for challenging situations (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997). Thus, proactive coping was used as a theoretically grounded proxy for preparedness, as no validated preparedness measure specific to workplace mistreatment currently exists. The PCI has been widely used in high-quality organizational and psychological research (e.g., Diehl et al., 2006; Wang et al., 2023).

The PCI consists of 55 items across seven subscales. For relevance to the present context, three subscales were administered: proactive coping, reflective coping, and strategic planning, resulting in a 29-item scale. In the present sample, internal consistency was strong across subscales (Proactive Coping: $\alpha = .91$, $CR = .91$, $\omega = .91$; Reflective Coping: $\alpha = .89$, $CR = .89$, $\omega = .89$; Strategic Planning: $\alpha = .80$, $CR = .80$, $\omega = .80$). A sample item includes, “When I have a problem with my co-workers, friends, or family, I imagine beforehand how I will deal with them successfully.” Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“not at all true”) to 5 (“completely true”).

Independent Variable

Abusive Supervision. Participants were first provided with Tepper’s (2000) definition of abusive supervision and then responded to a screening item asking whether they had experienced such behaviour within the past 12 months. Those who indicated they had not were screened out. Participants then completed the Abusive Supervision Scale (Tepper, 2000), a 15-item measure assessing the frequency of supervisor behaviours perceived as abusive. A sample item is, “My boss puts me down in front of others.” Responses were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale

ranging from 1 (“I cannot remember him/her ever using this behaviour with me”) to 5 (“He/she uses this behaviour very often with me”). In the present sample, internal consistency was excellent ($\alpha = .92$, $CR = .92$, $\omega = .92$). Administering this scale again helped ensure participants met the study’s inclusion criteria by confirming their experience of abusive supervision.

Controls

Social Desirability. Social desirability bias was assessed using the 10-item short form of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972). This measure evaluates respondents’ tendencies to provide favourable self-presentations. A sample item includes, “I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone’s feelings.” Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). This scale was included to account for potential response bias and considered as a control variable in analyses. In the present sample, internal consistency was acceptable ($\alpha = .76$, $CR = .77$, $\omega = .76$).

All models controlled for abusive supervision and gender, age, job level, industry, region, work arrangement, work experience, abuse duration, abuse recency, multiple abuse, partnership status, parental status, and caregiving responsibilities. Attention check items were embedded throughout the survey to monitor participant engagement and data quality. Participants who failed three attention checks were excluded from the analytic sample.

Data Analysis Methods

In Study 2 (Quantitative Phase), data were analyzed using SEM in Stata 19. SEM was used to test the hypothesized relationships among abusive supervision, sensemaking, motivation, goal motivation, and work performance. SEM can be applied with non-probability samples, provided that potential effects of sampling on means, variances, and covariances are carefully evaluated and interpreted (Goodman & Blum, 1996). SEM is well suited to Study 2 because it

allows for the simultaneous estimation of multiple regression equations, the modelling of latent variables with measurement error, and the testing of complex structural relations among constructs (Nusair & Hua, 2010; Rai et al., 2019).

Prior to estimating the structural models in Study 2, descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations were computed for all study variables. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was then conducted to evaluate the measurement model. Latent factors were specified to load on their respective items, and model fit was evaluated using χ^2 , the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) with 90% confidence intervals, and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). Conventional guidelines (e.g., CFI/TLI $\geq .90$, RMSEA $\leq .08$, SRMR $\leq .08$) were used to assess acceptable fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2016). Standardized factor loadings, residuals, and modification indices helped pinpoint problematic indicators.

Common method variance was examined following Podsakoff et al.'s (2003) recommendations using both procedural and statistical approaches. Statistically, Harman's one-factor test was conducted using both a single-factor confirmatory factor analysis and a principal factor analysis. In addition, a common method factor approach was estimated, and changes in global fit indices were examined to assess the potential influence of CMV. In Study 2, missing data were minimal and consistent with MAR assumptions. Thus, models were estimated using FIML, implemented as maximum likelihood with missing values (MLMV) in SEM, which produces less biased estimates and retains statistical power under MAR assumptions (Kline, 2016). MLMV estimates model parameters using all available observed data without imputing missing values, thereby retaining all available information and avoiding the loss of cases associated with listwise deletion.

For Hypotheses 1 and 2 (mediation), SEM models were specified in which abusive supervision predicted sensemaking, and sensemaking in turn predicted each composite outcome (motivation dimensions, goal motivation, and performance), with both direct and indirect paths estimated. Partial and full mediation models were compared using fit indices (CFI, TLI, RMSEA, SRMR) and information criteria (AIC, BIC). Indirect effects were obtained using SEM's `estat teffects` command, and their significance was evaluated using z-tests and 95% confidence intervals.

For Hypotheses 3–5 (moderation), sensemaking was operationalized as a latent factor score, while preparedness and causal framing were standardized continuous variables. Interaction terms (Sensemaking $\times$ Preparedness, Sensemaking $\times$ Causal Framing, and the three-way interaction for Hypothesis 5) were created as product terms and entered into SEM path models predicting each composite outcome. All models controlled for abusive supervision and gender, age, job level, industry, region, work arrangement, work experience, abuse duration, abuse recency, multiple abuse, partnership status, parental status, and caregiving responsibilities. Significant and marginal interactions were probed using simple slope analyses at ± 1 SD of the moderators, and group correlations were examined as a follow-up.

Limitations

As this dissertation utilizes a mixed-method design, the limitations associated with each study are discussed separately. Study 1 presents limitations related to reflexive thematic analysis and narrative self-report data, while Study 2 outlines methodological constraints associated with survey-based, cross-sectional quantitative research.

Study 1: Qualitative Study Limitations

Study 1 is subject to several methodological limitations.

Researcher Bias and Subjectivity. The first limitation is that researcher bias and subjectivity in the interpretation of themes can arise during the process of thematic analysis. However, steps were taken to mitigate and manage bias. Researchers were mindful of their theoretical assumptions and engaged in ongoing reflexive practices. Braun and Clarke (2022) highlight the importance of situating thematic analysis theoretically, recognizing that researchers bring assumptions about reality and knowledge to the analytic process. Thus, the researcher kept a reflexive journal and wrote analytic memos throughout data collection and analysis to document assumptions, decision points, and evolving interpretations (Olmos-Vega et al., 2023). Additionally, committee checking and validation of the analysis helped surface potential subjective biases and supported a faithful representation of participants' experiences (Smith & McGannon, 2018). Finally, the analysis followed existing guidance on reflexive thematic analysis, including explicitly stating the theoretical positioning and engaging in a recursive, reflexive approach to meaning making rather than treating themes as objective discoveries (Braun & Clarke, 2023).

Oversimplification of Complex Data. The second limitation of the qualitative thematic analysis is the potential for oversimplification of complex data. Hence, the analysis utilizes an iterative and reflexive approach, ensuring that coding and theme refinement are grounded in the research questions while remaining open to complexity and nuance (Braun & Clarke, 2023). Further, direct quotations are utilized (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Transparency in reporting, with vast description and the inclusion of direct quotations, offers readers with insight into the analytic process and helps prevent the flattening of meaning (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Finally, given that identity work is multifaceted and influenced by numerous factors, the analysis

acknowledges that the themes developed represent only one theoretically informed interpretation rather than an exhaustive account of all potential reasons for differences in identity work.

Self-Report Narratives. A final limitation of Study 1 is the reliance on self-report narratives. Such narratives can suffer from recall bias, emotional reflection, or be misrepresented due to the passage of time. Prior research notes that retrospective accounts are shaped by both memory and individuals' current interpretations and emotions (Flick, 2018). Narrative scholars similarly highlight that individuals construct accounts that are interpretive rather than literal reproductions of events (Chase, 2018). Nonetheless, these interpretations remain valuable, as they offer insight into how individuals make sense of their experiences and how these meanings may inform subsequent workplace attitudes and behaviours.

Study 2: Quantitative Study Limitations

Study 2 is also subject to several methodological limitations.

Common Method Bias. First, common method bias may arise due to the use of single-respondent self-reports (Jap & Anderson, 2004). To mitigate this concern, both procedural (a priori) and statistical (post hoc) remedies were implemented. First, certain questions were reverse-coded and the order of presentation of quantitative measures was counterbalanced. The items were chosen for each variable such that there is minimal similarity in the content of items across variables. Further, Harman's single-factor test was conducted to test for common method bias (Harman, 1967). CFA was used to estimate parameters that will validate how well the theory fits the data or lead to the hypothesized relationships being rejected. A common latent factor was included in the statistical model to account for the variance that is shared among variables due to the method of measurement (Eichhorn, 2014).

Self-Report Data. The self-report may also be cause for concern in answering questions about employee performance. Some research has claimed that there may be incongruencies between how employees perceive their performance versus others' perceptions of their performance (Matilla & Enz, 2002). However, alternate research has emphasized that employees' perceptions of their own performance are meaningful predictors of motivation, behaviour, and workplace outcomes (Shaharyar et al., 2014). Moreover, meta-analytic research shows that self-reports correlate moderately with supervisory ratings, which highlight that they are neither random nor disconnected from job behaviour (Heidemeier & Moser, 2009).

Cross-Sectional Research. Additionally, an issue with the quantitative methodology is using cross-sectional research. The study only measures participants at a single point in time. Therefore, causality or temporal relationships between variables cannot be established (Bowen & Wiersema, 1999). Because abusive supervision experiences cannot ethically be manipulated or observed longitudinally in real time, a cross-sectional design was appropriate for Study 2. In contexts where outcomes are assessed only after an event, such as is often the case with incidents of abusive supervision, cross-sectional snapshots remain a legitimate and widely accepted approach (Capili, 2021). Further, cross-sectional research helps test theoretical models of how variables are related and efficient and cost-effective (Rindfleisch et al., 2008). While longitudinal research could lead to stronger evidence about temporal relationships and causality, a methodological review by Maier et al. (2023) notes to not dismiss the value of cross-sectional data, especially when researchers transparently report sampling, controls, and limitations.

Non-Random Sampling. Finally, given that non-random sampling is used to explore the quantitative aspect of Study 2, there is a potential for bias. Namely, there is potential for selection bias, limited generalizability, difficulty estimating sampling error, and difficulty in

causal inference. However, to some extent, SEM can partially account for the effects of non-random sampling (Goodman & Blum, 1996).

To mitigate the potential issues with the non-random sampling utilized in Study 2, namely, convenience sampling, the following methods will be employed, as suggested by Stratton (2021): The study objective will be clearly stated and the outcomes of interest are minimized to avoid confusion; detailed methods for participant recruitment will be outlined in the methods section; it will be further acknowledged that convenience sampling does not represent every member of the target group, and thus the generalizations will be limited; surveys will be validated using balanced input (positive, neutral, and negative) and confirmation questions; external factors will be identified to explore potential control factors (Stratton, 2021).

CHAPTER 4 - QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings from Study 1, which explored how individuals engaged in identity work following experiences of abusive supervision and the cognitive processes that shaped variation in these identity work responses. The chapter begins by introducing the emergent process model of identity work derived through iterative coding and thematic analysis. Next, an explanation is provided of how participants were analytically grouped based on attributional framing of abuse and perceived preparedness. The purpose of this chapter is to articulate the inductively derived patterns and distinctions that emerged from participants' narratives; these findings are conceptual insights rather than confirmatory evidence.

This chapter then outlines the sensemaking processes across the four identity profiles. These processes include belief appraisal and rumination. Subsequently, restoration-oriented and loss-oriented identity work strategies are examined, distinguishing between active and passive forms. The chapter concludes by outlining differences in motivation, performance orientation, and future trajectories across profiles, linking the qualitative findings to the subsequent quantitative phase of the research.

Model of Identity Work

Through iterative coding, whereby transcripts were repeatedly reviewed, codes were refined, and themes were compared across cases, a process model of identity work was inductively generated from the qualitative data. Rather than testing a predetermined framework, Study 1 explored how individuals interpreted and responded to abusive supervision and to identify recurring identity work patterns across cases. Across interviews, participants described experiencing identity disruption following abusive supervision, which initiated a sensemaking process that led to personal identity work. Analysis revealed that participants' attributional

framing of the abuse and their perceived preparedness to cope with adversity emerged as contextual distinctions that shaped their identity work patterns.

Participants varied in whether they engaged in restoration-oriented or loss-oriented strategies, and whether these strategies were enacted actively or passively. Many described oscillating between approaches over time. These patterned variations formed the basis of distinct identity work profiles. Differences in these profiles were associated with divergent motivational tendencies and work-related orientations described by participants.

Figure 3 illustrates the emergent process model derived from the qualitative findings (see Appendix B). This model serves as a conceptual foundation for the subsequent quantitative phase, in which selected propositions derived from these inductively generated distinctions are examined using quantitative methods. It is important to emphasize that this model is an interpretive synthesis of participants' narratives rather than a statistically tested causal structure.

 Insert Figure 3 about here

Participants

The 28 participants in this study come from diverse professional and personal backgrounds. In terms of gender, 53.57% are men and 46.42% are women. Their ages range from 21 to 65, with 28.57% between 20-29 years old, 32.14% between 30-39, 17.86% between 40-49, 14.29% between 50-59, and 3.57% between 60-69. The participants occupy roles in various industries, including health research, insurance, finance, manufacturing, tourism, mental health, and government. Educational backgrounds also vary widely: 10.71% hold a PhD, 35.71% a Master's degree, 2.57% a JD in Law, 29.29% an undergraduate degree, 2.57% a post-graduate certificate, and 7.14% a high school diploma. Marital and family statuses are equally diverse,

with participants ranging from married to single, divorced, or engaged. Some are single parents, while others are part of blended families with stepchildren. Geographically, participants are spread across various regions of Canada and the United States, with some located internationally in places such as Singapore and the Philippines. For further details, refer to Table 4 for a complete breakdown of participants. In presenting the findings, pseudonyms are assigned to participants to protect confidentiality while preserving the narrative integrity of their accounts. Participant numbers are retained in parentheses for analytic reference.

 Insert Table 4 about here

Emergence of Identity Work Profiles

Analysis revealed four identity work profiles reflecting how individuals interpreted the source of abuse and how prepared they felt to cope with adversity. Two key dimensions structured these interpretations: attributional framing of the abuse and perceived preparedness. These dimensions produced four distinct patterns of response, reflecting differences in how individuals made sense of abusive supervision and how prepared they felt to respond to it.

The first dimension distinguishing the identity work profiles concerned attributional framing of the abuse. While some individuals attributed the wrongdoing to specific supervisors or “bad actors,” others understood the abuse as rooted in systemic inequities. Participants who framed the abuse as isolated to individuals often described attempts to understand the perpetrator’s personality, motives, or personal history, reported feeling personally targeted, and adopted strategies aimed at resisting or psychologically detaching from the abuser. In contrast, those who interpreted the abuse as systemic more frequently critiqued power dynamics, institutional norms, and structural inequalities.

For example, James (P18), a 40-year-old consultant with advanced training in human behaviour, framed the abuse in interpersonal terms, reflecting on individual personality differences rather than structural forces. He said: *“I learned a lot more about introversion and extroversion ... Understanding the flow of how people get their energy has really, really helped me.”* This reflection illustrates how James interpreted the abusive behaviour primarily through individual personality differences.

In contrast, others emphasized broader societal power dynamics or organizational factors rather than individual personality differences. For instance, Evelyn (P8), a 33-year-old accounting clerk working in a car dealership, explained, *“I think that my personality of seeing the world in terms of power dynamics makes it harder to deal with.”* This reflection suggests that Evelyn interpreted the abusive behaviour through a broader lens of systemic power relations rather than attributing the experience to the personality or characteristics of a specific supervisor.

The second dimension distinguishing the profiles involved perceived preparedness. Participants differed in the extent to which they felt equipped to cope with adversity. Some described prior experiences that had helped them develop boundaries, interpretive frameworks, and coping strategies, enabling more contained or strategic responses. Others reported feeling ill-equipped, even when they had encountered similar situations previously, often because earlier experiences had not been fully processed or integrated.

For some individuals, prior experiences were viewed as providing useful insights that helped them navigate abusive situations. The following quote from Li (P7), a 31-year-old social worker in a mental health institution who had witnessed abusive supervision across multiple contexts, highlights this felt preparedness by noting his experience, his education, and his reflection as helping him navigate these experiences:

Li (P7): "I have a little bit more experience to be able to say hey like this is not right... whereas a younger person with no resume...and this is your very first job, they would have a lot less power to be able to speak up in their organization."

This reflection illustrates how Li drew on past experience and professional knowledge to interpret the abusive behaviour and felt more capable of confronting it.

Meanwhile, others did not view their past experiences as informative or preparatory. For example, Mark (P1), a 52-year-old former Director of Administration at a Canadian university with over two decades of diverse work experience, explained that his past successes created a sense of overconfidence, which prevented him from recognizing the abuse early on and hindered his ability to respond effectively to the supervisor's behaviour, *"I've always been able to fix it...because of my confidence in myself and my ability, that's why I think, reflecting back, that's why I was so blind about how bad it was."* Mark's reflection illustrates how prior experiences did not translate into preparedness to address the abusive supervision. Instead, his confidence in his past ability to resolve workplace problems initially obscured the severity of the situation, leaving him less prepared to confront the abusive behaviour.

When these two dimensions were considered together, clear differences between participants' identity work responses became evident. Drawing on principles of typology development (Miles et al., 2014), cases were systematically examined across these dimensions to determine whether coherent configurations of meaning and response clustered together. This process involved repeatedly returning to the raw transcripts to ensure that emerging groupings demonstrated internal consistency in narrative patterns and clear differentiation from alternative configurations. Through iterative refinement, four analytically constructed identity work profiles were developed.

By mapping the perceived origin of abuse (individual versus systemic) against perceived preparedness (higher versus lower), a 2×2 typology of identity work responses emerged. Within the Perceived Lone Actor orientation, individuals who felt past experiences had not prepared them for the situation were categorized as Isolated Novices, whereas those who believed prior experiences had prepared them were categorized as Isolated Veterans. Within the Perceived Societal Embodiment orientation, individuals who felt unprepared were categorized as Societal Issue Novices, whereas those who perceived themselves as prepared were categorized as Societal Issue Veterans. Table 5 presents this 2-by-2 classification.

 Insert Table 5 about here

In sum, these findings suggest that individuals' responses to abusive supervision varied along two key dimensions: how they attributed the source of the abuse and how prepared they felt to cope with adversity. These dimensions produced four distinct identity work profiles: Isolated Novices, Isolated Veterans, Societal Issue Novices, and Societal Issue Veterans. While Isolated profiles interpreted the abuse as stemming from a particular individual, Societal profiles viewed the behaviour as embedded within broader organizational or systemic dynamics. Similarly, Novices reported feeling relatively unprepared to navigate the situation, whereas Veterans drew on prior experiences that helped them respond more strategically.

Overview of the Identity Work Profiles

Before presenting the quotes that illustrate differences among the four groups, this section briefly introduces each profile's characteristic sensemaking processes, identity work responses, and longer-term motivational trajectories.

Isolated Novices engaged in sensemaking that was primarily interpersonal, often focusing on the motives, character, or deficiencies of the abusive actor following the abusive treatment. Because they did not feel prepared to handle the abuse, identity disruption was significant. Identity work largely involved efforts to rebuild self-worth, repair confidence, and develop boundary-setting skills. They also commonly engaged in hiding aspects of the self and derogation. This group often experienced prolonged emotional distress and loss of confidence, alongside cautious and reactive career reassessment.

Isolated Veterans engaged in sensemaking that was similarly interpersonal but more pragmatic. Identity disruption was less destabilizing, and identity work focused on recalibration rather than reconstruction. Individuals in this group often refined their values, strengthened interpersonal skills, and set clearer boundaries to protect their sense of self. Their strategies tended to be more calculated. They also frequently decoupled self-worth from work and shifted toward making career decisions based on personal values and long-term goals rather than immediate emotional reactions.

Societal Issue Novices engaged in sensemaking that focused primarily on power structures and institutional forces. However, this systemic awareness was still emerging and often emotionally taxing. Identity work frequently involved exploratory reassessment of values, professional identity, and long-term direction. Members of this group engaged in significant identity questioning that sometimes extended beyond the workplace. Their motivational trajectories often involved ambivalence, redirection, and uncertainty.

Societal Issue Veterans' sensemaking processes were more ideologically integrated. With greater perceived preparedness, they were able to connect personal experiences to broader power dynamics. Identity work frequently took the form of values affirmation, resistance, and meaning

making, often accompanied by a drive for systemic change. While individuals in this group did experience emotional strain, they were generally able to maintain a stronger sense of identity coherence. Motivational outcomes included a recalibrated sense of purpose, greater focus on the intrinsic value of work, and in some cases commitment to advocacy or structural reform.

The following sections explore how these distinctions appeared across stages of sensemaking, identity work, and motivation and performance outcomes.

Self-Reflection/Sensemaking Process

The four identity work profiles that emerged, differentiated by their perceptions of the root cause of the abuse and their preparedness based on past events, displayed distinct processes of self-reflection and sensemaking following the abuse (see Figure 3). Figure 4 expands the sensemaking stage presented in Figure 3, illustrating this process, outlining a conceptual process model of sensemaking. Although visually appearing as a sequential progression from trigger evaluation to identity work outcomes, this model notes different thematic patterns identified across participants within each of the four groups, rather than a statistically tested mediation model. The stages illustrate how cognitive appraisals and sensemaking processes occurred within each identity profile.

 Insert Figure 4 about here

Across the four identity profiles, participants' sensemaking could be organized into three interrelated stages: (1) evaluation of the triggering abusive event, (2) belief appraisal and revision (including reflections on power, privilege, and interpersonal motives), and (3) emotional and cognitive rumination, which shaped their distinct identity work responses. Although each group moved through these stages, the content and direction of appraisal and rumination differed

depending on participants' perceptions of causality and preparedness. All participants began with an evaluation of the triggering abusive event, though differences across groups emerged more during belief appraisal and rumination and thus the following sections explain how Stages 2 and 3 manifested differently across the four identity profiles.

In terms of the differences across identity work profiles in how they engaged in sensemaking, all participants began by evaluating the triggering abusive event, but differences emerged in how they appraised the causes of the abuse and how they engaged in rumination. Isolated Novices tended to preserve beliefs in a just world when appraising the event and later engaged in rumination that often resulted in deep emotional upheaval. Isolated Veterans interpreted the abuse in interpersonal terms but focused on understanding personality differences or leadership competence, leading to more pragmatic rumination centered on how to work effectively with oneself and others. Societal Issue Novices began to recognize systemic barriers and power dynamics during sensemaking, though this awareness often produced confusion about how to reconcile their personal experiences with new recognition of power dynamics. In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans approached the abusive event through a more developed systemic lens, reviewing issues of privilege, oppression, and power structures and engaging in rumination that encompassed anger at systemic injustice and a desire for broader change. These differences in sensemaking will be described in greater detail in the following section.

Reflection on Privilege and Power Dynamics

This subsection corresponds to Stage 2 of Figure 4, in which participants engaged in belief appraisal following the abusive trigger. Specifically, participants reflected on power dynamics, privilege, and the structural versus interpersonal factors that caused the abuse. Differences across groups were pronounced at this stage.

Differences across identity profiles were evident at this stage. Isolated Novices tended to interpret power dynamics at the interpersonal level, looking at individual supervisors' behaviour or competence while preserving beliefs in a fair world. Isolated Veterans also framed abuse in interpersonal terms but reflected more pragmatically on leadership competence or personality differences. In contrast, Societal Issue Novices began to recognize broader systemic and structural dynamics, though this awareness was often accompanied by uncertainty. Societal Issue Veterans articulated the most integrated analyses of privilege, hierarchy, and institutional power. These differences across the four groups are explored in the following sections.

Within the Isolated Novices group, only one individual discussed feelings of injustice. However, consistent with the attributional style of this group, this individual framed power dynamics in terms of personal injustice and constrained agency rather than broader structural forces. This interpretation focused on individual leaders' shortcomings rather than systemic patterns of power. Lily (P11), a 30-year-old research professional at a not-for-profit organization who remained under the abusive supervisor at the time of the interview, expressed frustration at her perceived lack of power to address ongoing injustice:

Lily (P11): "I'm stuck in a place where I receive a lot of injustice. That's a bit frustrating and infuriating because at that time I couldn't do anything about it...I'm not sure if they have class or courses for managers or supervisors or people in those positions, but I believe they should start."

Lily's reflection illustrates how she attributed abusive behaviour to the shortcomings or lack of preparation of individual leaders rather than to broader structural or systemic dynamics.

Meanwhile, only two individuals in the Isolated Veterans group reflected on privilege. However, similar to the Isolated Novices group, these participants did not focus on broader perceptions of injustice, and these reflections were not extended into critiques of institutional or structural inequities. James (P18), who held a doctorate and described his household as

financially secure, remarked, “*Our household income is close to 400,000 a year. So, privilege plays a lot into this.*” Unlike Societal Issue Veterans, who linked privilege to broader structural power dynamics, James’ reflection remained individualized rather than extending into an institutional critique.

Meanwhile, individuals in the Societal Issue Novices group described a growing recognition of workplace power dynamics as they began to make sense of their experiences. Tereza (P20), a 25-year-old HR professional working in research and recruitment, reflected on how exploitative dynamics within recruitment organizations normalized excessive work while disproportionately benefiting supervisors:

Tereza (P20): In most agencies it works on sort of multi-level marketing principles. We all get bonuses, but the bonuses I get are nothing compared to what she earns.... So, for her, it's good if I work overtime...she will get more money and benefit from me overworking myself.

Tereza’s reflection illustrates how participants in this group began to recognize structural dynamics that incentivized overwork and advantaged supervisors. Meanwhile, other individuals in this group also recognized that, while they possessed some privilege based on factors such as socioeconomic status or race, this privilege did not shield them from difficult workplace experiences. Diwata (P26), a 29-year-old researcher in a government institution who had worked under her supervisor for nearly two years, reflected:

Diwata (P26): She hires certain people that wouldn't let go. Because from what I know, from all the hires that she hired, most of them come from a non-privileged background. She lures them with charisma, food, jobs. I am financially privileged, but emotionally, no.

Diwata’s reflection illustrates how this experience challenged her prior assumption that her privilege would protect her from such treatment, highlighting the emerging recognition of broader inequalities within the workplace.

Unlike Societal Issue Novices, whose recognition of power dynamics was emergent, Societal Issue Veterans demonstrated a more developed analysis of privilege and institutional power. Participants in this group identified aspects of their identities that both protected and constrained them but did so with less ambivalence than Novices. They recognized factors that afforded advantages, such as gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, education level, or experience. Wyatt (P9), a 40-year-old social worker who was working in foster care at the time of the abusive supervision, reflected on how aspects of his identity both exposed him to marginalization and, paradoxically, shielded him from certain negative consequences:

Wyatt (P9): “I don’t think I experience the push back from this quite as much as some people because I’m also trans.... And I think that status kind of protected me a little bit from some of this pushback, I was the favorite for a while.”

However, four participants also noted that demographic factors such as culture, gender, disability, or sexuality could inhibit them within these environments. Evelyn (P8) explained, “I’m autistic and autistic people stick out.” Evelyn’s reflection highlights how neurodivergence can create vulnerability within systems that are not designed to support such differences.

Notably, Societal Issue Veterans also articulated more developed critiques of how organizational structures allow abusive supervision to persist. Bruce (P14), a 39-year-old communications leader within a military-affiliated organization, reflected on how organizational hierarchies and privilege can enable abusive leaders to flourish:

Bruce (P14): “There’s maybe a reason psychologically that people like that move up in the ranks, because she was a task master and this younger woman who is relatively attractive in the government space, so, I think a kiss up kick down kind of person...So, I think it is systemic in American culture or just our culture in general.”

Bruce’s reflection illustrates how participants in this group connected abusive supervisory behaviour to broader institutional and cultural dynamics that allow such leadership patterns to persist.

In summary, as highlighted in Figure 4, clear differences emerged across the identity profiles in how participants interpreted power dynamics during belief appraisal. Isolated Novices and Isolated Veterans tended to interpret abusive supervision primarily at the interpersonal level, focusing on individual supervisors' behaviour or competence. In contrast, Societal Issue Novices and Societal Issue Veterans framed the abuse within broader structural and systemic dynamics. For Societal Issue Novices, this recognition of systemic forces was emergent and often accompanied by uncertainty or ambivalence. For Societal Issue Veterans, systemic awareness appeared more integrated and stable, allowing participants to more confidently situate their experiences within broader structures of power and privilege.

Beliefs About Others

This subsection further elaborates on Stage 2 of Figure 4. Specifically, it focuses on how participants appraised the motives and character of their abusive supervisors. Individuals amended their interpersonal beliefs. Differences across identity profiles were evident in how participants appraised the motives and character of their abusive supervisors. Isolated Novices tended to preserve beliefs in the inherent goodness of others. Isolated Veterans also relied on interpersonal explanations but framed the abuse more pragmatically, attributing it to leadership incompetence, personality differences, or role misalignment. In contrast, Societal Issue Novices began to recognize broader systemic dynamics, though their interpretations often involved moral tension as they both empathized with the supervisor while questioning the fairness of the system. Societal Issue Veterans had the most developed critiques and interpreted supervisory behaviour as intentional and embedded within structures of power.

Isolated Novices sought to reconcile what had occurred by attempting to understand the abusive supervisor in a way that allowed them to maintain a belief in a just world. This pattern is

evident in Melody's (P13) account, a 41-year-old social worker, who explained, "*I believe that people are good, innately good... I've come across people that make up things about their lives because they're insecure.*" Melody's reflection illustrates how abusive behaviour was interpreted as an anomaly or the result of individual insecurity rather than evidence of broader malicious intent.

Similarly, Isolated Veterans attempted to understand their supervisors by adopting a more pragmatic and empathetic lens. James (P18) described how he drew on his prior experience working with social workers as a child welfare investigator to cultivate empathy toward his supervisor, explaining, "*I try to at least understand him using empathy... Even if I don't agree with it... If I withhold all the empathy, I'll never understand it and then I'll never be able to help everyone work it out here.*" James' reflection illustrates how empathy was a strategic sensemaking tool. Rather than interpreting the abuse purely as injustice, he reframed the situation through understanding the supervisor's perspective, allowing him to protect himself and his subordinates.

Similarly, Domenic (P21), a 37-year-old director of security operations with over a decade of leadership experience, interpreted the abuse through the lens of leadership development and role misalignment, "*Because he was most senior, he was then elevated to director of security for six months. And then after six months, suddenly he's a chief officer... Way too fast for someone with less than a year of leadership experience.*" Unlike Isolated Novices, who sought to preserve beliefs in the inherent goodness of others, Isolated Veterans interpreted abusive behaviour more pragmatically, attributing it to leadership incompetence, poor role fit, or insufficient managerial training. These interpretations allowed them to externalize responsibility while developing more calculated strategies for navigating the situation.

Meanwhile, in the Societal Issue Novices group, some individuals began to frame abusive supervision as part of a broader systemic cycle in which supervisors themselves were also embedded. For example, Tereza (P20), who was early in her career and had worked under the abusive supervisor for only five months, described empathizing with her supervisor's personal struggles while simultaneously perceiving the broader work environment as gendered and unfair:

Tereza (P20): "I saw her many times to be on her phone, texting and then started crying and I realized that it's something like of a personal matter. I never commented about this because I understand that we are dealing with stuff in our personal lives and so, it really bothers me that she doesn't have the same empathy for me."

Tereza's reflection illustrates how belief appraisal began to incorporate broader systemic dynamics. However, consistent with the Societal Issue Novice profile, this recognition remained emotionally conflicted.

Societal Issue Veterans framed their beliefs about others in terms of intentional manipulation, alienation, and power struggles, often describing supervisors' behaviours as strategic rather than incidental. Participants observed deliberate behaviours intended to exclude or undermine them, such as being ignored in meetings or having their suggestions dismissed. Tyson (P24), a 50-year-old senior developer working in the healthcare sector, reflected on how he gradually recognized that his supervisor was abusing the team and that this behaviour disrupted both his work and the functioning of the group. Tyson explained, *"We're in a situation where our supervisor can abuse us at any time that they want to. They don't really seem to need to have a well thought out or pragmatic or documented reason for doing so. They just kind of find ways to find the sort of the victim of their current thing."* Tyson's account illustrates a recognition that abusive behaviour reflected the supervisor's intentional exercise of power.

In summary, and as depicted in Stage 2 of Figure 4, the critical divergence across groups occurred in how participants attributed motive and causality. Isolated Novices attempted to

reconcile the abuse while preserving beliefs in the goodness of others. Isolated Veterans also relied on interpersonal explanations but framed the abuse more pragmatically, attributing it to leadership incompetence, role misalignment, or personality differences. Societal Issue Novices began to recognize broader systemic and structural dynamics, though their interpretations were often accompanied by moral tension. In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans articulated more integrated critiques of power, interpreting abusive behaviour as intentional and embedded within hierarchical structures. These belief appraisals influenced the rumination processes discussed in the next section.

Rumination

This subsection corresponds to the Stage 3 of Figure 4, in which participants engaged in rumination as a cognitive and emotional response to their belief appraisals. At this stage, individuals revisited the abuse, integrated it with prior experiences, and grappled with what it meant to their own identity. Differences across groups arose in terms of the intensity of rumination, and the function and direction. Isolated Novices engaged in emotionally intense rumination with significant self-questioning. Isolated Veterans, while still experiencing distress, demonstrated more bounded rumination, often situating the experience within a specific organizational context. Societal Issue Novices engaged in rumination with moral tension as they struggled to reconcile compassion for others with emerging awareness of systemic unfairness. In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans displayed more integrative rumination, revisiting experiences to identify broader patterns of power.

For Isolated Novices, rumination involved self-questioning, linking present abuse to earlier relational patterns, and struggling to reconcile the experience with pre-existing beliefs in others' goodwill. This form of rumination often led to deep emotional disturbance. For instance,

Giacomo (P6), a 21-year-old business undergraduate student who worked as a customer experience associate and had since left the abusive workplace, described how the experience continued to shape his reactions even under a supportive supervisor after leaving the abusive environment:

Giacomo (P6): "I still do get scared to ask her questions. Because even though she literally said, 'you're doing great job' ...I'm scared to ask her questions even though she tells me, 'Oh just call me if you need something, don't worry' I'm trying to get over that."

Giacomo's account illustrates the lingering psychological impact of the abusive supervision, as fear and hesitation persisted even after transitioning into a supportive work environment. Similarly, Melody (P13), a 41-year-old social worker who had also been romantically involved with the abusive supervisor, connected her current distress to earlier relational patterns and questioned why she had continued to tolerate such treatment:

Melody (P13): "A part of it is working on, why did I allow this type of individual in my life number one, number two why did I continue to allow this person in my life. I have to look back at all of these unhealthy things that occurred as a child. And it was mainly directed towards my father because he was an alcoholic."

Melody's rumination highlights the persistent self-questioning characteristic of this group, as participants revisited earlier relational experiences in an effort to understand why they had remained in abusive situations.

In contrast, Isolated Veterans demonstrated more bounded rumination. Although they experienced distress, their reflections incorporated distancing strategies and temporal framing that helped contain the emotional impact of the abuse. Rumination remained present but was more controlled and contextualized. For instance, Jabari (P25), a 23-year-old undergraduate student working in housing and residential life at his university, acknowledged feeling anger and frustration but framed the experience as temporary:

Jabari (P25): “I was angry... But I did know that at one point, I was going to be done with the job...the industry doesn’t align with what I got my bachelor’s degree in. So even if it’s maybe, a lot of supervisors like this within that industry, I’ll never be in that industry again, so I just knew that it would pass at some point.”

By situating the experience as temporary and misaligned with his longer-term career path, Jabari was able to limit the emotional impact of the abuse and prevent it from destabilizing his broader sense of identity.

For Societal Issue Novices, rumination encompassed moral tension and identity conflict. Participants struggled to reconcile their compassion for others with emerging awareness of systemic unfairness. Their reflections often centered on the tension between maintaining empathy and protecting themselves from mistreatment. For these individuals, rumination functioned as an attempt to make sense of experiences that conflicted with their previously held moral beliefs.

Francesca (P27), a social worker working in a government-affiliated institution, described confusion and emotional turmoil as she tried to understand why such mistreatment occurred:

Francesca (P27): “It usually comes as a shock to me, because I always think that everybody’s intentions are good.... So, it’s hard for me because it’s a fine line between continuing to be a compassionate person and just cutting yourself off emotionally altogether to deal with the workplace.... And then, when things like this happen, it really throws me because I would never do that to somebody. Why are they doing that to me? And it just baffles me.”

Francesca’s account illustrates the moral dissonance characteristic of this group, as participants struggle with the tension between preserving their identity as compassionate individuals and confronting the reality of systemic mistreatment.

Unlike Societal Issue Novices, Societal Issue Veterans engaged in more integrative rumination. Rather than remaining primarily emotionally engrossed in the experience, they revisited abusive events to identify patterns and connect them to broader organizational and

societal power structures. In this group, rumination appeared to lead to meaning consolidation rather than prolonged emotional distress. Evelyn (P8) described how her reflections led her to interpret the abuse through systemic dynamics of culture and power:

Evelyn (P8): "I definitely feel like that's informed the way that I react to things. I see that it's a problem of people hiring people who are just like them. It's a problem of bad culture, it's a problem of ableism, it's a problem of so many different things. And that I don't really have agency over so it would be sadism to put that on myself."

Evelyn's reflection illustrates how participants in this group externalized responsibility for the abuse by situating it within broader systemic dynamics, which in turn reinforced a desire to challenge or change these structures.

In summary, and as illustrated in Stage 3 of Figure 4, rumination was a critical point in the sensemaking process. For Isolated Novices, rumination led to heightened emotional distress and prolonged identity disruption as participants repeatedly revisited the abusive experience and questioned themselves. Isolated Veterans also engaged in rumination, but their reflections were more bounded and often moderated through distancing strategies and temporal framing. Societal Issue Novices used rumination to grapple with emerging awareness of systemic dynamics, often accompanied by moral confusion and identity tension. In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans engaged in more integrative rumination, revisiting experiences to consolidate systemic interpretations and reduce identity destabilization. These differing rumination patterns shaped the identity work responses discussed in the next section.

Figure 4 summarizes the sensemaking pathways. Following trigger evaluation, Isolated Novices tended to preserve a belief in a just world during belief appraisal and subsequently engaged in rumination that linked the abuse to past experiences and intensified emotional upheaval. Isolated Veterans more often interpreted the abuse through interpersonal explanations related to leadership competence or personality differences and shifted toward bounded

rumination focused on navigating the experience pragmatically. Societal Issue Novices increasingly recognized systemic barriers and reported persistent rumination regarding both personal and structural challenges. Societal Issue Veterans, by contrast, more consistently interpreted the abuse through broader dynamics of privilege, oppression, and organizational power, engaging in rumination that often generated anger toward systemic injustice and a desire for change. Across profiles, these sensemaking pathways shaped the identity work responses described in the next section.

Identity Work

The patterned sensemaking pathways shaped how participants responded to identity disruption through identity work. Participants engaged in two overarching forms of identity work following identity disruption: restoration-oriented and loss-oriented strategies. These strategies took either active or passive forms.

Across identity work profiles, participants engaged in both restoration- and loss-oriented strategies, but the focus and function of these efforts differed by group. Isolated Novices often engaged in restoration-oriented identity work that involved rebuilding damaged self-worth alongside loss-oriented strategies such as shame-based hiding and self-derogation. Isolated Veterans also relied on restoration-oriented strategies, but their identity work focused on refinement rather than rebuilding, such as setting clearer boundaries and selectively concealing aspects of their experiences to protect their identity. Societal Issue Novices often used identity work to renegotiate identity in light of emerging systemic awareness, combining restoration through exploration and identity expansion with loss-oriented responses marked by embarrassment, social comparison, and doubts about personal and professional worth. Societal Issue Veterans, in contrast, engaged in identity work that was more action-oriented. Their

restoration strategies involved belief revision and values-based self-definition, while loss-oriented strategies were more strategic and often accompanied by resistance, exit, or identity integration rather than internalized blame. Figure 5 illustrates the identity work processes across the four profiles, showing differences in restoration- and loss-oriented strategies as well as active and passive forms of identity work. These identity work strategies are explored in the following sections.

 Insert Figure 5 about here

Restoration Oriented

Restoration-oriented identity work refers to efforts aimed at repairing, reaffirming, or strengthening one's sense of self following identity disruption. In this study, restoration-oriented strategies took both active and passive forms. Although all four profiles engaged in restoration-oriented identity work, the focus of these efforts differed. Isolated Novices worked to rebuild damaged self-worth and regain confidence following identity disruption. Isolated Veterans instead described refining and reaffirming an already established identity. Societal Issue Novices emphasized exploration and identity expansion. In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans grounded restoration in ideological reflection and belief revision. These differences are discussed in the succeeding subsections.

Active. *Re-Establish Self.* Re-establishing the self involved deliberate efforts to regain a coherent and valued sense of identity following the disruption caused by abusive supervision. Each group engaged in re-establishing the self. However, the ways in which they did so differed.

In the Isolated Novices group, individuals described a significant shift between their pre- and post-abuse sense of identity. Participants reflected on recognizing maladaptive tendencies and reassessing how they approached workplace interactions. For example, Giacomo (P6) described becoming aware of his people-pleasing tendencies and reframing how he handled conflict, *“I was trying to please too much with my work...I guess, that’s what I took from it. I guess that’s what I can use next in future work.”* Giacomo’s account highlights a growing awareness of aspects of his identity that he sought to change following the experience.

Isolated Novices also focused on repairing diminished self-worth. Participants described substantial losses of confidence and efforts to rebuild it. For example, Mark (P1) reflected on how the experience profoundly undermined his confidence, *“For most of my life I was used to having too much self-confidence and overestimating my abilities. Well, it went in totally other way. It wasn’t that I didn’t have much self-confidence. I had none.”* This account illustrates the extent to which abusive supervision destabilized participants’ sense of self, prompting efforts to re-establish a coherent identity.

In contrast to Isolated Novices’ efforts to re-establish their identity following significant threat, Isolated Veterans did not rebuild themselves from scratch but instead refined and reaffirmed an already developed identity. Their narratives emphasized clarifying and strengthening previously held values and leadership principles. Domenic (P21) reflected on how his experiences helped him understand what works for him and how it aligns with his moral convictions as a leader:

Domenic (P21): “I try to be a compassionate servant leader and understand where people are coming from. And so that has never left who I am... I went back to my faith, I went back to some of the greatest leaders of the faith in history... I was like, I kind of want to be, compassionate and servant, compassionately bold, be there for people if they’re going through a tough time, understand that they’re human too, but also bold and doing the right thing.”

Domenic's reflection illustrates how individuals in this group used the experience to strengthen and reaffirm aspects of their identity that they already valued, rather than reconstructing their sense of self.

Meanwhile, Societal Issue Novices emphasized exploration and rediscovery, often through activities outside of work that allowed them to distance themselves from stigmatized professional identities. At the same time, participants in this group described experiencing substantial identity disruption that prompted ongoing struggle and reflection. For example, Mark (P1), who held a PhD and had spent many years in senior leadership roles, described reconnecting with nature and education as a means of personal renewal, *"I'm trying to take control of my life...forcing myself to do the things that I was once passionate about, but I've lost that passion."* Mark's reflection illustrates the depth of identity threat experienced by individuals in this group.

Societal Issue Veterans re-established the self through ideological reflection and belief revision, often revisiting deeply held assumptions shaped by family, culture, or gendered power dynamics. Bruce (P14), who was raised in a military family and later attended the Naval Academy, reflected on how hierarchical socialization had shaped his earlier reluctance to assert his voice, prompting him to reconsider how he positioned himself in authority relationships, *"In the past not standing up for myself or not having a voice. Growing up in a military family, then joining the Naval Academy... not having a voice."* Bruce, like others in this group, used this reflection to reassess how prior socialization had shaped their identity and interpersonal positioning.

Meanwhile, Noor (P19), a former missionary team leader who had since left her faith while remaining married to a pastor and pursuing a PhD, described turning to feminist literature

and media as a means of critically re-examining her beliefs about power, gender, and identity, *“I’ve grown. But it’s taken a lot of reading feminist literature... Even fiction TV shows with strong women role models. Listening to podcasts talking about women being powerful, trying to change that mindset.”* Noor’s attention to feminist scholarship illustrates deliberate belief revision and the re-evaluation of long-standing assumptions about gender and authority.

Several participants also reframed these experiences as opportunities to reinterpret hardship and reaffirm aspects of their identity. Wyatt (P9) reflected on how confronting repeated challenges shaped how he understood himself, *“My growth as a person could not have happened if I hadn’t been through it.”* Wyatt’s reflection highlights how individuals in this group integrated difficult experiences into a broader narrative of identity development.

In summary, the groups differed in how they re-established the self following identity disruption. Isolated Novices focused on rebuilding diminished self-worth and correcting self-doubt. Isolated Veterans reaffirmed and refined previously established values and valued identities. Societal Issue Novices experienced substantial identity threat and attempted to renegotiate their identity in light of emerging awareness of systemic power dynamics. In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans engaged in deeper ideological reflection, revising beliefs about power, identity, and social systems.

Active. Values Affirmation. Within this category, participants described reasserting their core values following experiences of abusive supervision, although the way this occurred differed across groups. Among Isolated Novices, values affirmation was primarily used to preserve moral identity rather than to resist or challenge the organization. For example, Giacomo (P6) emphasized continuing to treat customers with respect and care, refusing to allow the abusive experience to alter how he treated others, *“I still love leaving a smile on the customer’s*

face as they left...it was nice giving them the respect they deserve. And I didn't let his abuse affect that because I'm not going to let what he does to me affect other people." This quote emphasizes the group's aim to preserve their moral identity.

Giacomo's account illustrates how individuals in this group reaffirmed their moral identity by maintaining prosocial behaviour despite mistreatment. However, this emphasis on preserving personal values also meant that individuals were less likely to confront the abusive supervisor directly. For instance, Giacomo (P6) explained that he refrained from criticizing his supervisor during his exit interview, *"I still didn't say anything about him...he even asked me said, can you please say something nice about me in the exit survey? And I was like, yeah, sure."* This example highlights how values affirmation functioned as a strategy for protecting personal identity rather than resisting the abusive authority.

Unlike Isolated Novices, Isolated Veterans carried over their values from other life domains as a means to affirm their identity. By anchoring themselves in stable relational and moral commitments, they protected their sense of self from being fully defined by workplace mistreatment, highlighting value they placed on other aspects of their identity. Stefan (P23), a 39-year-old proposal writer in the legal sector, described how focusing his identity on his family life strengthened his well-being and sense of self, *"Knowing that I have a strong loving family at home and that my main goals are to make them happy... so it's like I kind of tend to take things that happen outside my immediate family like less personally."* By emphasizing his role as a husband and father as his primary source of meaning, Stefan affirmed a stable value structure that reduced the emotional weight of workplace hostility.

Meanwhile, values affirmation among Societal Issue Novices involved actively reassessing which values continued to guide them and which required reconsideration. Unlike

the previously discussed groups, individuals in this group described modifying aspects of their value systems as part of renegotiating their identity following abusive supervision. For example, Mark (P1), who previously described prioritizing and protecting his subordinates, even shielding them from the abusive demands of his own supervisor, reflected on a shift toward self-prioritization once he left that position. As he explained, *“My first loyalties are to myself now. And that was never the case.”* This realization reflects how participants began to reinterpret broader power dynamics and reconsider their role within them.

Several participants also described adjusting personal values in response to lessons learned through the abusive experience. Ximena (P16), a 28-year-old clinical laboratory scientist in biotechnology who had previously defined herself through high achievement and performance, described recognizing traits that no longer aligned with how she wished to define herself, *“It’s shone light on certain traits that I think I should change.”* Her reflection illustrates how abusive supervision prompted identity work that involved reevaluating and redefining personal values.

In contrast, among Societal Issue Veterans, values affirmation often led participants to speak out and resist compliance, highlighting the action-oriented nature of this group’s identity work. For these individuals, reaffirming their values led to moral action rather than just a means of preserving identity. For example, Li (P7), a social worker with ten years of experience, reflected on the tension between the altruistic motivations that draw individuals to social work and the organizational systems that prioritize financial outcomes. As he explained, *“So it definitely makes you question your values because a lot of social workers get into the profession because they have certain values. And the way that we’re forced to practice conflicts with those*

values.” Li’s account illustrates how participants in this group resisted organizational expectations that conflicted with their values and instead opposed unethical practices.

In summary, the groups differed in how values affirmation functioned as a form of identity work following abusive supervision. Isolated Novices used values affirmation to preserve moral identity and maintain prosocial behaviour despite mistreatment. Isolated Veterans reaffirmed their values by grounding them in other meaningful aspects of their identity outside the workplace. Societal Issue Novices engaged in values reassessment as part of renegotiating their identity following emerging awareness of power dynamics. In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans enacted their values through moral resistance.

Active. *Setting Personal Boundaries.* Setting personal boundaries emerged as a key identity work strategy across groups. Individuals established interpersonal, emotional, and behavioural limits to protect their sense of self in the face of abusive supervision. Across groups, this strategy emerged differently.

Within the Isolated Novices group, individuals engaged in boundary setting primarily as a self-protective strategy. However, these efforts were often accompanied by uncertainty and a sense of personal responsibility for resolving the situation following workplace mistreatment. Participants attempted to establish limits by documenting interactions, seeking formal organizational intervention, and obtaining external validation in order to protect themselves from further harm. For example, Lily (P11) described creating a detailed record of abusive interactions and approaching HR as a way of formally challenging her supervisor’s behaviour:

Lily (P11): “I documented everything she said, what time, what date, where in the documents. HR read that and he was like, ‘Okay, what do you want us to do for you? I can talk to her for you.’ But in my mind, I was really scared because I knew how she would react. But I was like, ‘Okay, I have nothing to lose anyway’.”

These efforts reflect participants' attempts to address the situation while signaling that the supervisor's behaviour was unacceptable. Despite these efforts, several Isolated Novices struggled to assert effective boundaries. When boundary-setting proved unsuccessful, participants often sought external validation to counter self-doubt. For example, Alessandra (P5), a 49-year-old senior development professional in tourism and hospitality, described asking colleagues for perspective in order to determine whether the treatment she experienced was appropriate, *"Can you help me be objective about this? Am I reading too much into it? Am I taking it personally?"* These accounts illustrate how boundary setting in this group was often tentative and unstable.

In contrast, Isolated Veterans approached boundary setting with greater clarity and strategy, drawing on prior experience to protect their professional integrity. For example, Domenic (P21) described strategically coordinating with colleagues to present consistent complaints about the abusive supervisor, thereby asserting collective boundaries that limited the supervisor's power:

Domenic (P21): "We're like look if we're going to get him out of here like we have to make sure we're all saying the same overarching themes... if we keep saying the big hitters, the big themes then that's going to carry more weight....the first person who went, we were like, 'hey, what did the auditor really react to?...So we know what to emphasize.'"

This account illustrates how individuals in this group approached boundary setting in a calculated manner, as opposed to the more unstable responses observed among Isolated Novices. In addition, Isolated Veterans described using emotional disengagement as a boundary-setting strategy. Several participants reduced their level of personal investment at work, focusing only on meeting required responsibilities rather than extending additional effort. For example, Rajiv (P2), a 36-year-old manager at an insurance company, explained, *"I just did my role, and I put*

all my energy into getting the next one.” This strategy allowed participants to maintain psychological distance from the abusive environment while protecting their sense of self.

Among Societal Issue Novices, boundary setting often emerged alongside growing awareness of broader systemic dynamics. Participants described moving from passivity toward anger and frustration. Sandra (P3), a 65-year-old lawyer working in a financial technology organization who had experienced years of supervisory instability and prolonged exposure to abuse, captured this shift, *“I think just [company redacted] made me into that kind of a person where I just decided fuck you.”* This reaction illustrates how boundary setting in this group often emerged as a reactive response and an initial attempt to protect the self.

As participants became more aware of systemic dynamics, boundary setting also extended beyond the workplace, reshaping personal relationships and expectations of reciprocity. Asher (P28), a 32-year-old taxpayer service agent working for the government, noted, *“It’s allowed me to put boundaries on relationships in a way I don’t think I ever would have before. I’ve cut some friends out who I realized were not good for me anymore, I had outgrown their relationship, or it was never really a two-way street before.”* These accounts illustrate how boundary setting among Societal Issue Novices was often reactive and led to new realizations about the need for personal protection and relational limits.

Meanwhile, Societal Issue Veterans engaged in boundary setting as an act of resistance against systemic injustice. Hudson (P17), a 40-year-old email marketing specialist in the ecommerce sector, reflected on how his defiant stance led him to refuse unreasonable demands and challenge organizational practices he perceived as mechanisms of control. This response represented a deliberate form of noncompliance:

Hudson (P17): “I’ve had a lot of toxicity in my in my life, to the point where I try not to let it get me down and I’m going to fight it. I’m going to make it very uncomfortable for

them...a lot of the toxicity is based on the fact that they don't fear any retribution... So, I want to make them uncomfortable with making me uncomfortable."

Hudson's account illustrates how individuals in this group used resistance as a form of boundary setting. Rather than quietly protecting themselves or disengaging, participants actively confronted organizational practices they believed perpetuated abuse, reflecting the oppositional nature of boundary setting among Societal Issue Veterans.

In summary, boundary setting differed across the four identity work profiles. Isolated Novices attempted to establish boundaries as a form of self-protection, but individuals struggled with self-doubt. Isolated Veterans approached boundary setting more strategically. Among Societal Issue Novices, boundary setting often emerged reactively as growing awareness of systemic injustice triggered anger and led to efforts to protect the self. Finally, Societal Issue Veterans used boundary setting as a tactic of resistance, challenging organizational expectations and refusing compliance.

Taken together, active restoration strategies reflected distinct patterns across identity work profiles. Isolated Novices primarily engaged in rebuilding efforts, attempting to restore damaged self-worth and establish protective limits. Isolated Veterans refined and reinforced an already established sense of self, drawing on experience to strategically reaffirm values and manage interpersonal boundaries. Societal Issue Novices used active restoration to explore new aspects of identity and reassess values as they began to recognize broader systemic dynamics. In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans used active restoration strategies based on ideological reflection and resistance.

Passive. *Mindful Self-Presentation.* Mindful self-presentation emerged as a passive form of identity work utilized by individuals, whereby they attempted to protect their self-

concept by highlighting their competencies or accolades instead of challenging abusive dynamics.

For Isolated Novices, mindful self-presentation was typically used as a form of self-affirmation. Individuals highlighted their qualifications and professional experience to reinforce their competence and counteract negative perceptions. Participants frequently emphasized past achievements and technical skills as evidence of their capabilities, attempting to maintain a positive sense of self despite identity threat. For example, Alessandra (P5), who had over 20 years of work experience, reflected, *“I’ve never been a poor performer in my life, right? And so it was such an anomaly compared to 20 years prior that I just couldn’t fathom that I was that poor of a performer.”* Similar sentiments were echoed by Kwame (P4), who highlighted his formal training and experience, and Charlotte (P10), who emphasized her strong work ethic despite emotional strain, among others.

In addition, several participants externalized blame by reframing the abuse as a reflection of the supervisor’s character or incompetence rather than their own shortcomings. This strategy allowed individuals to reaffirm their professional identity and maintain a sense of competence. Charlotte (P10), a 50-year-old customer service representative who remained in the organization despite ongoing mistreatment, described how recognizing her supervisor’s broader pattern of behaviour helped her preserve her self-concept, *“I hear the way he talks about the receptionist... I hear the way he talks about the girl I replaced. It’s not me, it’s because of him.”* This illustrates how individuals used mindful self-presentation and attributional reframing to protect their identity.

In contrast, Isolated Veterans engaged in mindful self-presentation by strategically diversifying the sources of their identity and self-worth. Rather than relying solely on their

professional role, participants emphasized meaningful identities outside the workplace as a way to protect their sense of self. For instance, James (P18) described maintaining involvement in community activities, such as running a local charity, explaining, *“I do other things. I run a local charity. I do a lot of other things... not putting all my eggs, my value eggs in one basket.”* This illustrates how individuals in this group protected their identity by drawing on valued roles beyond the workplace.

Participants also reinforced their self-concept by reminding themselves of positive experiences in other professional contexts. For example, Stefan (P23) reflected on previous successful work experiences as a way of countering the negative treatment he faced, *“I just have to remind myself that I’ve had plenty of other jobs and had lots of other positive experiences. I’m trying to remind myself this is one person’s issue.”* By situating the abuse within a longer career discussion, individuals were able to maintain a stable sense of professional identity despite the hostile environment.

Among Societal Issue Novices, mindful self-presentation was often strained and emotionally costly. Participants attempted to maintain integrity and self-respect despite mistreatment, yet their narratives frequently revealed difficulty fully protecting their self-concept. Sandra (P3) described how the experience diminished her sense of identity despite efforts to maintain her usual demeanor, *“It diminished me. No, I think I have an ability to laugh at myself, I think I have a good sense of humour, and I make fun of myself and laugh... I tried to continue in that vein, but I felt isolated and the walking wounded.”* Sandra’s account illustrates how efforts at self-presentation were undermined by the emotional toll of the experience, leaving participants struggling to maintain a stable sense of identity.

Over time, however, several participants began to reinterpret the experience, recognizing that the mistreatment stemmed from organizational dysfunction rather than personal shortcomings. Sandra (P3) reflected on this gradual shift in perspective while still acknowledging the lasting impact on her identity, *“In the in the end ultimately, I really do think there’s something wrong with the way in which the company is structured...deep down I know it’s not me. However, it does affect you and my affect changed.”* These accounts suggest that mindful self-presentation in this group remained fragile.

For Societal Issue Veterans, mindful self-presentation largely centered on systemic attributions and resilience narratives. Participants interpreted mistreatment through broader social and organizational structures rather than attributing it to personal shortcomings. For example, Wyatt (P9) discussed how systemic failures, such as ineffective management practices or organizational cultures that prioritize self-interest, shaped workplace mistreatment. This perspective allowed her to protect her identity by situating the problem within broader social dynamics and aligning more strongly with her political values:

Wyatt (P9): “I’m at point where I can acknowledge that this isn’t a me problem... I think, a lot of the capitalist mindset of the fuck you got mine that is very very common unfortunately here in the US...It definitely did drive me a lot more left when I realized hey, this is not just a me problem.”

Wyatt’s account illustrates how individuals in this group protected their identity by interpreting abusive experiences through systemic and ideological frameworks rather than internalizing blame. This perspective also contributed to resilience narratives. Wyatt, who works with LGBTQIA teens, reflected on how these experiences shaped her professional identity:

Wyatt (P9): “The growth out of the trauma...it has absolutely shaped the way that I am now as a practitioner and a person. But it would also be preferable if people didn’t have to go through that in order to build all these resiliencies.”

These accounts illustrate how Societal Issue Veterans engaged in mindful self-presentation by grounding their identity in ideological understanding, allowing them to resist self-blame.

In summary, mindful self-presentation was a key restoration-oriented passive strategy across the identity work profiles. For Isolated Novices, mindful self-presentation was primarily used to protect self-worth in the face of identity threat. Isolated Veterans, in contrast, engaged in more strategic self-presentation by diversifying identity sources beyond work. Among Societal Issue Novices, mindful self-presentation was more strained and emotionally costly as individuals struggled to maintain a stable sense of self. Finally, Societal Issue Veterans engaged in mindful self-presentation by making systemic attributions and framing their experiences through resilience narratives.

Loss-Oriented

Loss-oriented identity work refers to efforts aimed at accommodating identity disruption, often through withdrawal, resignation, or reduced investment in threatened aspects of the self. In this study, loss-oriented strategies also took both active and passive forms and will be discussed in the following section.

Active. *Hiding.* Hiding as an identity work strategy involved deliberate efforts to suppress or mask emotional experiences and personal struggles. The strategic manner and motivations for doing so differed across identity work profiles.

Among Isolated Novices, hiding often took the form of shame-based concealment. For example, Giacomo (P6) explained that he felt embarrassed to disclose how much the abusive supervisor was affecting him emotionally, “*You don’t want to show to people that you’re getting treated this way and you have to go to work with anxiety...I just don’t like showing my emotions*

to people.” His account illustrates how individuals in this group concealed emotional distress in order to protect their dignity.

Among Isolated Veterans, hiding was more calculated and instrumental. Rather than concealing their experiences out of shame, individuals strategically managed how much they revealed in order to protect their professional standing. For example, Rajiv (P2) explained that he deliberately suppressed his reactions because he lacked the external safety net needed to risk open confrontation, *“I did not have enough of a safety net outside my job. In case something blew up in my face, so it was a calculated call.”* His account illustrates how hiding functioned as a pragmatic decision aimed at preserving job security rather than a vulnerable response to mistreatment.

In addition, participants described managing the emotional toll of abusive environments by limiting when and how they expressed frustration. Rather than openly dwelling on the experience, they often confined these discussions to trusted confidants. James (P18) reflected on the need to regulate how much he spoke about the situation, *“Sometimes I talk about it too much and it’s not good for me either. It’s not helpful when I go there and then just complain to my husband and my friend.”* In this way, hiding served as a strategy for maintaining emotional equilibrium and protecting psychological well-being.

For Societal Issue Novices, hiding tactics were often rooted in feelings of inadequacy, which prevented individuals from sharing their struggles with those close to them. Like Isolated Novices, participants concealed distress due to associated shame. However, unlike the Isolated Novices, discussions of hiding frequently centered on the entanglement of work identity with their broader sense of self. Because their professional roles were closely tied to personal identity and the expectations of others, exposing workplace difficulties felt particularly vulnerable. For

some individuals, their sense of self-worth was deeply linked to professional success, making it difficult to reveal struggles without feeling that their overall identity was threatened. Sandra (P3), despite having over 25 years of experience as a lawyer, reflected on how this dynamic extended into her family relationships, *“I’m very close with my brother and his wife.... She’s a CA...so she had some of those experiences too.... But I often felt that I’d be judged by them.... I wanted to present this very successful person to my family.”* Sandra’s account illustrates how her sense of identity and esteem was intertwined with her professional image, leading her to conceal workplace struggles that might undermine that image.

Similarly, Ali (P22), a 24-year-old bank teller living with colitis, described withholding aspects of his experience because they were closely tied to both his professional identity and his chronic illness. Anticipating misunderstanding and judgment, he internalized the burden of coping rather than openly disclosing his struggles:

Ali (P22): “I would love to say a coping mechanism is talking about it through different people who care...but at the end it’s really only been my therapy that’s helped me. Because outside of that voice, I’m at a great fear of being judged.”

Ali’s account highlights concealment as a form of identity work, where fear of stigma and invalidation led him to withhold aspects of his experience that were closely tied to his sense of self.

In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans engaged in hiding as a strategic response to systemic constraints. They understood how their identities were read within organizational hierarchies and adjusted their behaviour accordingly to maintain safety or credibility. The form of concealment varied across individuals and intersected with gender, neurodivergence, faith, and organizational politics. Evelyn (P8) described consciously adhering to gender norms in toxic environments to avoid retaliation, *“My gender definitely informs things because I know what the rules are... I*

follow them as much as I feel I have to not to get fired or not to set people's radar off when I'm in a toxic situation." Evelyn's account illustrates how participants' awareness of systemic power dynamics informed their decisions to conceal aspects of themselves as a protective strategy.

Similar patterns were evident in Li's (P7) emphasis on political caution within psychologically unsafe environments and Noor's (P19) description of performing emotional steadiness within her faith community despite internal disillusionment. Thus, in this group, hiding functioned as a calculated form of identity management within systems participants perceived as disempowering individuals with marginalized or nonconforming identities.

In summary, hiding took different forms across identity work profiles. Isolated Novices concealed distress due to shame, whereas Isolated Veterans used hiding strategically to protect their professional and psychological well-being. Societal Issue Novices hid vulnerabilities tied to the entanglement of work and personal identity, while Societal Issue Veterans engaged in calculated concealment in response to power dynamics.

Active. Derogation. Derogation emerged as an identity work strategy in which individuals internalized mistreatment, leading to diminished self-worth and questioning of their competence and identity.

Among Isolated Novices, derogation was characterized by identity destabilization, as participants questioned both their competence and broader life choices. Individuals expressed uncertainty about their professional paths and personal decisions, often reflecting on whether different choices might have prevented the abusive experience. For example, Kwame (P4), a 25-year-old welder who had worked under his abusive supervisor for three years while also navigating family challenges, described persistent self-questioning regarding his life trajectory, *"Sometimes I question myself, ... If I should I have gone to university... I questioned whether I*

should have started my own business to make myself my own boss.” Kwame’s reflection illustrates how individuals in this group searched for flaws in their own identity and decisions, attributing responsibility for the abusive situation to personal shortcomings.

This internalization frequently manifested as negative self-talk and doubts about personal capability. Melody (P13) similarly described grappling with uncertainty about her sense of self, *“You can know things intellectually...I’m not the things that I do. But as far as feeling that and really knowing that with your being, I just have to find out, who am I?”* Such reflections demonstrate how individuals experienced profound identity disruption, leading them to question their self-worth.

Among Isolated Veterans, derogation was more reflective and comparatively rare. When it did occur, it often took the form of guilt or momentary uncertainty about whether their confidence or actions had contributed to the conflict. For example, Rajiv (P2) described feeling guilty for asserting himself and requesting responsibilities that aligned with his professional goals:

Rajiv (P2): “I thought I was being too cocky because my manager repeatedly told me, ‘Oh, I’m not ready to give you responsibility.’ The reason is he’s a micromanager; he wants to hold it for himself. But I started being left with the feeling that I was being too cocky all the time by asking for it.”

Rajiv’s reflection illustrates how derogation in this group manifested as brief self-questioning rather than sustained self-blame.

For Societal Issue Novices, derogation extended beyond the workplace to encompass a broader re-evaluation of both professional and personal worth. Individuals in this group questioned their abilities and value, and interpreted mistreatment as evidence of personal inadequacy. Ximena (P16), who had recently completed her master’s degree and relocated for her first position in the field, described how she initially internalized blame and questioned her

competence, *“My first thought was she has way more experience in this industry than I do, maybe I’m just not doing a good job. And I started to blame myself.”* Her reflection illustrates how professional inexperience and power asymmetry were interpreted as personal failure rather than structural mistreatment.

Ali (P22) similarly described how abusive supervision contributed to feelings of self-blame that extended into other aspects of his life. Living with a chronic illness, he began attributing difficulties managing his health and social commitments to personal shortcomings. This sense of responsibility extended to interactions with friends, where he blamed himself when plans had to be cancelled due to illness:

Ali (P22): “A few weeks ago I had a friend that I was going to go out with, but I woke up with a sore throat. And I just said, ‘hey, sorry last minute I have a sore throat. I’m really not feeling like going out today....’ And then later on, I said sorry again. And they’re like, ‘yeah, it was just annoying because I did my hair and everything and I was waiting for us to go out.’ ... I think even apologizing the second time was from all of this stuff I had experienced before, where it’s like, it’s totally my fault. You don’t deserve this. I’m a bad friend.”

Ali’s account demonstrates how derogation in this group often extended beyond the workplace. Experiences of abusive supervision contributed to self-doubt that impacted both professional and personal domains.

In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans experienced a tension between systemic awareness and lingering self-doubt, resulting in disillusionment rather than identity collapse. Although these individuals were often prepared by past experiences to recognize systemic dynamics, they still occasionally grappled with uncertainty about their own abilities or decisions. Tyson (P24), for example, reflected on moments of imposter syndrome despite recognizing the structural nature of the problem, *“There’s some imposter syndrome stuff there as well, I spent time exploring it.”* Tyson’s reflection illustrates how self-doubt persisted even alongside an awareness

of systemic injustice. However, unlike other groups, participants tended to interpret these feelings as something to examine and manage rather than internalize as enduring self-blame.

Participants also described confronting contradictions in how their work was evaluated. In some cases, verbal praise from supervisors contrasted with negative written feedback, creating confusion about their professional standing. Hudson (P17) described this tension, *“Am I great or am I terrible? Because it sounds like on paper, I’m terrible, but you tell me I’m great and you never critique or help me grow. It just, when it’s time to put it on paper, suddenly I’m terrible.”* Such inconsistencies prompted participants to reflect on organizational dynamics and evaluation practices rather than just attributing these experiences to personal shortcomings.

In summary, derogation differed in both intensity and focus across the four identity work profiles. Isolated Novices internalized mistreatment most strongly, leading to identity destabilization and self-blame. Isolated Veterans experienced derogation more briefly and reflectively, often in the form of momentary guilt or questioning of their actions rather than sustained identity doubt. Societal Issue Novices experienced broader self-derogation that extended beyond the workplace. In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans experienced lingering self-doubt but interpreted it through a lens of systemic awareness. This process led to critical reflection rather than identity collapse.

In terms of the differences across these four groups based on loss-oriented active identity work strategies overall, Isolated Novices largely engaged in shame-based hiding and identity-destabilizing derogation, suppressing their emotions while internalizing mistreatment. Isolated Veterans, in contrast, adopted more calculated and reflective strategies. They hid strategically to protect themselves and engaged in limited derogation that did not destabilize their broader identity. Societal Issue Novices experienced more pervasive identity disruption, as hiding and

derogation extended beyond the workplace and led to reassessments of personal worth across multiple life domains. Finally, Societal Issue Veterans engaged in strategic hiding shaped by systemic awareness and identity constraints, while derogation was based on disillusionment and critical reflection rather than full internalization of blame.

Passive. Acceptance. Acceptance emerged as a passive identity work strategy through which individuals came to terms with mistreatment by cognitively reframing their experiences and adjusting aspects of their identity.

Only one individual from the Isolated Novices group employed acceptance as a form of identity work. In this case, acceptance took the form of sensemaking without full resolution. Alessandra (P5) reflected on attempting to understand aspects of herself that may have contributed to the situation, noting, *“But I started looking into it more and so it helped me understand that that’s just a part of who I am.”* This form of acceptance resembled resignation rather than reconciliation.

Meanwhile, individuals in the Isolated Veterans group expressed acceptance as a form of containment and identity recalibration. Rather than reacting with heightened emotional distress, participants normalized imperfections and moderated the importance of work in defining themselves. James (P18), who holds a doctorate and has two decades of professional experience, described arriving at a more tempered and accepting view of his abilities. Instead of striving to be exceptional at all times, he acknowledged being neither the best nor the worst performer:

James (P18): “The 41-year-old senior manager who’s been in the field 15 years is considered slow progression. But overall, I’ve been a what, maybe a seventieth percentile performer at my consulting jobs... It’s helped me just be more accepting of that... I don’t need my workday to be exactly my way because it’s not all that defines who I am.”

James’s reflection illustrates how individuals in this group came to accept aspects of their identity that had previously been less integrated into their sense of self.

For Societal Issue Novices, acceptance often reflected survival rather than resolution. Participants described coming to terms with mistreatment not because the situation had improved, but because they recognized the limits of their control within the organizational environment. Ali (P22) described a form of resigned acceptance following public shaming related to his chronic illness and the abuse he experienced from his supervisor. While he expressed frustration with the situation, he also acknowledged the constraints he faced, *“As much as I find it unfair, obviously, at the same time I’ve just come to the fact that like this is the reality. I’ve gotten past the point of trying to change it, trying to hope for this... this sort of attitude that lingers is like, what can I control?”* Ali’s reflection illustrates how acceptance in this group often involved acknowledging structural and interpersonal limits rather than resolving the underlying identity disruption. Individuals recognized that certain aspects of the environment were unlikely to change and adjusted their expectations about themselves.

Meanwhile, Societal Issue Veterans utilized acceptance as a form of identity integration and re-prioritization. Their acceptance reflected a sense of identity coherence and personal growth. For example, Wyatt (P9) described shifting away from prioritizing societal judgments toward prioritizing personal well-being. He used the example of his missing front tooth to illustrate how he came to accept aspects of himself that previously felt incompatible with professional expectations:

Wyatt (P9): “How can I possibly be a professional when I’m missing a front tooth...And then I finally decided...why do I let other people’s opinions and the way that they see me, why do I prioritize that over my own wellbeing and that alone allowed me to I think grow beyond a lot of this.”

Wyatt’s reflection illustrates how individuals in this group moved beyond strategic concealment toward greater identity integration, redefining professionalism and self-worth according to their own values rather than external expectations.

In sum, acceptance as a passive identity work strategy varied across groups. Isolated Novices rarely engaged in acceptance; when it occurred, it took the form of sensemaking without closure, leaving individuals unable to fully integrate the experience into a stable sense of self. Isolated Veterans adopted acceptance as a containment strategy, normalizing imperfection and separating work performance from self-worth. In contrast, Societal Issue Novices exhibited resigned acceptance driven by exhaustion and a sense of powerlessness. Finally, Societal Issue Veterans engaged in acceptance as identity integration and re-prioritization, acknowledging systemic constraints while maintaining identity coherence and personal growth.

Motivation and Performance

As individuals discussed the interplay between sensemaking and identity work, they highlighted divergent long-term emotional impacts, motivational orientations, goal foci, and performance outcomes. The following section explores these differences.

Participants' accounts explicated how the long-term consequences of abusive supervision differed across identity work profiles. Individuals in the Isolated Novice group had lingering fear, low confidence in their abilities, and uncertainty about their future direction. Meanwhile, Isolated Veterans had greater emotional regulation and agency. They were more successful in decoupling their identity from work and engaging in practical career redirections. Participants in the Societal Issue Novice group also experienced emotional strain, but their responses were characterized by exploration and questioning as they reassessed their career paths and personal values. Finally, Societal Issue Veterans were typically more motivated by the adversity as it acted as a source of meaning-making. They integrated their experiences into a sense of purpose and redirected their motivation toward intrinsically meaningful goals. These differences will be explored in the following section.

Long-Term Emotional Toll

Participants' accounts revealed that abusive supervision carried enduring emotional consequences. While emotional disruption was reported across all identity work profiles, the long-term emotional impact differed depending on the identity work profile.

In both the Perceived Societal Embodiment and Perceived Lone Actor groups, participants who felt that prior experiences had not prepared them for abusive supervision described more enduring emotional consequences. For Societal Issue Novices, the emotional toll was largely unresolved, characterized by persistent fear, avoidance, and uncertainty about how to move forward. This emotional strain influenced participants' career decisions and work–life priorities as they attempted to navigate their future plans in light of these experiences. Imani (P15), a 28-year-old compliance officer in banking, described her reluctance to pursue ambitious opportunities because of the uncertainty surrounding what success might entail, *“I think one of the major hurdles that I have is I’m too scared of success because I don’t know what it looks like.”* Imani’s reflection illustrates how lingering emotional distress shaped participants’ outlook on their careers, leading to ongoing exploration pertaining to their future paths.

In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans described emotional distress as a catalyst for reassessment and redirection rather than prolonged dysregulation. Initially, Evelyn (P8) described engaging in behaviours such as venting, minor acts of rebellion at home, and treating herself as a way to regain control and assert independence from work stress. These actions were viewed as essential for maintaining a sense of personal agency outside of a constraining job environment:

Evelyn (P8): “What can I do where I have agency outside of work? So, just doing things that I like to do just so I can remember that I have other interests and other talents, and this job is not my life. Treating myself after a particularly hard day ...It’s little things that

give me the power back.”

Evelyn’s reflection illustrates how individuals in this group channeled emotional upheaval into efforts to reclaim personal agency and autonomy. Similarly, Mark (P1) described reaching a breaking point that prompted him to reconsider his fit within the organization and pursue alternative directions:

Mark (P1): “I said, ‘I don’t know if I’m a good fit here anymore. And I would certainly be open to a package.’ And I just walked out the door... The only thing I had to lose was a paycheck at that point... there comes a point that the money is not worth it.”

Mark’s account highlights how emotional disruption prompted participants to reassess their priorities and make deliberate decisions about the direction of their careers.

Overall, Isolated Novices and Societal Issue Novices had more long-lasting emotional strain, whereas Isolated Veterans and Societal Issue Veterans were more likely to transform emotional disruption into redirection.

Decoupling Personal and Professional Lives

Participants also described decoupling their personal and professional lives as a longer-term outcome of abusive supervision, reframing work as only one component of identity rather than its defining feature. However, the way individuals across identity work profiles approached this process, and the motivations behind it, differed.

For Isolated Novices, decoupling was often framed as an emerging realization rather than a fully established boundary. Individuals described beginning to question long-held assumptions about work and identity but had not yet fully restructured their relationship with work. James (P18), for example, reflected on recognizing the dangers of defining himself solely through his job: *“I was a bit of a workaholic... which I won’t do again. I resent it now.”* Similarly, Giacomo (P6) described realizing that he no longer wished to devote himself entirely to his employer: *“I*

don't have to live and die for the business." These accounts illustrate an early-stage shift in perspective, where participants began to reconsider the role of work in their identity but were still in the process of redefining those boundaries.

Among Isolated Veterans, decoupling appeared more purposeful and shaped by prior experiences and a deliberate refusal to allow work to dominate their identity. Participants emphasized the importance of cultivating growth and meaning outside of work. This pattern is evident in the reflections of Rajiv (P2), who had previously experienced toxic workplaces and had worked under his abusive supervisor for over three years. Following the birth of his child, Rajiv described a significant shift in perspective that prompted him to psychologically detach from work and reorient toward a broader sense of identity: *"When I look at people who are older to me, let's say who are beyond retirement, I realize that those who do not have a sense of identity, personal identity without the job, are probably really lost."* He later explained, *"I had to decouple myself from my job by saying I have an identity outside work. And that informs my professional identity versus it being the other way around."* Rajiv's account illustrates how individuals in this group intentionally broadened their sense of identity beyond work, drawing on experience to maintain boundaries between professional and personal domains.

For Societal Issue Novices, decoupling often emerged out of necessity, as individuals attempted to reclaim personal functioning after prolonged emotional strain. Participants described taking deliberate steps to prioritize their health, personal time, and psychological well-being. Tereza (P20), for example, reflected on how observing her father's workaholicism, shaped by state-imposed labor expectations during the communist era in Czechia, prompted her to reassess her own relationship with work:

Tereza (P20): My father was a workaholic. Seeing him overwork himself so much made me realize that I don't want to do that. It was a sort of depressing realization. It made me

question if this is what adult life is about, always being overworked.... Hearing this from the business unit manager made me realize that this is not the standard and that there is something wrong going on.”

Tereza’s reflection illustrates how individuals in this group began to distance themselves from work-centered identities as a means of protecting their sense of self.

In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans described decoupling to redefine how they related to work. Rather than tying self-worth to career outcomes or advancement, participants emphasized focusing on the process and maintaining perspective about work’s role in their lives. Bruce (P14) described shifting away from evaluating himself based on career milestones and instead focusing on the present and the intrinsic aspects of his work at his new job:

Bruce (P14): “My thought process with that previous job was just to get through the probationary period. With this job it is to focus on the job... I am trying to focus on the present, but I sometimes think about the future a little too much... Maybe it’s attaching less self-worth to what those goals might be. I’m focusing more on the process.”

Bruce’s reflection illustrates how individuals in this group detached their self-worth from external career markers and adopted a more balanced perspective toward work.

In summary, Isolated Novices described decoupling as an emerging realization. In this group individuals began questioning their preconceived notions about work but had not yet fully established clear boundaries. Isolated Veterans, in contrast, demonstrated more purposeful decoupling. Societal Issue Novices described decoupling as a recovery strategy, distancing themselves from work-centered identities to restore well-being. Finally, Societal Issue Veterans framed decoupling as a way to maintain perspective about work while protecting their sense of self so that they are not just defined by their career outcomes.

Future Directions

Participants’ future-oriented reflections revealed how abusive supervision led individuals to re-evaluate their identity, purpose, and career direction. The Isolated Novice group described

future planning through a lens of recovery and identity repair but had diminished confidence and self-doubt. Participants spoke about reconsidering their career paths while navigating uncertainty about their future direction. This sentiment is illustrated by Kwame (P4), a 25-year-old welder who described attempting to recover from toxic workplace experiences that had contributed to a negative spiral affecting his mental health, substance use, and employment prospects, *“It’s really changed my goal. At this age I thought I would be married. I’ll save a little bit and get a house for myself.”* Kwame’s reflection illustrates how the emotional aftermath of abusive supervision extended beyond the employment relationship.

Similarly, Giacomo (P6), an early-career professional who had initially envisioned a long-term path in wealth management, described how the abusive environment disrupted this trajectory and led him to reconsider his professional aspirations:

Giacomo (P6): “I’m like...I’m going to work wealth management... I’m working at a bank; I was so motivated. And then I’m like, screw this. This is not what I want to do. There’s no work-life balance. I’m going to deal with shitty miserable people.... I don’t want to be in this career, it’s not what I want to do.”

Giacomo’s account illustrates how individuals in this group often described abandoning previously desired career trajectories as they attempted to distance themselves from environments associated with prior mistreatment.

In contrast, for the Isolated Veterans, future planning involved individuals leveraging skills and experience to proactively reshape their trajectories. They discussed their future aspirations from a perspective of skill and personality development. As James (P18) described, the discussion was largely surrounding what specific skills he has and how he can apply it in different positions.

James (P18): “I’m kind of debating getting out of consulting... I’ve just applied for an internal role at a consulting firm but doing more transforming their practice and helping them really become top notch. So that interests me because I love mentorship, I’ve

learned that. Basically, since COVID, I've learned that I love mentoring and leading teams."

James' account highlights how his career direction is more thought out and aligned with his skills and interests rather than giving up seen in the last group.

Meanwhile, for Societal Issue Novices, future directions often involved exploration without clear resolution. Participants described questioning both their career trajectories and the broader systems within which they worked, as they attempted to determine what role work should play in their lives. Lily (P11), for example, expressed uncertainty about her future career aspirations following these toxic experiences: *"I also wanted to work in research, but... I'm not sure if it's just this individual or just collectively the academic industry is just a little bit toxic, so I'm not too sure."* Lily's reflection illustrates the uncertainty participants experienced as they reconsidered their professional paths.

Several participants described making significant changes to their career plans as a result of these experiences. However, these shifts were often accompanied by emotional conflict. Ximena (P16), for instance, explained that although the experience led her to reconsider her career trajectory, she continued to struggle with the emotional consequences of abandoning a path she had once really wanted:

Ximena (P16): "I always wanted a job like this... it actually did help me rethink my career path... I feel like this is the job that I currently have is probably going to be my last lab job... I just kind of feel like I wish I didn't have to go through this to realize that this wasn't the career path for me."

Ximena's reflection illustrates how individuals in this group often redirected their career paths while still processing the emotional impact of the experience, with unresolved tension.

In contrast, Societal Issue Veterans framed future aspirations around meaning and contribution. They often learned from these adverse experiences, leading them towards a

commitment to intrinsically valued work. Participants described considering alternative career paths, including shifting industries or leaving toxic environments, in order to pursue work that aligned with their values and sense of purpose. Noor (P19) reflected on a career shift shaped by her personal struggles, faith, and academic journey. Like others in this group, she approached these reflections with realism, acknowledging past hardships while maintaining hope for a different future:

Noor (P19): "I didn't start my PhD until a couple of years in. It was obviously 'me search,' trying to figure out what was going on here...I wanted to write a book and expose everything... What's impacted my sense of well-being more than anything is the career change, having hope for a future that looks different, because I had been suicidal since I was 14... I thought, 'okay, it's time to get a plan. It's time to make a plan and start working on it.' And I realized as I thought through it, 'okay, I've got a future'."

Noor's account illustrates how individuals in this group integrated difficult experiences into a broader sense of purpose, using adversity as a catalyst for pursuing meaningful and intrinsically motivated career paths.

In summary, Isolated Novices approached future planning through a lens of recovery and identity repair, often accompanied with diminished confidence and uncertainty. Isolated Veterans, in contrast, leveraged their skills and experience to realign their career trajectories. Societal Issue Novices engaged in exploration without clear resolution, questioning both their career paths and the broader systems within which they worked while still processing the emotions that followed. Finally, Societal Issue Veterans reframed adversity and directed their future aspirations toward meaningful and intrinsically valued work.

Altogether, across outcomes, group-based differences highlighted how individuals differently experienced emotional consequences, recalibrated life goals, and oriented themselves toward the future. Isolated Novices experienced unresolved emotional distress, marked by fear, avoidance, and diminished confidence, which constrained motivation and led to fragile future

planning focused on recovery rather than growth. In contrast, Isolated Veterans demonstrated greater emotional regulation and agency, decoupling work from identity and leveraging their experiences to pursue skill-based career redirection. Societal Issue Novices also struggled with lingering emotional effects but approached these experiences through exploration and questioning, reassessing career paths and values without yet reaching resolution or coherence. Finally, Societal Issue Veterans transformed emotional upheaval into meaning-making, integrating adversity into a coherent sense of purpose and future direction.

Discussion

The present study examined the cognitive processes underlying variation in identity work following abusive supervision and how distinct identity work profiles shape subsequent work outcomes. Findings indicate that exposure to an extreme incident, specifically abusive supervision, initiated a process of post-incident sensemaking that was shaped by individuals' cognitive interpretations, particularly their attributions regarding the cause of the abuse and their perceived preparedness to respond. Through this reflective process, individuals evaluated the abusive episode by considering the supervisor, power dynamics, situational context, and the implications of the experience for their sense of self and identity, which in turn led to divergent outcomes.

Across profiles, participants initially reported intense emotional reactions, followed by sustained emotional strain linked to questions of personal responsibility and accountability as they reflected on their role in the event (Dwyer et al., 2023). These findings align with prior research highlighting the emotional foundations of sensemaking (Dwyer et al., 2023), which emphasizes how individuals revisit troubling events, question perceived wrongdoing, and grapple with the meaning of these experiences for their identities. Such reflection fostered the

construction of self-relevant narratives that enabled post-incident sensemaking, allowing individuals to integrate abusive experiences into their self-narratives, renegotiate their identities, and shape further patterns of action and self-adjustment.

Four Profiles

Analysis revealed four identity work profiles following abusive supervision, shaped by two core cognitive dimensions: (1) attribution of the abuse and (2) perceived preparedness. These dimensions structured how individuals made sense of abusive experiences and how they engaged in identity work. The first dimension concerns how individuals attributed the source of abusive supervision. Some participants understood abuse as stemming from the actions of a specific individual, conceptualized here as Perceived Lone Actor attributions. Others interpreted abusive supervision as reflective of broader structural or societal forces, referred to as Perceived Societal Embodiment. These attributional orientations functioned as relatively stable, trait-like beliefs about agency, power, and social systems, shaping how individuals interpreted both the abuse itself and their role within it.

This distinction aligns with theories of individualism and collectivism conceptualized at the individual level (Beilmann & Realo, 2012). Individualistic orientations emphasize personal agency and self-focused identities, whereas collectivistic orientations emphasize collective identity, collective agency, and relational dynamics within social contexts (Chen & Unal, 2023). Accordingly, individuals with individualistic orientations were more likely to attribute abuse to personal failings or characteristics of the supervisor, whereas collectivistic orientations emphasized systemic or cultural explanations (Feinberg et al., 2019).

The second dimension, perceived preparedness, reflects whether individuals believed that prior experiences equipped them with cognitive, emotional, or behavioural resources to navigate

the abusive episode. Importantly, preparedness did not depend solely on whether individuals had encountered abuse previously. Rather, it reflected whether past experiences had been cognitively processed and integrated into usable lessons for future action. Preparedness is conceptualized as a trait-like cognitive orientation that shapes how individuals approach sensemaking across situations, while its specific expression varies by context. This distinction aligns with research showing that traits provide a stable interpretive framework, whereas states reflect situational enactment (McCabe & Fleenor, 2016). Preparedness draws on relatively stable individual differences in self-awareness, which shape how individuals recognize and interpret their emotional and behavioural patterns (Brownlee et al., 2019). It is also informed by self-reflection, which enables individuals to critically evaluate past decisions and extract lessons over time (Donovan et al., 2015). Further, individuals with stronger future orientation are more likely to connect past experiences to anticipated outcomes and apply prior learning to future situations (Yang et al., 2024).

Notably, perceptions of preparedness did not depend on whether individuals had objectively experienced abusive supervision in the past. Some individuals with prior exposure did not feel equipped by those experiences, whereas others without similar exposure felt prepared. This variation suggests that preparedness reflects differences in sensemaking and learning rather than exposure alone. Cognitive biases, such as confirmation bias, may hinder learning from past experiences by leading individuals to favour information that confirms existing beliefs (Gonçalves & Rocha, 2023). Conversely, organizational environments that promote psychological safety and mistake tolerance may facilitate reflective learning and preparedness (Weinzimmer & Esken, 2017). However, the antecedents of preparedness fall outside the scope of the present study.

These two dimensions yielded four profiles. Within the Perceived Lone Actor attribution, individuals who felt unprepared by past experiences were categorized as Isolated Novices, whereas those who felt prepared were categorized as Isolated Veterans. Similarly, within the Perceived Societal Embodiment attribution, individuals who felt unprepared were categorized as Societal Issue Novices, while those who felt prepared were categorized as Societal Issue Veterans. These profiles reflect distinct sensemaking processes. As Weick (1979) describes in his notion of the future perfect tense, individuals may engage in forward-looking sensemaking by revisiting past experiences as if they have already shaped future outcomes. In the present study, some individuals actively mobilized prior experiences to guide future action, whereas others struggled to do so, resulting in divergent identity work trajectories and outcomes.

It is important to note that the group categorizations are conceptualized as stemming from participants' beliefs as trait-like, reflecting relatively stable worldviews, and that individuals also differ in a trait-like tendency to process and integrate prior experiences, which shapes perceived preparedness. However, it is the contention in this research that trait-position exists on a continuum. Traits represent enduring dispositions, whereas states reflect temporary, situation-driven responses (Ursache & Raver, 2013). In the context of abusive supervision, individuals who have previously experienced mistreatment may develop a stable, trait-like belief that supervisors are generally abusive or that society is inherently flawed. This belief sets a baseline for how they approach future interactions with authority figures. However, although these beliefs provide a stable interpretive lens, behavioural responses may vary depending on contextual factors (Wang et al., 2024). While the core belief remains stable, new experiences may reinforce or adjust its expression. Research supports this continuum perspective. For example, Nezlek (2007) notes that while traits shape enduring attitudes, their situational expression can fluctuate.

This finding highlights those past experiences condition both expectations and immediate reactions. Thus, it is argued that beliefs about abusive supervision function as a trait but are not entirely rigid.

Self-Reflection/Sensemaking

Consistent with the conceptual process model presented in Figure 4, the four identity profiles differed in how they progressed through trigger evaluation, belief appraisal, and rumination following abusive supervision. Although all participants began by evaluating the abusive event, divergence became more pronounced during belief appraisal and rumination.

Individuals who perceived the abuse as stemming from a lone actor tended to frame their belief appraisals at an interpersonal level, focusing on the supervisor's motives, role misalignment, or leadership deficiencies. Among these individuals, Isolated Novices engaged in self-focused rumination that intensified emotional distress, self-blame, and unresolved questioning. In contrast, Isolated Veterans demonstrated more bounded rumination, drawing on empathy and contextual explanations to contain emotional impact and preserve agency.

Participants who interpreted abuse as embedded within broader organizational or societal structures engaged in belief appraisal centered on power, privilege, and systemic forces. Societal Issue Novices demonstrated an emerging awareness of these dynamics but often experienced moral confusion and persistent rumination as they struggled to reconcile compassion with self-protection. Societal Issue Veterans, by comparison, engaged in more integrative rumination that consolidated systemic interpretations, reduced self-blame, and supported coherent meaning-making.

Identity Work

The identity work strategies utilized across all four groups were divided into two categories: restoration-oriented and loss-oriented identity work. Restoration-oriented identity work involves efforts to regain a sense of coherence in one's identity, helping individuals re-establish their self-concept and restore a stable sense of self following disruption (Beech et al., 2016). Conversely, loss-oriented identity work focuses on acknowledging, processing, and coming to terms with loss, particularly the emotional impact of identity disruption.

These two categories align with the Dual Process Model of coping with bereavement, which posits that individuals oscillate between restoration-oriented and loss-oriented coping (Torrens-Burton et al., 2021). Within this framework, loss-oriented coping centres on engaging with the emotional consequences of loss, whereas restoration-oriented coping involves adjusting, rebuilding, and reorienting oneself toward future functioning. Consistent with this model, it is argued in the present research that restoration-oriented and loss-oriented identity work are not mutually exclusive but instead unfold through an oscillatory process. For example, individuals may initially engage in loss-oriented identity work to process grief or identity disruption, which may later give way to restoration-oriented efforts aimed at redefining or strengthening their identity (Stroebe & Schüt, 2010; Torrens-Burton et al., 2021). This oscillation enables individuals to engage with both loss and growth simultaneously, facilitating the reconstruction of a coherent identity over time (McLean & Syed, 2016).

In addition, these two broad forms of identity work were further differentiated into active and passive strategies. Active identity work entails deliberate and intentional efforts to shape, protect, or redefine one's identity (Kulshrestha, 2024). In contrast, passive identity work involves more subtle, indirect, and often unconscious processes through which identities evolve without explicit intentionality (Gjernes, 2013). Across the four identified groups, individuals varied in

how they combined restoration- versus loss-oriented strategies and active versus passive forms of identity work, but also in how intentionally these strategies were enacted, with some responses reflecting deliberate identity management and others emerging more passively as individuals attempted to cope with identity threat.

The four groups employed distinct identity work strategies. Isolated Novices primarily focused on personal reflection and self-improvement. Their efforts were largely aimed at reshaping themselves and “doing better” in future work contexts. They frequently emphasized kindness, respect, and fairness, even toward the abusive supervisor, and felt a strong sense of personal responsibility for resolving the situation. However, many struggled to assert boundaries effectively and assumed too much self-blame, which contributed to disengagement and emotional exhaustion. Several individuals described vulnerability, negative self-talk, and questioning of past decisions, leading to self-derogation and uncertainty about their identities. Nevertheless, Isolated Novices actively sought to demonstrate professional competence to counteract negative perceptions, frequently relying on mindful self-presentation as a way to protect their self-concept.

Isolated Veterans engaged in more deliberate and conscious identity adaptation, often drawing on prior experiences and interpersonal skills to assert themselves. They affirmed their identities by prioritizing personal fulfillment, spiritual beliefs, and family roles over workplace conflict. Compared to novices, this group demonstrated more strategic and effective boundary-setting. They expanded their identity beyond work by drawing on multiple identity sources, which helped buffer identity threat. At the same time, they were cautious about emotional disclosure, recognizing that sharing vulnerability might not lead to supportive outcomes. Similar to other groups, some Isolated Veterans continued to experience guilt or internalized blame,

particularly when advocating for themselves, but many developed a nuanced form of acceptance that acknowledged the limits of their control while maintaining self-respect.

Societal Issue Novices responded to adverse experiences by redefining their commitment to themselves and shifting from passivity toward reactive boundary-setting and greater self-protection. Initially, they internalized negative workplace outcomes as personal failings, closely tying their self-worth to professional roles and performance. Over time, however, many began to recognize organizational dysfunction and systemic issues as the causes of their experiences. Despite this shift, they often experienced self-doubt, learned helplessness, and diminished confidence. This often led to a re-evaluation of their professional histories. When acceptance emerged within this group, it was often a reluctant resignation rather than resolution, accompanied by ongoing feelings of powerlessness.

Finally, Societal Issue Veterans engaged in identity work that emphasized self-care, ideological reflection, and career recalibration. They actively challenged pre-existing beliefs and sought empowerment through both reflection and action. This group often responded by questioning or resisting systemic pressures that threatened their values and demonstrated a willingness to make career changes to remain aligned with their principles. They often adopted a defiant stance, challenging management and rejecting the notion that personal inadequacies were responsible for their mistreatment. Instead, they framed their experiences as outcomes of systemic failings and maintained their identities by emphasizing competencies and achievements outside the problematic organizational context. At the same time, many masked aspects of their identities to navigate hostile environments, and despite their systemic awareness, they frequently reported feelings of alienation or marginalization. Nonetheless, this group displayed a deeper form of personal acceptance.

Motivation and Performance

Identity work is a dynamic process that shapes how individuals understand themselves and orient their motivation over time, particularly as they navigate evolving self-concepts (Kvasková et al., 2020). Doerflinger and Byrka (2021) highlight that motivation is strengthened when individuals experience their actions and pursuits as congruent with their self-concept, supporting a sense of coherence and authenticity. Consistent with these perspectives and the present findings, identity work prompted individuals to re-evaluate the role of work within their broader sense of self, with shifts in perceived identity congruence shaping motivational orientation and patterns of behaviour, including how individuals approached or reconsidered future aspirations.

However, differences in motivational orientation and subsequent outcomes were apparent across the distinct groups. Participants in the Perceived Lone Actor group emphasized the importance of separating personal and professional lives, frequently framing work as a means to an end rather than a central component of identity. Within this group, individuals, especially Veterans, described approaching challenges with a focus on resilience, self-agency, and personal growth. In contrast, participants in the Perceived Societal Embodiment group described a more reassessment of life goals, with identity work prompting a shift toward seeking meaning, purpose, and fulfillment outside of work. Rather than concentrating motivation primarily on career advancement, these individuals increasingly prioritized well-being and life satisfaction.

Differences were also evident across preparedness profiles. Isolated Novices often struggled to disentangle personal and professional identities, resulting in uncertainty about career goals and difficulty coping with negative workplace experiences. This uncertainty constrained motivation and led to more fragile or tentative future planning. In contrast, Isolated Veterans

adopted a more proactive stance, reframing workplace challenges as opportunities for skill development and self-growth. These individuals sought to leverage professional experiences to enhance their capabilities and regain a sense of control.

Among Societal Issue Novices, emotional challenges were prevalent. They often felt lingering distress, burnout, and difficulty deriving meaning from work. Their goal orientations were frequently characterized by exploration and questioning rather than resolution. Conversely, Societal Issue Veterans navigated workplace adversity with a stronger sense of purpose and used negative experiences to drive themselves to reassess values, redefine success, and pursue intrinsically meaningful goals. These distinctions across groups are illustrated in Figure 6.

 Insert Figure 6 about here

Link to the Quantitative Portion of the Research

Building on the interpretive distinctions identified in the qualitative phase, the quantitative study will examine whether the proposed identity work profiles are associated with differential patterns of motivation and performance. Participants in the quantitative study will first answer survey questions designed to assess their perceptions of abusive supervision, determining whether they perceive the abuse supervisor as a lone actor or part of a broader and more system issue. They will also be asked questions pertaining to their level of preparedness for navigating such experiences. These responses will categorize participants into one of the four groups: Isolated Novices, Isolated Veterans, Societal Issue Novices, or Societal Issue Veteran.

Participants will complete survey measures designed to assess attributional framing, perceived preparedness, and relevant outcome variables, allowing examination of whether the dimensions derived from Study 1 differentiate patterns of sensemaking, motivation, and

perceived performance. Finally, demographic information will be collected to be utilized as control variables. These measures will allow for a better understanding of how each group processes and reacts to abusive supervision, shedding light on how different identity work profiles lead to differences in outcomes.

Summary

This study examined how individuals engage in identity work following abusive supervision and how variation in sensemaking following the abuse shapes motivation and work-related outcomes. Findings indicate that abusive supervision initiates a process in which individuals interpret the incident through cognitive lenses related to attribution and perceived preparedness. During this process, individuals evaluated the abuse by considering the supervisor, power dynamics, situational context, and their sense of self. These reflections led to self-relevant narratives that resulted in divergent identity work trajectories.

Four identity work profiles emerged through two cognitive dimensions: attribution of abuse (Perceived Lone Actor versus Perceived Societal Embodiment) and perceived preparedness. These dimensions led to four profiles: Isolated Novices, Isolated Veterans, Societal Issue Novices, and Societal Issue Veterans. These profiles were composed of distinct sensemaking patterns and identity work strategies. Individuals within all four groups engaged in both loss-oriented and restoration-oriented identity work, further divided into both active and passive strategies, and often oscillating between them.

Differences across profiles were particularly evident in motivation and performance-related orientations. Identity work shaped how individuals positioned work within their broader sense of self. Whereas Isolated Novices struggled with unresolved self-blame and fragile motivation, Isolated Veterans had comparatively greater agency, boundary-setting, and skill-

focused growth. Societal Issue Novices engaged in exploration that led to emotional distress and uncertainty, while Societal Issue Veterans transformed adversity into meaning-making, value-driven motivation, and career recalibration. These findings highlight how identity work following abusive supervision shapes motivation, performance orientation, and future trajectories.

CHAPTER 5 – QUANTITATIVE HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Chapter Overview

The qualitative phase of the present study revealed four identity work profiles following abusive supervision, shaped by attributional orientations pertaining to the perceived cause of the abuse (individual versus systemic) and perceived preparedness (prepared versus not prepared). These profiles reflected differences in cognitive processes that gave rise to distinct patterns of sensemaking, identity work trajectories, and subsequent motivational orientations and work-related outcomes.

Building on these insights, the present chapter examines whether the relationships suggested by the qualitative findings can be empirically tested using quantitative methods. In line with a sequential exploratory mixed-methods design, the qualitative findings informed the identification of key constructs, relationships, and outcome variables, which were integrated with existing theory and empirical research to guide hypothesis development. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to translate the qualitative patterns of sensemaking, identity work, and motivational and performance outcomes observed following abusive supervision into testable hypotheses.

Drawing on IBM theory (Oyserman, 2007, 2009; Oyserman et al., 2012), some elements from narrative identity theory (Eakin, 2006; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Watson, 2009b), and sensemaking research, the hypotheses developed in this chapter specify expected relationships among attributional orientations, perceived preparedness, sensemaking processes, identity work, and subsequent motivational and performance outcomes. It is important to note that, at present, no validated scale of workplace identity work exists; accordingly, these relationships are examined indirectly through the identified group categorizations.

In what follows, the chapter first outlines the conceptual model guiding the quantitative analyses. It then presents the hypotheses, organized around key theoretical relationships and supported by relevant theoretical and empirical justification.

Conceptual Model

Figure 7 presents the conceptual model guiding the quantitative phase of this study. As apparent in the model, abusive supervision is specified as the independent variable, with victims' engagement in sensemaking efforts acting as a mediating process linking abusive supervision to motivational and performance-related outcomes, including goal motivation for work, goal motivation for non-work, work motivation, and work performance. In addition to these pathways, the model includes causal framing of abusive supervision (isolated actor versus societal issue) and perceived preparedness (Veterans versus Novices) as moderators of the relationship between sensemaking efforts and the work outcomes. Preparedness and causal framing are expected to affect the strength of the associations between sensemaking efforts and work outcomes, and their interaction is included to capture the combined influence of these orientations. The hypotheses related to Figure 7 are developed in the following section.

 Insert Figure 7 about here

Hypothesis Development

Abusive Supervision, Sensemaking Efforts, and Motivational and Performance Outcomes

Narrative identity theory contends that the stories individuals tell themselves help them make sense of their lives. These stories help construct coherent narratives that are “goal-directed, motivated, and purposeful” (McAdams, 1993, p. 68). In this regard, and aligned with the present context, these narratives could shape individuals' motivation, goal motivation, and performance. However, narrative identity theory also highlights that identities are rarely fully coherent

(Brown, 2022). At times, self-narratives must be modified and repaired as obstacles arise in order to re-establish temporal continuity (Brown, 2017) and to integrate or contain contradictory aspects of the self and one's behaviour (Fuchs, 2007).

Consequently, identity narratives are often in flux, and when significant disruptions occur, individuals may be required to reinterpret and revise their stories, a process that closely aligns with sensemaking. This process is salient in the context of abusive supervision, which can confront individuals with information that contradicts their previously held self-views or brings about negative evaluations. Such experiences can destabilize individuals' existing narratives. In turn, restorying efforts may help individuals understand why the abuse is occurring, what it means for the self, and how to respond, resulting in sensemaking.

Narrative identity theory further suggests that narratives are inherently social, requiring ongoing recognition and verification from others (Down & Reveley, 2009), and are enacted in relation to individuals' social surroundings as they live their lives (MacIntyre, 2007).

Consequently, abusive supervision represents a context particularly conducive to restorying through sensemaking. The present study hypothesizes that abusive supervision will be positively associated with increased sensemaking.

In turn, it is also hypothesized that sensemaking acts as a mediator between abusive supervision and motivation and performance outcomes, including goal motivation for work, goal motivation for non-work, work motivation, and work performance. Building on IBM theory, motivation and goal pursuit are largely driven by individuals' identities and their efforts to act in ways that are congruent with who they understand themselves to be (Oyserman, 2007, 2009; Oyserman et al., 2007). From this perspective, behaviour reflects "current action in pursuit of identity-based goals" (Oyserman & James, 2011, p. 117), suggesting that motivation is shaped

by how individuals interpret situations in relation to their sense of self. When a relevant identity becomes activated within a social context, this activation is likely to trigger action and effort aligned with that identity (Oyserman et al., 2007).

Accordingly, an identity-disruptive experience such as abusive supervision may prompt sensemaking efforts aimed at restoring coherence and meaning, which in turn can lead to the reorientation of goals and motivating behaviour. IBM theory further explains how this process occurs by linking identity to self-regulation and goal pursuit through individuals' interpretation of their experiences (Oyserman, 2007, 2009). This theory emphasizes the motivational power of the self (Oyserman, 2015) and proposes that identities are dynamically constructed in response to contextual cues rather than fixed or static (Oyserman et al., 2012). Situations signal how individuals with a given identity should think, feel, and act, while also shaping how they interpret experiences of ease or difficulty during goal pursuit (Oyserman, 2009, 2009). Thus, sensemaking following abusive supervision may mediate the relationship between identity disruption and work outcomes by influencing how individuals reconstruct goals, sustain motivation, and engage in performance-relevant behaviour.

Referring to prior research, there is growing support for the proposition that abusive supervision precipitates sensemaking efforts. For example, a qualitative study by Masood et al. (2024) demonstrates that victims of abusive supervision engage in sensemaking processes to derive meaning and “lessons” from their experiences. Their findings show that abusive supervision disrupts victims' narratives and triggers retrospective sensemaking to understand the circumstances surrounding the abuse and the motivations of the abuser (Masood et al., 2024). Once individuals leave the abusive supervision relationship, their sensemaking becomes more detailed as they combine retrospective and prospective interpretations that shape future work

attitudes and responses (Masood et al., 2024). These findings highlight that there is in fact a relationship between abusive supervision and sensemaking.

Additional research further supports this contention. Drawing on sensemaking theory, Ng et al. (2020) show that exposure to workplace bullying activates appraisal processes, whereby individuals interpret the severity of the bullying, and their sense of responsibility and efficacy to guide their responses. Their model highlights how repeated exposure to workplace bullying leads to continued sensemaking and interpretations evolving over time as individuals look to prior events to anticipate future events (Ng et al., 2020). Extending this logic to group contexts, Mercer et al. (2025) argue that abusive supervision often triggers collective sensemaking efforts aimed at establishing a shared understanding of the abuse, particularly when group members seek to interpret the leader's behaviour. Collectively, this literature suggests that abusive supervision initiates sensemaking processes as individuals attempt to interpret and respond to abusive leadership.

Further, past research highlights that sensemaking also shapes motivation, action, and performance outcomes. Sensemaking provides individuals with direction and motivation to act by helping them interpret ambiguous or disruptive events that then supports subsequent behaviour (Zohar & Luria, 2003). Synthesizing the sensemaking literature, Maitlis and Christianson (2014) argue that sensemaking is related to affective and cognitive states, such that individuals' interpretations influence their readiness to act and their motivational orientation following various situations. When sensemaking generates clarity about a situation, individuals are more likely to move toward purposeful action instead of remaining stagnant due to ambiguity (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014).

Additional empirical evidence supports the hypothesis that sensemaking processes are linked to performance-related outcomes. For example, Thomas et al. (1993) demonstrated that sensemaking processes involving scanning, interpretation, and action are related to organizational performance. They establish linkages between interpretive processes and action that shape performance outcomes. More recently, Saeed et al. (2024) also noted that employee sensemaking influences organizational outcomes by enabling individuals to reinterpret uncertainty, redefine goals and values, and engage more effectively with change, with sensemaking operating as a key explanatory mechanism. Therefore, this literature suggests that sensemaking has significant consequences for motivation, goal orientation, and performance, supporting its role as a mediating mechanism through which abusive supervision may influence both motivational and performance-related outcomes.

These hypotheses also support the qualitative findings from Study 1 noted earlier. Interviews outlined how abusive supervision serves as a triggering event that initiates post-incident sensemaking. Further, participants engaged in sensemaking by interpreting the cause of the abuse and assessed their preparedness to respond, which structured subsequent identity work processes. These identity work trajectories led to differences in motivation, goal orientation, and performance-related behaviours. Therefore, the qualitative findings support the hypothesized pathway in which sensemaking mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and motivational and performance outcomes.

In summary, theory, past research, and the qualitative findings noted in the present research point to a sequential process in which abusive supervision initiates sensemaking, which in turn shapes motivational and performance outcomes. Thus, it is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 1: Abusive supervision will be positively related to victims' engagement in sensemaking efforts.

Hypothesis 2: Victims' sensemaking efforts will mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and (a) goal motivation for work, (b) goal motivation for non-work, (c) work motivation, and (d) work performance.

Moderating Conditions of the Sensemaking–Outcome Relationship

It is further hypothesized that contextual factors will condition the strength of the relationship between sensemaking and motivational and performance-related outcomes following abusive supervision. IBM theory provides a framework for understanding why these relationships may vary across contexts, emphasizing that motivation and behaviour depend in part on how experienced difficulty is interpreted during goal pursuit (Elmore & Oyserman, 2012; Oyserman, 2013). When situational cues activate identities that feel relevant in the moment, individuals are able to infer what “people like me” would do, which guides goal pursuit and effort allocation (Oyserman, 2019). Accordingly, sensemaking is not uniformly motivating. Instead, its consequences depend on how identities are constructed and interpreted in response to situational cues (Strietholt, 2026).

From this perspective, causal framing represents one such situational cue, as it shapes how individuals interpret responsibility, agency, and control following adverse events. Because IBM posits that contexts signal which actions are possible and identity-congruent, causal framings that activate different identities are expected to determine whether sensemaking leads to a felt readiness to act and sustained motivation (Oyserman, 2007; Oyserman, 2009; Oyserman, 2019). Applying this logic, causal framings that attribute abuse to a specific actor may lead to a greater sense of agency and action-relevant identities, increasing the likelihood that sensemaking leads to goal-directed motivation and better performance-related outcomes. In contrast, causal framings that blame external sources may lead individuals to feel the systemic issues are beyond their control, fostering limited action and weakening motivational and performance-related

outcomes following sensemaking. Because IBM posits that only identity-congruent actions are motivating, sensemaking efforts should be more strongly associated with motivation and performance outcomes when causal framing leads to felt agency (Oyserman, 2009).

Perceived preparedness is hypothesized to further condition the motivational and performance-related consequences of sensemaking by shaping how individuals interpret difficulty during goal pursuit. IBM identifies the interpretation of difficulty as a core mechanism linking identity to motivation. In essence, when action feels identity-congruent, experienced difficulty signals importance instead of impossibility (Oyserman, 2009; Oyserman et al., 2012). Individuals who are prepared, through prior reflection or learning, are more likely to interpret post-abuse sensemaking as meaningful and actionable, thereby sustaining motivation and performance (Oyserman, 2015). Conversely, individuals who lack preparedness and engage in sensemaking may conclude that the situation is overwhelming or discouraging, leading to worse motivational and performance-related outcomes (Oyserman & Horowitz, 2023). Therefore, based on this theory, sensemaking should be more strongly related to increased motivation and performance-related outcomes when individuals frame abusive supervision as stemming from an isolated actor rather than broader societal forces, as interpreted by the individual and feel prepared by past events. The following subsections draw on relevant literature and findings from the qualitative portion of this study to support these hypotheses.

Moderating Role of Causal Framing. In terms of moderation, this study first hypothesizes that causal framing will moderate the relationship between sensemaking and goal motivation for work, goal motivation for non-work, work motivation, and work performance, such that individuals who attribute the abuse to individual-level factors will display higher motivation and performance-related outcomes compared to those who attribute the abuse to

systemic or societal-level factors. Empirical attribution research indicates that motivational outcomes differ depending on how individuals assign responsibility and controllability following adverse events. For example, Weiner's framework demonstrates that when outcomes are attributed to controllable causes, individuals will be more likely to sustain effort and persistence, whereas if they attribute a situation to uncontrollable causes, it can undermine motivation and performance (Weiner, 1985). Similarly, Abramson, et al. (1978) showed that stable, uncontrollable attributions for negative events lead to learned helplessness and reduced motivation. In later research, Harvey et al. (2014) highlighted that attributions emphasizing controllable causes are associated with greater effort, persistence, and engagement. In contrast, attributions to uncontrollable causes are linked to withdrawal and reduced motivation. Taken together, this research suggests that attributing abuse to individual-level, controllable factors is more likely to sustain motivation and performance-related outcomes than attributing abuse to broader societal factors that are perceived as diffuse and uncontrollable.

Further, research on individualism–collectivism at the individual level supports the proposition that differences in attributional orientations have important motivational and behavioural consequences. A meta-analysis by Oyserman et al. (2002) demonstrates that individualistic orientations are associated with greater effort, achievement motivation, and self-regulation, with these effects observed at the individual level rather than only across national contexts. Complementing this perspective, Beilmann and Realo (2012) show that individualism and collectivism can form based on individual-level differences, and that individualism predicts greater self-directed goal pursuit and stronger perceptions of control in comparison to collectivism. This research suggests that individuals who adopt more individualistic orientations, which in the present context can be comparable to individual-level attributions of abuse, may be

more likely to experience a sense of agency that supports sustained motivation and performance as compared to collectivism.

The qualitative findings from the first half of this sequential mixed-methods study offer preliminary support for the proposed moderation by demonstrating that the consequences of sensemaking for motivation and performance appeared to differ depending on how individuals framed the cause of abusive supervision. Participants who perceived the abuse as stemming from an individual actor often engaged in sensemaking that emphasized bounded responsibility and preserved a sense of personal agency. In several cases, this framing was associated with clearer goal reorientation and more adaptive performance-related behaviours. In contrast, participants who framed abusive supervision as stemming from broader societal or structural forces frequently discussed power asymmetries and systemic constraints. Within these narratives, sensemaking sometimes focused less on immediate action and more on interpreting the broader context of the experience. Thus, while sensemaking occurred across both contexts, the qualitative patterns suggest that the motivational and performance-related consequences of sensemaking may be stronger when abusive supervision is framed as attributable to an isolated actor.

Moderating Role of Preparedness. In addition to perceptions of cause, it is hypothesized that perceived preparedness to handle abuse moderates the relationship between sensemaking and goal motivation for work, goal motivation for non-work, work motivation, and work performance, such that individuals who feel prepared by prior experiences will exhibit stronger positive associations than those who do not. Past research supports this contention. For example, research on experiential learning highlights that systematic reflection on prior events enhances performance by providing individuals with opportunities to extract lessons that guide

future action (Ellis et al., 2014). Meta-analytic evidence also shows that structured reflection and debriefing processes, procedures intended to turn experience into usable lessons, lead to significant improvements in performance (Tannenbaum & Cerasoli, 2013). These findings suggest that individuals who have engaged in prior reflective learning can more effectively convert sensemaking efforts into productive action.

Complementing this evidence, research on proactive coping shows that individuals who establish anticipatory resources and prepare for future stressors exhibit higher job performance, greater motivation, and more adaptive work behaviours (Ersen & Bilgiç, 2018). Proactive coping also functions as a mechanism through which personal resources translate into effective outcomes, indicating that preparedness enables individuals to engage in constructive action when challenges arise (Stanojević et al., 2014). Thus, this literature suggests that sensemaking efforts are more likely to translate into increased motivation and performance when individuals possess preparedness from prior learning and proactive coping.

The qualitative findings from the first part of this sequential mixed-methods study further support the proposed moderation hypothesis. Interviews suggested that the extent to which sensemaking translated into motivation and performance-related outcomes differed depending on whether individuals felt prepared to navigate abusive supervision based on prior experience. Participants who perceived themselves as prepared often drew on past lessons, prior reflection, and accumulated coping resources, which appeared to enable more focused sensemaking and more adaptive responses. Their ability to learn from past events allowed them to reinterpret abusive experiences as actionable, sustain motivation, and maintain or adjust their performance-related behaviour. In contrast, participants who felt unprepared were more likely to experience

rumination, uncertainty, and emotional overwhelm, which limited the motivational and performance-related consequences of sensemaking.

Interactive Effects of Causal Framing and Preparedness. Although prior research has not tested the interaction between the attributional framing of the cause of the abuse and perceived preparedness, some evidence suggests that both factors shape motivation in a complementary fashion. Attribution research demonstrates that perceived controllability promotes effort and persistence (Weiner, 1985), while experiential learning and proactive coping research highlights how reflection and resource accumulation enable individuals to translate past experience and utilizing it effectively to handle future situations (Ellis et al., 2014; Ersen & Bilgiç, 2018). Integrating these perspectives, preparedness may enhance the motivational consequences of sensemaking primarily when situational framings cue a sense of agency and action relevance. In other words, when individuals perceive the abuse stems from a lone actor and when they felt prepared by past events, it will lead to superior motivational and performance-related outcomes. Conversely, when situations are framed as uncontrollable, such as when abuse stems from broader societal issues, even prepared individuals may perceive limited scope for action, attenuating the effects of sensemaking on outcomes.

In sum, prior research suggests that the motivational and performance-related consequences of sensemaking depend on how individuals frame the cause of abusive supervision and whether they feel prepared to respond. These factors are expected to interact in shaping when and for whom sensemaking translates into adaptive outcomes. Thus, it is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 3: The positive relationship between sensemaking efforts and (a) goal motivation for work, (b) goal motivation for non-work, (c) work motivation, and (d) work performance will be moderated by causal framing, such that individuals who perceive abusive supervision as stemming from an isolated actor will exhibit stronger positive associations than those who perceive it as stemming from a societal issue.

Hypothesis 4: The positive relationship between sensemaking efforts and (a) goal motivation for work, (b) goal motivation for non-work, (c) work motivation, and (d) work performance will be moderated by preparedness, such that Veterans will exhibit stronger positive associations than Novices.

Hypothesis 5: Preparedness and causal framing will interact to moderate the relationship between sensemaking efforts and (a) goal motivation for work, (b) goal motivation for non-work, (c) work motivation, and (d) work performance, such that Veterans will report stronger positive associations than Novices, and among Veterans, those who perceive abusive supervision as stemming from an isolated actor will exhibit stronger positive associations compared to those who perceive it as stemming from a societal issue.

Conclusion

In summary, this chapter utilizes theory, past empirical research, and advances the qualitative portion of this study to propose a theoretical model that explains how abusive supervision initiates sensemaking processes that, in turn, shape motivational and performance-related outcomes. It is argued that sensemaking is a critical mechanism through which abusive supervision influences goal motivation, work motivation, and performance. Importantly, the chapter further advances theory by identifying causal framing and perceived preparedness as key contextual conditions that shape motivational and performance-based outcomes. The next chapter empirically tests these hypotheses using quantitative data, examining the proposed mediation and moderation effects and evaluating the extent to which distinct sensemaking processes lead to divergent motivational and performance-related outcomes.

CHAPTER 6 – QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Participant Demographics

Table 6 provides a full breakdown of participant characteristics in Appendix C. A total of 420 participants completed the survey. The sample was evenly split by sex (50.36% female; 49.64% male) and the large majority consisted of early-career adults, with 56.70% aged 18–34, 34.93% aged 35–54, and 8.37% aged 55 or older. Participants held a variety of organizational roles, including entry-level (16.35%), mid-level (47.36%), and managerial or supervisory positions (36.30%). Work experience ranged across early (44.95%), mid (31.97%), and late career (23.08%) stages.

Educational attainment was diverse. Specifically, 21.63% possessed non-university education as the highest level of education, while 49.28% held a bachelor's degree or postgraduate certificate, and 29.09% held a graduate degree. The majority worked in service-producing industries (86.60%) and within for-profit organizations (84.71%). Most participants were covered by a collective agreement (61.89%) and were working on-site or in a hybrid format (89.61%).

Geographically, participants were primarily located in Sub-Saharan Africa (51.20%) and North America (19.14%), with additional smaller percentages of participants located in Latin America/Caribbean, Europe, Asia, Oceania, and the Middle East/North Africa. Leader locations largely followed a similar pattern. Participants' places of birth also varied widely, with the largest share born in Sub-Saharan Africa (51.96%), followed by North America (16.96%) and Western Europe (9.81%).

Regarding experiences of supervision, participants varied in abuse duration, with the most common duration being 1–2 years (33.49%). Over one-quarter (27.34%) reported currently

experiencing abusive supervision, and 43.88% reported experiencing multiple incidents of abuse. Most participants were in a committed relationship or married (64.03% combined), and over half had children (64.11%). Additionally, 36.12% reported caregiving responsibilities beyond childcare.

 Insert Table 6 about here

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among study variables are presented in Tables 7 and 8. The one-item Perception of Cause variable was not included for reliability estimation. All measures demonstrated acceptable to excellent internal consistency, as reported in the Measures section.

 Insert Table 7 about here

Participants reported moderate levels of abusive supervision ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 0.88$) and high levels of sensemaking, work motivation, and goal motivation. Work performance (effort and quality) was also high. Preparedness dimensions (proactive, reflective, and strategic planning) showed high means and strong internal consistency.

As shown in Table 8, correlations among variables were generally consistent with theoretical expectations (see Table 8). Abusive supervision showed small but significant positive associations with several motivation and performance variables, as well as with amotivation, highlighting the complex motivational dynamics observed in abusive contexts. At the bivariate level, abusive supervision was positively correlated with several variables; however, in the mediation models, some direct paths became negative once sensemaking was included,

consistent with suppression/indirect-only patterns. Sensemaking was positively correlated with the three preparedness dimensions ($r_s = .42-.53$) and with both work performance indicators ($r_s = .41-.52$). The preparedness subscales had strong intercorrelations. Although the preparedness subscales were moderately intercorrelated, variance inflation factors (VIFs) were examined to assess potential multicollinearity. VIF values for the proactive coping, reflective coping, and strategic planning subscales ranged from 2.41 to 3.02, below accepted thresholds, indicating that multicollinearity was not a concern.

Work motivation variables were highly correlated with one another ($r_s = .50-.75$). This reflects their shared conceptual foundation. They were also positively associated with both goal motivation and work performance. Social desirability showed generally small-to-moderate associations with variables; thus, it is unlikely to fully explain the observed relationships.

 Insert Table 8 about here

Measurement Model

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Table 9 indicates model fit for the competing measurement models. Table 10 reports the standardized factor loadings and reliability estimates, and Table 11 presents descriptive statistics, correlations, and AVE values. A two-step procedure was conducted to estimate relationships among the study constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). First, nested measurement models were estimated to specify the relations between the observed indicators and their underlying latent constructs, with factors allowed to intercorrelate freely. Latent variables were modeled using an oblique factor structure, consistent with theoretical expectations. Next, nested structural models were estimated to test the hypotheses, and model fit was evaluated using both absolute and incremental fit indices.

The measurement model was examined via confirmatory factor analysis using the SEM procedure in Stata. An initial CFA including all items was estimated for each latent construct.

Several competing models were estimated to assess the distinctiveness of the study constructs. These included a single-factor model, a three-factor model, a five-factor model, and the theorized multi-factor model in which abusive supervision, preparedness dimensions (proactive coping, reflective coping, and strategic planning), sensemaking, work motivation dimensions, goal motivation (at work and outside work), and work performance (effort and quality) were specified as 15 correlated latent variables.

As shown in Table 9, the single-factor model $\chi^2(3402) = 12,893.70$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .082, 90% CI [.080, .083]; CFI = .52; TLI = .51; AIC = 91,375.17; BIC = 92,393.31) demonstrated misfit, as did the three-factor solution $\chi^2(3399) = 10,535.58$, RMSEA = .07, 90% CI [.069, .072], CFI = .64; TLI = .630; AIC = 89,023.05; BIC = 90,053.31), with information criteria remaining considerably higher than for the theorized model. A five-factor model was also estimated but did not provide adequate fit to the data $\chi^2(3392) = 8,729.07$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .06, 90% CI [.060, .063], $p < .001$; CFI = .73; TLI = .72; AIC = 87,230.54; BIC = 88,289.08. Although the five-factor solution showed improvement over the single-factor and three-factor alternatives, it remained weak. Then, an initial CFA including all items was estimated for each latent construct. Three reverse-scored items from the PCI_PCS scale (PCS2, PCS9, PCS14) showed poor psychometric performance in the CFA, including weak or non-significant standardized loadings ($|\lambda| \approx .18-.66$) and very low item R^2 ($< .10$). These items were removed from subsequent analyses, and the PCI_PCS factor was estimated using the remaining items. The final measurement model demonstrated acceptable fit to the data, $\chi^2(3054) = 5299.07$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .04, 90% CI [.040, .044], $p = 1.00$; CFI = .88; TLI = .88; AIC = 80,497.52, BIC =

81,903.53. Although the CFI and TLI values fell slightly below the conventional .90 threshold, they reflect substantial improvement over competing models and are considered acceptable given the complexity of the model and the strong performance of other fit indices (e.g., RMSEA) (Marsh et al., 2004). These comparisons indicate that the 15-factor structure best captures the covariance among the items and supports the distinctiveness of the constructs.

All model modifications were theory-driven and based on psychometric performance and conceptual alignment with the constructs, consistent with recommendations by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). It is also important to note that although the chi-square statistic was significant, χ^2 is sensitive to sample size and model complexity (Bentler & Bonett, 1980; Kline, 2016). Therefore, more attention is placed on the incremental and residual-based fit indices (CFI, TLI, RMSEA, SRMR), which are reliable indicators of model fit for large SEMs (Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003).

 Insert Table 9 about here

As can be seen in Table 10, all items loaded significantly on their intended latent factors ($ps < .001$), with most standardized loadings exceeding the conventional .60 benchmark (Hair et al., 2019). A small number fell below this threshold, including a limited subset below .40, which were retained for content coverage. Evidence of convergent validity was further supported by average variance extracted (AVE) values that met or closely approached the recommended .50 threshold across latent variables (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), in conjunction with strong composite reliability estimates. The revised Proactive Coping scale, which removed three problematic reverse-coded items, demonstrated high internal consistency, with composite reliability and omega both approximately .91.

Internal consistency was adequate to excellent across all scales. Composite reliability values and Cronbach's alpha coefficients surpassed the commonly recommended .70 criterion (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), indicating that the indicators consistently represented their latent constructs.

 Insert Table 10 about here

Presented in Table 11, discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker (1981) criterion. For most constructs, the square root of the AVE exceeded its correlations with other latent variables, demonstrating that each construct shared more variance with its own indicators than with any other construct. However, higher correlations were observed among the proactive coping dimensions, particularly between reflective and strategic planning, and between reflective and proactive preparedness. This pattern is consistent with their conceptual relatedness, as these dimensions represent closely linked facets of a broader preparedness construct. In sum, the measurement model demonstrated acceptable fit, strong convergent validity, internal consistency, and clear discriminant validity.

 Insert Table 11 about here

Structural Model Comparison and Mediation Structure Selection

Before testing the hypothesized indirect effects, competing mediation structures were evaluated to determine whether a partial or full mediation model best represented the data. Full mediation models were estimated by constraining the direct paths from abusive supervision to the outcomes to zero and compared against partial mediation models in which these paths were freely estimated.

For motivation outcomes, the full mediation model demonstrated significantly worse fit than the partial mediation model, $\Delta\chi^2(8) = 26.61$, $p < .001$, and explained less variance across outcomes. For performance outcomes, constraining the direct paths resulted in the removal of an empirically supported direct effect (to work effort) without improving overall model fit. These comparisons indicate that a partial mediation structure provides a superior representation of the data. Accordingly, results are reported from the partial mediation models.

Assessment of Common Method Variance

Because all variables were collected using self-report surveys at a single time point, the data were assessed for potential CMV. Several procedural remedies were implemented at the study design stage to reduce the likelihood of CMV (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Participation was anonymous, and respondents were assured that their answers were confidential and used solely for research purposes, which helps reduce evaluation apprehension and socially desirable responding. All constructs were measured using well-established scales drawn from prior research and were worded to emphasize subjective experiences rather than right or wrong answers. In addition, several scales included reverse-worded items in accordance with their original scale construction, which can help reduce acquiescence bias, although such procedural remedies alone are insufficient to rule out CMV.

To further assess CMV, a latent-factor CFA was estimated in which all multi-item self-report measures (abusive supervision, preparedness, sensemaking, goal motivation, work motivation, and work performance) were specified as substantive latent constructs, alongside a latent CMV factor consistent with Podsakoff et al.'s (2003) recommendations. The latent CMV factor was modeled orthogonally to the trait factors and allowed to load onto all self-report indicators.

Inspection indicated that the substantive trait-factor loadings remained strong and statistically significant across indicators, with most standardized loadings falling within acceptable-to-high ranges (commonly approximately .50–.90 or above). In contrast, the CMV loadings were generally small to moderate in magnitude, and more than half of the CMV loadings were not statistically significant. Most CMV loadings ranged from approximately .10 to .35, although a small number of indicators demonstrated somewhat larger method loadings (approximately .40–.62), particularly among select Abusive Supervision, Introjected Regulation, and Amotivation items. Several indicators demonstrated small or near-zero CMV loadings (such as AS3, AS7, and GMatwork3).

The latent factor covariances were statistically significant with the inclusion of the CMV factor. Thus, although some shared method variance was present, discriminant validity among the substantive constructs was maintained, and the relationships were robust after controlling for the latent CMV factor.

An exploratory factor analysis using principal factors extraction was also conducted. The first factor accounted for 43.86% of the total variance, below the 50% threshold commonly cited in Harman's single-factor test (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Multiple additional factors had eigenvalues greater than 1, supporting a multidimensional measurement structure rather than a dominant common method factor.

Testing of Hypotheses

Model Specification and Rationale

The structural models were estimated with controls (gender, age, job position, industry, region, work arrangement, work experience, abuse duration/recency, multiple abuse experiences, relationship status, childhood SES, caregiver status), in accordance with recommendations to test

robustness against confounding variables (Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2009). As the inclusion of controls did not significantly change the structural paths, controlled estimates are summarized briefly at the end of the section.

Hypothesis 1 and 2

Results for Hypotheses 1 and 2 are presented in Tables 12–15 and Figure 8. Hypothesis 1 proposed that abusive supervision would positively predict sensemaking. This hypothesis was supported: abusive supervision significantly predicted employees' engagement in sensemaking efforts ($b = .20$, $SE = .04$, $z = 5.01$, $p < .001$, $\beta = .22$), indicating that higher levels of abusive supervision were associated with greater cognitive processing of the abusive experience. This direct path is displayed in Figure 1 and reported in Table 13. At the bivariate level (see Tables 7–8), abusive supervision was positively correlated with several motivation and performance variables. However, once sensemaking was included in the structural model (Table 13), the direct effects of abusive supervision became negative or nonsignificant, consistent with a suppression (indirect-only mediation) pattern. Table 13 reports unstandardized structural path estimates (b) alongside fully standardized coefficients (β ; StdYX). Standardized coefficients are provided to facilitate interpretation and comparison across outcomes.

To evaluate Hypothesis 2, which proposed that victims' sensemaking efforts would mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and (a) work motivation, (b) goal motivation for work, (c) goal motivation for non-work, and (d) work performance, two SEMs were estimated using composite indicators. Initial attempts to estimate the full latent-variable SEMs failed to converge, which is a common issue in SEM when models contain a large number of latent constructs and indicators (Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2009). When measurement models become overly complex, researchers recommend using composite indicators to reduce model

complexity and improve convergence while still maintaining the theoretical meaning of the constructs (Hair et al., 2022).

Prior to testing the indirect effects, full and partial mediation models were compared to determine the most appropriate representation of the data (see Table 12). For the performance model, the partial mediation model demonstrated improved fit according to the CFI and TLI indices relative to the full mediation model. For the motivation model, fit indices remained comparable across the full and partial mediation specifications. Although AIC favored the partial mediation models and BIC produced less consistent results, the fit statistics supported retaining the partial mediation structure. Furthermore, several direct paths from abusive supervision to the outcomes remained statistically significant after accounting for sensemaking. Accordingly, the partial mediation models were retained.

Model fit statistics for the mediation model are reported in Table 12. Specifically, outcomes were estimated in two models, one including motivational outcomes and a second including performance-related outcomes. The motivational outcomes model indicated marginal fit, $\chi^2 (396) = 2247.66$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .11, 90% CI [.10, .11]; CFI = .83; TLI = .82; CD = .94.

Insert Table 12 about here

Insert Table 13 about here

Consistent with Hypothesis 2, sensemaking showed strong and significant positive effects on all motivational dimensions (see Table 13). These effects are illustrated in Figure 8. Higher sensemaking was associated with higher goal motivation at work ($b = 1.04$, $p < .001$; $\beta = .54$) and goal motivation outside of work ($b = .83$, $p < .001$; $\beta = .40$). Sensemaking was also

positively related to intrinsic motivation ($b = 2.36, p < .001; \beta = .52$), integrated motivation ($b = 2.21, p < .001; \beta = .52$), identified motivation ($b = 2.09, p < .001; \beta = .52$), introjected motivation ($b = 2.28, p < .001; \beta = .52$), external ($b = 1.90, p < .001; \beta = .49$), and amotivation ($b = 2.07, p < .001; \beta = .52$). This pattern suggests that sensemaking may intensify motivational activation overall, both adaptive and less adaptive.

 Insert Figure 8 about here

Although sensemaking accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in motivation, abusive supervision also had small direct effects on certain motivation outcomes (see Table 13). Abusive supervision significantly predicted lower intrinsic motivation ($b = -.19, p = .01; \beta = -.06$), integrated motivation ($b = -.15, p = .02; \beta = -.05$), identified motivation ($b = -.13, p = .036; \beta = -.05$), introjected motivation ($b = -.16, p = .02; \beta = -.05$), and amotivation ($b = -.13, p = .04; \beta = -.05$). Importantly, abusive supervision was positively correlated with amotivation at the bivariate level; however, the direct effect became negative in the mediation model, indicating a suppression pattern in which the positive association operates primarily through sensemaking. The paths to external motivation and motivation outside work were nonsignificant. These findings support a partial mediation model.

Indirect effects are reported in Table 14. All indirect paths from abusive supervision through sensemaking were statistically significant. Abusive supervision indirectly predicted higher intrinsic ($\beta = .48, p < .001$), integrated ($\beta = .45, p < .001$), identified ($\beta = .42, p < .001$), introjected ($\beta = .46, p < .001$), external motivation ($\beta = .38, p < .001$), and amotivation ($\beta = .42, p < .001$). Similarly, indirect effects were significant for goal motivation at work ($\beta = .21, p < .001$) and outside work ($\beta = .17, p < .001$). These findings support Hypothesis 2a, 2b, and 2c.

 Insert Table 14 about here

A second mediation model tested whether sensemaking mediated the relationship between abusive supervision and employees' performance outcomes. Model fit indices for this model are reported in Table 12 and indicated good overall fit, $\chi^2 (249) = 736.55$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .07, 90% CI [.06, .07]; CFI = .89; TLI = .88; CD = .93. Similar to the above, abusive supervision significantly predicted sensemaking ($\beta = .22$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$), supporting Hypothesis 1 as well.

Sensemaking was also strongly associated with both performance outcomes (see Table 13). Higher sensemaking was related to greater work effort ($\beta = .78$, $p < .001$) and work quality ($\beta = .52$, $p < .001$). Abusive supervision showed a small positive direct effect on work effort ($\beta = .10$, $p = .02$; Table 13) but did not directly predict work quality ($\beta = .06$, $p = .21$). Indirect effects for performance outcomes are reported in Table 14. Abusive supervision indirectly predicted higher work effort ($\beta = .15$, $p < .001$) and work quality ($\beta = .11$, $p < .001$; see Table 14). These results support Hypothesis 2d.

As shown in Table 15, the results indicate an inconsistent mediation pattern (MacKinnon et al., 2000), in which the indirect effects of abusive supervision through sensemaking were positive, whereas the direct effects were negative or nonsignificant. This pattern reflects a suppression process whereby abusive supervision simultaneously activates sensemaking while exerting a demotivating influence on outcomes once sensemaking is held constant.

These findings suggest that sensemaking offsets the otherwise negative impact of abusive supervision on motivation outcomes. Total effects further indicate that the overall associations between abusive supervision and motivation and performance outcomes are primarily driven by

the indirect pathway through sensemaking. However, the negative direct effects observed in the mediation models indicate that the abusive experience itself remains psychologically harmful, net of sensemaking.

 Insert Table 15 about here

Hypothesis 3

Results for Hypothesis 3 are presented in Tables 16-17 and Figure 9. Hypothesis 3 proposed that the positive relationship between sensemaking and (a) goal motivation at work, (b) goal motivation outside of work, (c) work motivation, and (d) work performance would be moderated by causal framing, such that individuals who perceived abusive supervision as stemming from an isolated actor would exhibit stronger positive associations than those who perceived it as a societal issue.

Although these mean-level differences were not statistically significant, reporting descriptive comparisons provides context for the magnitude and direction of group differences prior to testing conditional relationships in complex models. Before testing the moderation hypothesis using SEMs, descriptive analyses were conducted to examine whether individuals who differed in causal framing also differed in average levels of sensemaking, motivation, or performance outcomes. These comparisons provide a baseline assessment of whether causal framing is associated with mean-level differences across outcomes.

Descriptive statistics comparing individuals who framed abuse as a societal issue versus an isolated actor are reported in Table 16. Mean-level differences across causal framing groups were small and nonsignificant for sensemaking and all motivational and performance outcomes (all p s > .05), indicating that causal framing was not associated with systematic differences in outcome levels.

 Insert Table 16 about here

Whereas these descriptive analyses assess whether causal framing is associated with differences in outcome levels, the SEMs test whether causal framing changes the strength of the relationship between sensemaking and the outcomes while accounting for abusive supervision and covariates. Importantly, the absence of mean-level differences does not imply the absence of moderation, as causal framing may still influence how sensemaking relates to outcomes rather than overall outcome levels. Hypothesis 3 was then formally tested using SEM estimated with MLMV values ($N = 420$). Causal framing was operationalized using a dichotomous perceived-cause variable (isolated actor = 1; societal issue = 0). For the purposes of estimating interaction terms, continuous independent variables were standardized prior to computing interaction effects to reduce multicollinearity and facilitate interpretation of conditional effects. Abusive supervision and demographic and work-related covariates were included as controls.

In terms of the main effects, across dependent variables, as noted in earlier hypotheses, sensemaking had positive associations with all motivational and performance variables. Sensemaking significantly predicted goal motivation at work ($\beta = .35$, $z = 4.94$, $p < .001$) and goal motivation outside of work ($\beta = .44$, $z = 5.89$, $p < .001$). Sensemaking also significantly predicted intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .42$, $z = 6.01$, $p < .001$), integrated motivation ($\beta = .40$, $z = 5.67$, $p < .001$), identified motivation ($\beta = .39$, $z = 5.50$, $p < .001$), introjected motivation ($\beta = .40$, $z = 5.71$, $p < .001$), external motivation ($\beta = .37$, $z = 5.28$, $p < .001$), amotivation ($\beta = .36$, $z = 5.08$, $p < .001$), work effort ($\beta = .42$, $z = 6.38$, $p < .001$), and work quality ($\beta = .32$, $z = 4.37$, $p < .001$).

The results for causal framing are reported in Table 17. Causal framing did not show significant main effects across most dependent variables ($ps > .05$). However, work effort was an exception, where isolated-actor framing was associated with higher effort after accounting for sensemaking, abusive supervision, and covariates ($\beta = .09, z = 2.17, p = .03$).

 Insert Table 17 about here

Contrary to the hypothesis, the Sensemaking $\times$ Causal Framing interaction was not significant for most motivational and performance outcomes ($p > .05$). However, moderation was supported for two outcomes. The interaction term significantly predicted goal motivation at work ($\beta = .10, z = 2.34, p = .019$) and work effort ($\beta = .09, z = 2.17, p = .030$). The positive association between sensemaking and these outcomes differed by causal framing. Thus, Hypothesis 3 received partial support. Specifically, causal framing moderated the relationship between sensemaking and goal motivation at work and work effort, but not other motivational or performance outcomes.

To interpret the significant interactions, simple slopes were estimated using linear combinations of model parameters (lincom). Because the interaction models were estimated with standardized coefficients, the simple slopes are reported as model-implied conditional effects (b) rather than standardized β s. For goal motivation at work, sensemaking was positively associated with work-related goal motivation under both framing conditions. Among individuals who framed abuse as a societal issue, the conditional effect of sensemaking was significant ($b = .44, SE = .08, z = 5.70, p < .001$). Among individuals who framed abuse as stemming from an isolated actor, the association was stronger ($b = .67, SE = .07, z = 10.12, p < .001$). These conditional effects are reported in text and are not presented in a separate table.

A similar pattern emerged for work effort. Among individuals who framed abuse as a societal issue, sensemaking was significantly related to effort ($b = .59$, $SE = .08$, $z = 7.17$, $p < .001$), whereas among individuals who framed abuse as stemming from an isolated actor, the association was stronger ($b = .83$, $SE = .07$, $z = 11.55$, $p < .001$).

To illustrate the moderation effect, Figure 9 presents an interaction plot showing the relationship between sensemaking and goal motivation at work based on causal framing. The figure shows predicted values of goal motivation at low (societal issue), mean, and high (isolated actor) levels of sensemaking for societal-issue and isolated-actor framings, with 95% confidence intervals. A similar pattern was observed for work effort, but only the interaction for goal motivation at work is outlined.

 Insert Figure 9 about here

Hypothesis 4

Results for Hypothesis 4 are presented in Tables 18-19 and Figures 10-12. Hypothesis 4 proposed that the positive relationship between sensemaking efforts and (a) goal motivation at work, (b) goal motivation outside of work, (c) work motivation, and (d) work performance would be moderated by preparedness, such that Veterans will exhibit stronger positive associations than Novices. Thus, to examine whether preparedness moderated the relationship between sensemaking and these outcomes, SEMs were estimated using MLMV ($N = 420$).

Preparedness reflects individuals' ability to anticipate, plan for, and proactively cope with challenging situations and encompassed a composite of proactive coping, reflective coping, and strategic planning tendencies. Moderation was tested via the interaction between sensemaking

and preparedness (Sensemaking $\times$ Preparedness; SMxPrep). Abusive supervision and demographic and work-related covariates were controlled.

Results of the SEMs testing Hypothesis 4 are presented in Table 18. Consistent with the earlier findings, sensemaking demonstrated consistent positive associations with most motivational and performance variables. Sensemaking significantly predicted goal motivation at work ($\beta = .17, z = 3.45, p = .001$) and goal motivation outside of work ($\beta = .13, z = 2.25, p = .02$). Sensemaking also positively predicted intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .25, z = 4.9, p < .001$), integrated motivation ($\beta = .24, z = 4.63, p < .001$), identified motivation ($\beta = .25, z = 4.78, p < .001$), introjected motivation ($\beta = .25, z = 4.66, p < .001$), external motivation ($\beta = .27, z = 5.19, p < .001$), amotivation ($\beta = .23, z = 4.42, p < .001$), work effort ($\beta = .31, z = 6.40, p < .001$), and work quality ($\beta = .10, z = 1.98, p = .05$).

Preparedness also had strong and consistent positive main effects across outcomes. Preparedness significantly predicted goal motivation at work ($\beta = .51, z = 11.68, p < .001$) and goal motivation outside of work ($\beta = .44, z = 8.89, p < .001$). Preparedness also strongly predicted intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .42, z = 9.20, p < .001$), integrated motivation ($\beta = .38, z = 8.07, p < .001$), identified motivation ($\beta = .35, z = 7.14, p < .001$), introjected motivation ($\beta = .36, z = 7.38, p < .001$), external motivation ($\beta = .33, z = 6.73, p < .001$), amotivation ($\beta = .35, z = 7.06, p < .001$), work quality ($\beta = .55, z = 12.82, p < .001$), and work effort ($\beta = .39, z = 8.58, p < .001$).

However, contrary to expectations, the Sensemaking $\times$ Preparedness interaction was not significant for any outcome. The interaction term did not predict goal motivation at work ($\beta = -.04, z = -0.99, p = .32$), goal motivation outside of work ($\beta = -.03, z = -0.55, p = .58$), intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .06, z = 1.49, p = .137$), integrated motivation ($\beta = .05, z = 1.12, p = .26$),

identified motivation ($\beta = .04, z = 0.97, p = .333$), introjected motivation ($\beta = .04, z = 0.95, p = .343$), external motivation ($\beta = .05, z = 1.24, p = .215$), or amotivation ($\beta = .03, z = .69, p = .49$). Similarly, the interaction was non-significant for work effort ($\beta = .00, z = 0.03, p = .98$) and work quality ($\beta = .01, z = 0.18, p = .85$).

Thus, Hypothesis 4 was not supported. Although sensemaking and preparedness each demonstrated strong and consistent direct effects on goal, motivational, and performance outcomes, preparedness did not moderate the relationship between sensemaking and any outcome examined.

 Insert Table 18 about here

Although the interaction between sensemaking and preparedness was not statistically significant, simple slopes analyses were conducted for interpretive completeness to investigate whether the outcomes differed at low (-1 SD, the novices) versus high ($+1$ SD, the veterans) levels of preparedness. As shown in Figure 10, individuals higher in preparedness (veterans) also reported higher levels of sensemaking than those lower in preparedness (novices). In all cases, the conditional effects of sensemaking were statistically significant at both low and high levels of preparedness, and no outcome demonstrated a statistically meaningful divergence between preparedness levels. These findings further confirm that preparedness does not moderate the relationship between sensemaking and the noted outcomes.

 Insert Figure 10 about here

To add insight, additional analyses were conducted comparing individuals lower in preparedness and higher in preparedness using one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs). It is

important to note that these analyses complement, but did not substitute the SEM moderation tests. Descriptive statistics and ANOVA results are found in Table 19.

ANOVA helped reveal statistically significant mean differences across all outcomes. In this case, veterans consistently reported higher levels than novices. Specifically, veterans reported higher goal motivation at work ($M = 4.83$, $SD = .36$) compared to novices ($M = 4.21$, $SD = .75$), $F(1, 418) = 122.90$, $p < .001$, as well as higher goal motivation outside of work ($M = 4.75$ vs. $M = 4.15$), $F(1, 418) = 95.17$, $p < .001$. Veterans also reported significantly higher intrinsic motivation ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 0.63$) than novices ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 0.72$), $F(1, 418) = 123.51$, $p < .001$. Similar patterns emerged for integrated motivation ($M_{\text{Veteran}} = 3.96$ vs. $M_{\text{Novice}} = 3.30$), $F(1, 418) = 107.09$, $p < .001$; identified motivation ($M_{\text{Veteran}} = 3.91$ vs. $M_{\text{Novice}} = 3.3$), $F(1, 418) = 98.87$, $p < .001$; introjected motivation ($M_{\text{Veteran}} = 3.98$ vs. $M_{\text{Novice}} = 3.32$), $F(1, 418) = 100.02$, $p < .001$; external motivation ($M_{\text{Veteran}} = 3.94$ vs. $M_{\text{Novice}} = 3.36$), $F(1, 418) = 99.00$, $p < .001$; and amotivation ($M_{\text{Veteran}} = 3.83$ vs. $M_{\text{Novice}} = 3.25$), $F(1, 418) = 94.26$, $p < .001$. Bonferroni-adjusted comparisons confirmed that all mean differences were statistically significant ($ps < .001$).

Insert Table 19 about here

Preparedness groups also differed significantly on performance outcomes. Veterans additionally reported higher work effort ($M = 4.54$ vs. $M = 3.75$), $F(1, 418) = 155.38$, $p < .001$ and work quality ($M = 4.46$ vs. $M = 3.73$), $F(1, 418) = 150.98$, $p < .001$.

To further clarify the nature of the null moderation effects, bivariate correlations were examined separately for novices and veterans. Among novices, sensemaking was moderately and positively correlated with intrinsic motivation ($r = .34$), integrated motivation ($r = .34$), identified

motivation ($r = .33$), introjected motivation ($r = .34$), external motivation ($r = .32$), amotivation ($r = .33$), goal motivation at work ($r = .31$), goal motivation outside of work ($r = .28$), work quality ($r = .26$), and work effort ($r = .39$). Among veterans, sensemaking was also positively correlated with intrinsic motivation ($r = .35$), integrated motivation ($r = .32$), identified motivation ($r = .33$), introjected motivation ($r = .31$), external motivation ($r = .36$), amotivation ($r = .30$), goal motivation at work ($r = .39$), goal motivation outside of work ($r = .12$), work quality ($r = .21$), and work effort ($r = .43$). Although veterans reported higher mean levels of motivation and performance overall, the magnitude of correlations between sensemaking and outcomes was broadly similar across groups, with overlapping ranges. These findings further support the structural equation results indicating that preparedness did not significantly moderate the relationship between sensemaking and motivational or performance outcomes.

Whereas the SEM analyses tested moderation effects while controlling for other variables, the bivariate correlations were included to show whether the strength of the sensemaking–outcome relationship differed between the groups. The similarity of these correlations indicates that although veterans report higher overall levels of motivation and performance, sensemaking is similarly related to these outcomes for both novices and veterans.

Figure 11 illustrates the sensemaking pattern for novices and veterans. For both novices and veterans, sensemaking was moderately and positively correlated with all outcomes. Among novices, correlations ranged from $r = .26$ (work quality) to $r = .39$ (work effort). Among veterans, correlations ranged from $r = .12$ (goal motivation outside of work) to $r = .43$ (work effort). The magnitude of correlations was similar, with overlapping ranges. These findings indicate that increases in sensemaking are associated with similar increases in outcomes across both groups, suggesting that preparedness does not alter the strength of these relationships. At

the same time, veterans consistently reported higher levels of motivation, goal motivation, and performance than novices. To illustrate this pattern of higher baseline levels alongside similar relationships, Figure 12 presents the additive effects of preparedness.

 Insert Figure 11 about here

 Insert Figure 12 about here

Hypothesis 5

Results for Hypothesis 5 are presented in Tables 20-21. Hypothesis 5 proposed that causal framing (societal issue vs. isolated actor) and preparedness (novice vs. veteran) would interact to affect the relationship between sensemaking and the proposed outcomes. To test this hypothesis, a set of SEMs were estimated using MLMV (N = 420).

In terms of the main effects, sensemaking was positively associated with several dependent variables, including intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .24, p = .003$), integrated motivation ($\beta = .23, p = .005$), identified motivation ($\beta = .25, p = .003$), introjected motivation ($\beta = .27, p = .001$), external motivation ($\beta = .26, p = .002$), amotivation ($\beta = .21, p = .015$), and work effort ($\beta = .27, p = .001$). However, sensemaking was not significantly related to goal motivation at work ($\beta = .11, p = .16$), goal motivation outside of work ($\beta = .13, p = .15$), or work quality ($\beta = -.01, p = .93$).

Causal framing showed limited direct effects across outcomes. It was significantly related to identified motivation ($\beta = .09, p = .043$), introjected motivation ($\beta = .09, p = .035$), amotivation ($\beta = .09, p = .039$), and work effort ($\beta = .14, p = .001$), with marginal effects observed for intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .08, p = .052$) and integrated motivation ($\beta = .08, p =$

.062). This indicates that attributing abuse to an isolated actor was associated with slightly higher motivation and effort after accounting for other variables.

Preparedness demonstrated strong and consistent positive associations across all dependent variables (all p s < .001), indicating that individuals who felt more prepared reported higher levels of motivation, goal pursuit, and performance, above and beyond sensemaking, causal framing, and control variables. With respect to two-way interaction effects, the Sensemaking $\times$ Causal Framing (SM $\times$ Cause), Sensemaking $\times$ Preparedness (SM $\times$ Prep), and Causal Framing $\times$ Preparedness (Cause $\times$ Prep) interactions were not significant across outcomes (p s > .05), suggesting that pairwise interaction alone did not explain variation in the outcomes.

Hypothesis 5 was further examined through the inclusion of three-way interaction effects. The SEM results are presented in Table 20. Consistent with the hypothesis, the three-way interaction between sensemaking, causal framing, and preparedness (SM $\times$ Cause $\times$ Prep) was significant across multiple outcomes. Specifically, the three-way interaction significantly predicted intrinsic motivation ($\beta = -.17$, $z = -2.14$, $p = .033$), integrated motivation ($\beta = -.17$, $z = -2.14$, $p = .033$), identified motivation ($\beta = -.16$, $z = -1.98$, $p = .047$), introjected motivation ($\beta = -.19$, $z = -2.30$, $p = .022$), external motivation ($\beta = -.20$, $z = -2.42$, $p = .016$), amotivation ($\beta = -.17$, $z = -2.12$, $p = .034$), goal motivation at work ($\beta = -.23$, $z = -3.03$, $p = .002$), and work effort ($\beta = -.24$, $z = -3.14$, $p = .002$). However, the three-way interaction was not significant for goal motivation outside of work ($\beta = .05$, $p = .60$) or work quality ($\beta = -.03$, $p = .69$). Thus, Hypothesis 5 received partial support. Although a significant Sensemaking $\times$ Causal Framing $\times$ Preparedness interaction emerged for several motivational outcomes and work effort, the pattern of effects did not fully align with the hypothesized direction.

Insert Table 20 about here

Further, based on the significant Sensemaking $\times$ Causal Framing $\times$ Preparedness interaction for goal motivation at work, simple slopes were estimated using linear combinations of model parameters (lincom). These results are presented in Table 21. The relationship between sensemaking and work-related goal motivation varied across the four combinations of causal framing and preparedness. The negative coefficient shows a crossover interaction. The effect of sensemaking on goal motivation at work differs in direction and strength across combinations of preparedness and causal framing.

Among individuals who attributed abuse to a societal issue and were less prepared (novices; prep = -1, cause = 0), the conditional effect of sensemaking on goal motivation at work was not significant ($b = .00$, $SE = .10$, $z = 0.01$, $p = .99$). In contrast, among individuals who attributed abuse to an isolated actor and were novices (prep = -1, cause = 1), sensemaking was positively and significantly associated with goal motivation at work ($b = .32$, $SE = .07$, $z = 4.49$, $p < .001$).

Among individuals who attributed abuse to a societal issue and were more prepared (veterans; prep = +1, cause = 0), sensemaking was significantly associated with goal motivation at work ($b = .26$, $SE = .12$, $z = 2.10$, $p = .04$). However, among individuals who attributed abuse to an isolated actor and were veterans (prep = +1, cause = 1), the association was not significant ($b = .12$, $SE = .10$, $z = 1.19$, $p = .23$).

 Insert Table 21 about here

These results highlight an important and unanticipated pattern. Sensemaking was most strongly associated with goal motivation at work when Novices attributed abuse to an isolated

actor, whereas among Veterans, sensemaking was more beneficial when abuse was framed as a societal issue. This pattern explains the significant negative three-way interaction. Further, it suggests that the motivational benefits of sensemaking depend on individuals' preparedness and how they attribute the source of the abuse, rather than uniformly benefiting the most prepared individuals.

Summary

In summary, the results largely supported the core mediation logic but failed to support the predicted moderation pattern. The results supported partial mediation. Hypothesis 1 was supported. Abusive supervision positively predicted sensemaking. Hypotheses 2a–2d were supported: sensemaking significantly mediated the relationship between abusive supervision and (a) work motivation, (b) goal motivation at work, (c) goal motivation outside of work, and (d) work performance. Indirect effects through sensemaking were positive and significant across motivational outcomes, and extended to work effort, whereas effects for work quality were weaker. Correspondingly, several direct effects of abusive supervision on motivational outcomes became negative or nonsignificant once sensemaking was included. Total effects indicated that the relationship between abusive supervision and outcomes was largely carried through indirect pathways via sensemaking.

For the moderation hypotheses, Hypothesis 3 was found to have partial support. Causal framing did not lead to mean-level differences. However, sensemaking positively predicted outcomes, and these relationships were stronger under isolated-actor framing for both goal motivation at work and work effort. The relationship was stronger under isolated-actor framing than societal-issue framing. Hypothesis 4 was not supported. Preparedness did not moderate the

sensemaking–outcome relationships. However, sensemaking and preparedness had strong positive main effects. Hypothesis 5 was also partially supported. Two-way interactions were nonsignificant, but there was a significant three-way interaction (Sensemaking $\times$ Causal Framing $\times$ Preparedness) for several motivation outcomes and work effort. However, the pattern did not align with the hypothesis. Notably, sensemaking was strongest for those who belong to the isolated actor Novice group, whereas for Veterans it was more beneficial when abuse was believed to be a societal issue.

CHAPTER 7 – DISCUSSION

Summary

This research aimed to uncover the reasons individuals differentially engage in identity work following abusive supervision and how these differences shape motivation and performance outcomes. Specifically, the study examined (a) the cognitive processes that lead to distinct identity work profiles in response to abusive leadership and (b) how these profiles lead to variation in motivation and performance-related outcomes. Utilizing a sequential exploratory mixed-methods design, this discussion integrates this research's qualitative and quantitative findings to demonstrate that identity work following abusive supervision is not a uniform response, but a cognitively structured process shaped by attributional framing and perceived preparedness. Applying narrative identity theory (Eakin, 2006; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Watson, 2009b) and IBM theory (Oyserman, 2007, 2009; Oyserman et al., 2012), the findings explicate how sensemaking operates as the central mechanism linking abusive supervision to work and nonwork outcomes. Further, it highlights that sensemaking may lead to disparate outcomes depending on individuals' causal interpretations of abuse and their preparedness to respond.

Sensemaking as the Core Mechanism Linking Abuse to Outcomes

The qualitative and quantitative findings revealed that sensemaking acted as the central process through which abusive supervision influenced motivation and performance-related outcomes. Qualitative accounts showed that abusive supervision operated as an extreme incident that disrupted individuals' sense of self. This event led to intensified emotional reactions and sustained cognitive reflection. Sensemaking constituted an identity-relevant interpretive process through which individuals evaluated what the incident meant about their competence and

standing both within and beyond the organization. This pattern aligns with prior research conceptualizing identity threat as a trigger for sensemaking, particularly when events threaten current or idealized identities and interrupt long-held assumptions about oneself (Vough et al., 2020).

Importantly, these sensemaking processes were shaped by individuals' identities. Consistent with identity-based perspectives on sensemaking, identity influenced how individuals attended to cues, determined which interpretations felt plausible, and constrained or enabled available interpretive resources (Vough et al., 2020; Weick, 1995). In the present findings, sensemaking was often identity-protective, as individuals attempted to reconcile threatening feedback with existing self-concepts while evaluating the legitimacy and ethicality of their supervisors' behaviour. For many participants, unresolved tension stemming from identity misalignment or threat led to ongoing rumination.

The qualitative findings suggest that sensemaking unfolds through distinct components, trigger evaluation, belief appraisal, and rumination, and that the content and direction of these components differ depending on individuals' attributional orientation and perceived preparedness. The quantitative findings provide support for the broader mechanism of sensemaking as mediating abusive supervision and outcomes; however, the qualitative results clarify that the nature of sensemaking varies across identity profiles. In particular, belief appraisals centered on interpersonal explanations versus systemic power structures, and rumination characterized by distress versus integrative reflection, may shape whether sensemaking amplifies identity disruption or leads to meaning consolidation.

Identity and sensemaking also operated recursively: identity shaped sensemaking, which in turn reshaped identity. Abusive supervision therefore initiated a feedback loop in which

meanings constructed about the event continued to influence subsequent motivation, self-understanding, and performance over time (Vough et al., 2020). Participants engaged in repeated reflection, questioning, and narrative revision in an attempt to stabilize meaning following this identity-disrupting experience. Emotion likely intensified this recursive process by directing attention toward significant cues and fostering sustained sensemaking rather than rapid normalization, whereby an event would get absorbed into existing beliefs with minimal reflection (Maitlis et al., 2013). It is important to note that this recursive processing did not necessarily mean that individuals were always engaged in maladaptive coping or that it led to poor outcomes. Instead, it merely signaled unresolved identity incongruence, particularly when individuals lacked clear explanations for what occurred or did not feel as though they had the tools to respond effectively. Under these conditions, participants struggled to reach “resting points” in meaning-making, or otherwise, temporary, workable understandings that allow individuals to continue functioning and acting (Maitlis et al., 2013). This led to longer sensemaking cycles.

The quantitative findings reinforced the qualitative results by demonstrating that sensemaking operates as a central mechanism linking abusive supervision to motivation and performance-related outcomes. Specifically, sensemaking partially mediated the relationship between abusive supervision and goal motivation at work, goal motivation outside of work, multiple forms of work motivation (intrinsic, integrated, identified, introjected, external motivation, and amotivation), and work performance (effort and quality). Across outcomes, abusive supervision exhibited negative or nonsignificant direct effects once sensemaking was included, while indirect effects through sensemaking were positive and significant, consistent with an inconsistent mediation (suppression) pattern. These findings indicate that the

consequences of abusive supervision depend less on the experience and more on how individuals move through the stages of sensemaking, including how they appraise causality and engage in rumination. Consistent with Vough and Caza (2016), when identity-supportive and social conditions enable adaptive sensemaking, individuals may translate adverse work experiences into engagement, effort, and resilience. Relatedly, Jing and Yang (2025) show that sensemaking functions as a key pathway through which crisis leadership influences organizational resilience. In sum, these findings reinforce sensemaking as a mechanism through which negative organizational experiences can sometimes be translated into action and meaning depending on interpretive processes.

Interestingly, sensemaking was associated with higher levels of introjected regulation, external motivation, as well as amotivation. This pattern suggests that sensemaking might energize goal pursuit, while still resulting in higher internal pressure or moral conflict. These findings intimate that sensemaking functions as a double-edged sword. These findings align with self-determination theory, which highlights that increased engagement following a threatening event may reflect intensified goal pursuit that has not yet been fully internalized, leading to heightened autonomous and controlled forms of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Vansteenkiste et al., 2020). In sum, the present findings extend abusive supervision research by demonstrating that sensemaking functions as a key mediating mechanism linking supervisory mistreatment to motivational and performance outcomes.

Attributional Framing and Preparedness as Identity Work Orientations

Although sensemaking emerged as a central mechanism linking abusive supervision to motivation and performance, the findings also indicate that sensemaking does not operate uniformly across individuals. Prior research similarly demonstrates that sensemaking following

extreme events does not unfold uniformly. For example, research on post-incident sensemaking in extreme contexts shows that different varieties of sensemaking emerge after the same event, with some forms leading to learning and adaptation while others inhibit meaning-making (Dwyer et al., 2023; Maitlis et al., 2013). Accordingly, this section examines why sensemaking leads to different consequences by focusing on attributional framing and perceived preparedness as orientations that shape how individuals interpret and respond to abusive supervision.

Qualitative findings revealed differences in whether individuals attributed abuse to a specific individual or to broader societal or organizational forces, as well as whether they felt prepared to cope with such experiences based on prior events. These dimensions formed four identity work profiles:

- Isolated Novices (those who viewed abuse as stemming from an individual rather than a societal issue and felt ill-prepared when the abuse arose)
- Isolated Veterans (those who viewed abuse as stemming from an individual rather than a societal issue and felt prepared when the abuse arose)
- Societal Issue Novices (those who viewed abuse as stemming from a societal issue rather than an individual and felt ill-prepared when the abuse arose)
- Societal Issue Veterans (those who viewed abuse as stemming from a societal issue rather than an individual and felt prepared when the abuse arose)

Consistent with prior work showing that how individuals explain and interpret events shapes perceived agency and responsibility during sensemaking (Weick, 1995; Vough et al., 2020), these orientations reflect differences in how individuals perceive their own agency, locate responsibility for the abusive experience, and interpret power dynamics at work, giving rise to

distinct patterns of identity work following abusive supervision. These framings were relatively stable interpretive lenses that guided ongoing sensemaking and identity work over time.

Reynolds-Kueny and Shoss (2021) describe that individuals utilize others' responses to their stories of negative experiences to shape their own feelings of inclusion, organization-based self-esteem, and subsequent motivation, above and beyond generalized social support. This work helps clarify why sensemaking processes shaped by attributional framing and preparedness may lead to divergent outcomes in the present study. Sensemaking that affirms identity and preserves legitimacy is more likely to stabilize identity and support motivation, whereas sensemaking that amplifies blame, exclusion, or self-doubt can intensify identity threat. These dynamics help explain why sensemaking unfolds differently across identity work profiles and yields divergent outcomes.

Attributional Framing as an Identity Work Orientation. Attributional framing, referred to in the study as perception of cause, emerged as a central orientation that shaped how individuals made sense of abusive supervision and its implications for the self. In the qualitative findings, differences in attributional framing constituted the first key point of divergence across identity work profiles, influencing how individuals interpreted responsibility, agency, and the meaning of abuse for their identities. These differences subsequently informed distinct sensemaking trajectories, identity work strategies, and motivational outcomes, patterns that were later examined in the quantitative phase of the study. Drawing on critical sensemaking perspectives, such framings can be understood as the ways individuals draw on, reproduce, or resist dominant power relations and discourse when constructing meaning around adverse work experiences (Helms Mills, 2003; Helms Mills et al., 2010). Qualitative findings showed that this distinction shaped how participants perceived their responsibility for the abuse or for rectifying

the situation, their perceived control over the situation, and the implications of the abuse for their identities.

Lone-actor framing, in which individuals attributed abuse to a single individual, often involved internalized blame, while simultaneously preserving a sense that the situation was potentially manageable or something that could be addressed through individual action. Prior research suggests that structurally produced distress is frequently individualized through organizational discourse, obscuring organizational responsibility and intensifying self-blame (Mueller & Morley, 2020). At the same time, attribution research indicates that felt personal responsibility can also motivate proactive behaviour. For example, Morrison and Phelps (1999) show that felt responsibility for change predicts taking-charge behaviours, particularly when individuals believe they have the capacity to effect change. This helps explain why lone-actor framings in the present study sometimes preserved a sense of agency, especially among individuals who felt prepared to respond.

In contrast, societal framings positioned abuse as part of a larger organizational or cultural system, prompting reflection on structural injustice while often constraining perceptions of personal agency. This pattern is consistent with research showing that externalizing responsibility to broader systems is associated with lower perceived personal control over outcomes (Baird & Wolak, 2021). Attribution research further suggests that while external explanations may reduce blame, they can also undermine perceived control or legitimacy depending on the moral framing of the event (Kim et al., 2006). These findings help explain why societal framings in the present study were associated with heightened critical awareness but decreased feelings of ability to change the situation.

Perceived Preparedness as an Identity-Relevant Resource. Perceived preparedness emerged as the second key dimension in the qualitative findings that differentiated participants and shaped how they perceived and responded to abusive supervision. This aspect reflected individuals' capacity to draw on prior experience, reflection, and coping resources following abusive supervision. It is important to note that preparedness was not synonymous with prior exposure to abuse. Instead, it depended on whether past experiences had been cognitively processed and integrated such that they could be applied in the present context. This is consistent with prior research demonstrating that experience alone does not produce learning or preparedness; rather, learning depends on whether individuals engage in systematic reflection on both failed and successful experiences (Ellis & Davidi, 2005). Such reflection is necessary even following instances of success to support functional alteration of individuals' existing knowledge structures and, consequently, enhance adaptive learning. Moreover, reflective processing increases epistemic motivation, or the motivation to understand why events occurred, which supports the development of more cohesive cognitive structures (Ellis & Davidi, 2005; Matthew & Sternberg, 2009). Systematic reflection also helps reshape attributional patterns by encouraging a focus on internal, controllable, and specific causes of outcomes, rather than the diffusion of responsibility or an intense focus on external explanations (Allen et al., 2010).

Preparedness can also contain elements of proactive and preventive coping in response to abusive supervision. Importantly, proactive and preventive coping are not reactive responses to stress but instead reflect learned, future-oriented capacities for managing anticipated demands (Schwarzer & Reuter, 2023). As such, these coping orientations function as personal resources that support agentic engagement and adaptive responding under challenging conditions (Searle & Lee, 2015). Preparedness therefore functioned as an identity-relevant resource that shaped

whether sensemaking took the form of constructive meaning-making or devolved into persistent rumination and self-doubt.

Intersections of Framing and Preparedness in Identity Work Profiles. The intersection of attributional framing and preparedness in the qualitative research led to four identity work profiles. Isolated Novices often struggled to set boundaries and had low self-worth. This resulted in heightened rumination, self-doubt, and emotional exhaustion. Societal Issue Novices showed an emerging recognition of systemic dysfunction and power dynamics, but experienced moral confusion, helplessness, and identity destabilization. In contrast, Isolated Veterans drew on their experiences to contextualize the abuse, feeling more empathy or attributing issues such as role misalignment, and engaged in more strategic boundary management. Societal Issue Veterans combined systemic awareness with more developed coping and meaning-making resources. This process enabled integrative interpretations, reduced harmful rumination, and identity work oriented toward resistance, re-prioritization, and alignment with core values.

This qualitative work extends prior identity work research by demonstrating that interpretive framings alone do not explain post-abuse outcomes. Instead, the consequences of framing also depend on access to identity-relevant resources, here, preparedness, which shape whether sensemaking results in restoration, destabilization, or resistance (cf. Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; Petriglieri, 2011). Therefore, the identity work patterns identified in the qualitative research suggest that attributional framing and preparedness shape not only how abuse is understood, but the identity work that takes place and the strategies utilized.

The qualitative results also revealed identity work across profiles varied along proactive versus reactive orientations, consistent with prior narrative identity research in work and career

contexts (Bjursell & Mellin, 2011) and was further differentiated into active and passive strategies based on how individuals enacted those orientations. Whereas prior identity work research has often emphasized active and “heroic” forms of identity work, alternative perspectives highlight that identity work can also occur through more passive, vulnerable, and constrained modes of engagement (Brown, 2015; Rose, 2012). The present findings build on this insight by showing that identity work can be enacted in more active or more passive ways.

It is also important to note that no established quantitative scale directly measures identity work processes or profiles in the specific context of post-abusive supervision sensemaking at the time of data collection. As a result, the quantitative phase did not assess identity work profiles directly. Instead, it operationalized attributional framing (perception of cause) and perceived preparedness as moderators to test their influence on the sensemaking–motivation/performance relationships.

Identity Work Profiles as Pathways to Motivation and Performance

Integrating the qualitatively determined identity work profiles with quantitative outcomes illustrates how attributional framing and preparedness shape divergent motivational orientations and performance pathways following abusive supervision.

Isolated Novices. In terms of the qualitative findings pertaining to how the distinct identity work profiles led to different outcomes, Isolated Novices engaged in predominantly restoration-oriented identity work focused on self-improvement and moral repair. Yet excessive self-blame, fragile boundaries, and unresolved emotional distress inhibited their motivation, resulting in fragile, recovery-focused future planning. This pattern is consistent with research on moral self-repair, which suggests that restoration-oriented efforts to repair the moral self can become fragile when individuals internalize blame (Butterfield et al., 2023). In turn, self-blame

has been shown to predict rumination and reduced goal-directed behaviour (Watkins et al., 2006).

Isolated Veterans. Meanwhile, Isolated Veterans purposefully decoupled their work from their personal identity and set strategic boundaries, which prior research suggests can function as a psychological resource rather than a form of disengagement (Kreiner et al., 2009). These individuals also expanded non-work sources of self-worth, reducing the extent to which workplace experiences dominated their broader sense of self. This pattern aligns with research on identity protection and role distancing, which indicates that purposeful decoupling can preserve agency and continued engagement under conditions of identity threat (Petriglieri, 2011). For Isolated Veterans, sensemaking therefore facilitated resilience, skill development, and productive career redirection.

Societal Issue Novices. Societal Issue Novices experienced learned helplessness and lingering emotional effects. As Carlson and Kacmar (1994) argue, learned helplessness occurs when individuals believe their actions are ineffectual, reducing their motivation and disengagement despite the fact that they are expected to continue to perform. In line with this view, Societal Issue Novices showed decreased motivation, uncertainty about their career paths and values, and future-oriented planning that lacked coherence or resolve. More recent research also demonstrates that learned helplessness is associated with lower work involvement and impaired psychological engagement, especially in high-pressure and ambiguous environments (Rizvi & Sikand, 2020).

Societal Issue Veterans. Finally, Societal Issue Veterans engaged in a significant recalibration. Sensemaking enabled a healthy decoupling between their professional identity and their broader sense of identity, aligning with past research that outlines that identity segmentation

preserves well-being and agency (Kreiner et al., 2009). This distancing can be adaptive when identities are devalued (Petriglieri, 2011). It allowed individuals to seek more functional avenues, such as non-toxic environments and more impactful roles, leading to more intrinsic, purpose-driven motivation. Tensions arising from misalignment between personal values and organizational contexts can, through reflective sensemaking, foster constructive identity work and establish a more coherent identity (Arvaja, 2018). Over time, such identity work following adversity can lead to new meaning and a sense of coherence (McAdams & McLean, 2013).

Quantitative Examination of Conditional Pathways. While the qualitative findings illustrate how each identity work profile is associated with distinct motivational and behavioural tendencies, the quantitative results clarify how these patterns operate as conditional pathways shaped by attributional framing and preparedness. Quantitative findings partially supported this pattern. Causal framing did not predict motivation or performance directly and was not associated with mean-level differences across outcomes. Instead, its effects emerged conditionally. Specifically, causal framing moderated the strength of the association between sensemaking and work-related goal motivation and work effort, but not the other outcome variables. For individuals who believed the abuse stemmed from an isolated actor rather than broader societal forces, sensemaking was more strongly linked to both outcomes.

Framing abuse as systemic may undermine the perceived instrumentality of sensemaking, consistent with research by Vroom (1964) and Steel and König (2006), which suggests that effort is largely dependent on instrumentality. In the context of the two significant outcomes, understanding abuse as a broader systemic issue may reduce the perceived potential for effective action. In contrast, perceiving the abuse as stemming from an isolated actor may preserve the belief that insight can inform strategy, allowing sensemaking to translate into work-related goal

motivation and work effort. These findings suggest that sensemaking may resolve cognitive ambiguity under both framings, but only under isolated-actor framing does it translate into motivational activation. This distinction aligns with research differentiating cognitive resolution from the mobilization of effortful action (Kanfer et al., 2017). Consistent with this, empirical work on systemic thinking demonstrates that triadic or systemic explanations are cognitively non-default and require conscious consideration of broader relational contexts (Ugazio et al., 2012), which may increase the cognitive demands of sensemaking and may at times reduce the ability to take action. The absence of moderation effects for other outcomes suggests that perceived instrumentality may be particularly consequential for outcomes involving effort allocation and goal pursuit, whereas other motivational or performance indicators may depend on additional or distinct processes.

Interestingly, a significant three-way interaction between sensemaking, attributional framing, and preparedness revealed that this pattern shifted at higher levels of preparedness. Among more prepared individuals, when considered in conjunction with attributional framing, sensemaking was most beneficial for work-related goal motivation, intrinsic motivation, integrated regulation, identified regulation, and work effort when abuse was framed as a societal issue, suggesting that preparedness may enable individuals to engage with systemic explanations without becoming immobilized by them. Prior research shows that systemic explanations are cognitively non-default and rarely produced in everyday reasoning, even when contextual information is available, but systemic thinking can be properly elicited under specific conditions (Ugazio et al., 2012). Drawing on research on expertise, individuals with greater experience are better able to integrate complex explanatory structures through more organized and principled knowledge representations, whereas novices tend to rely on simpler, more localized causal

accounts (Chi et al., 1988). This helps explain why Veterans were able to engage with societal framing without becoming demotivated.

Importantly, there was not a direct moderating role of preparedness alone, but rather only emerged when preparedness was considered in conjunction with attributional framing. This implies that without a specific framing context, preparedness alone does not alter how sensemaking translates into motivation or effort. From a person–situation perspective, individual capacities are effective in contexts that activate them, whereas certain contexts may lead to such capacities remaining latent (Tett & Burnett, 2003). Accordingly, self-regulatory capacity, reflected in the present study in the ability to draw on past experience when responding to abusive supervision, does not show uniform effects across situations but becomes consequential only when situational demands require its deployment (Kanfer et al., 2017).

One of the most theoretically important findings of this study is that the interaction between sensemaking, attributional framing, and preparedness did not confirm the original hypothesis. Instead, a significant three-way interaction revealed a preparedness-contingent crossover effect. For individuals classified as Isolated Novices, sensemaking was most strongly associated with work-related goal motivation and effort when abuse was framed as a lone-actor issue. In contrast, for Veterans, particularly among Societal Issue Veterans, sensemaking was most beneficial for work-related goal motivation, intrinsic motivation, integrated regulation, identified regulation, and work effort when abuse was framed as systemic or societal. Importantly, these effects were concentrated in motivational and effort-related outcomes rather than work quality, suggesting that attributional framing and preparedness primarily shape the regulation and direction of action rather than individuals' work quality. Past research suggests that motivation and effort are particularly sensitive to self-regulatory processes and perceived

capacity, whereas performance quality is more strongly shaped by situational and task constraints, helping explain why the observed effects were concentrated in motivational rather than performance outcomes (Kanfer, 1990; Kanfer et al., 2017).

Theoretical Implications

This research highlights several theoretical implications and contributions to the literature. First, this study pinpoints sensemaking as the central mechanism linking abusive supervision to motivation and performance. In doing so, it extends abusive supervision research beyond dominant affective depletion and stress-based models.

Prior research has predominantly explained the consequences of abusive supervision through affective and resource-based mechanisms. Early work conceptualized abusive supervision as a stressor that leads to anger, emotional exhaustion, and strain (Tepper, 2000). Meta-analytic evidence also highlight that abusive supervision is strongly associated with emotional exhaustion and stress-related outcomes, which subsequently predict reduced performance and increased deviance (Mackey et al., 2017). Consistent with conservation of resources theory, abusive supervision is viewed as a resource-depleting stressor that leads to burnout and impaired functioning (Hobfoll, 1989). Within the job demands–resources framework, abusive supervision is similarly conceptualized as a job demand that consumes psychological resources and contributes to strain (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Empirical studies reinforce this pathway, showing that emotional exhaustion mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and counterproductive work behaviours (Akram et al., 2019), safety behaviours (Yuan et al., 2020), and work withdrawal (Chi & Liang, 2013). Other work has extended this logic through ego depletion models, demonstrating that abusive supervision drains self-regulatory capacity and increases conflict and turnover intentions (Jin, 2023). This body of

work reflects a depletion framework in which abusive supervision acts as a stressor that erodes psychological resources, leading to strain-based outcomes and performance impairment.

In contrast, the present study conceptualizes abusive supervision as an identity-disruptive event that leads to interpretive processing. Consistent with sensemaking theory, disruptive and ambiguous events trigger efforts to construct meaning and restore coherence (Weick, 1995). Rather than assuming that abusive supervision impairs functioning through resource depletion, this research demonstrates that its consequences depend on how individuals interpret and integrate the experience into their identity narratives. Specifically, abusive supervision led to sensemaking, which conditionally shaped motivational and performance outcomes depending on attributional framing and preparedness. Thus, this study advances a cognitive–identity pathway in which abusive supervision leads to identity disruption, interpretive processing, and divergent motivational outcomes. While the emotional impact of abusive supervision should not be discounted, this perspective demonstrates that its effects are not uniformly depleting but are based on how individuals cognitively process the experience and narrate their life stories.

Second, the sensemaking processes identified across the four groups, each representing three stages (evaluation of a trigger, belief appraisal, and rumination) represent theoretically operationalizable constructs. Existing measures of rumination and general sensemaking (eg., Cantarero et al., 2023; Sukhodolsky et al., 2001; Yang et al., 2020) capture aspects of interpretive processing; however, they may not differentiate between interpersonal and systemic attributional framing or capture preparedness as a distinct interpretive resource. The present findings suggest that future research may benefit from developing a more context-specific sensemaking scale that assesses attributional orientation, perceived preparedness, and the qualitative nature of rumination. Validated sensemaking scales help examine interpretive

processing, but they may not completely capture the pathways identified here. Accordingly, this research offers a foundation for future quantitative model testing and scale development that can assess the profile-based pathways of sensemaking.

Third, this study advances theory by demonstrating that attributional framing and perceived preparedness together determine whether sensemaking translates into motivational activation and performance-related outcomes. In doing so, the findings clarify that resolving ambiguity through sensemaking is not equivalent to mobilizing goal-directed behaviour. This distinction refines sensemaking theory by separating cognitive resolution from behavioural activation.

While contemporary discourse increasingly emphasizes the importance of recognizing broader systemic causes of workplace harm (e.g., Cunningham, 2020; Lindsay, 2023; Renn et al., 2022), the present findings suggest that the motivational consequences of systemic framing are contingent on individuals' perceived preparedness. Without sufficient cognitive and coping resources, systemic explanations may heighten awareness without facilitating action. Under such conditions, less systemic framing may preserve a sense of agency and enable goal-directed mobilization, even when individuals are not personally at fault.

These findings extend goal-setting theory by illustrating that goal commitment and effort depend not only on goal clarity but also on perceived controllability and instrumentality (Locke & Latham, 2002). In this context, attributing abuse to a single individual may preserve perceived strategic agency, whereas systemic framings may reduce perceived instrumentality for individuals who lack resources to translate systemic awareness into action.

The effects of framing were concentrated in motivational and effort-related outcomes rather than work quality. This distinction advances performance theory by demonstrating that

identity-based interpretive processes may shape effort allocation more readily than performance quality. This pattern aligns with meta-analytic evidence conceptualizing work effort as a direct and proximal outcome of motivational processes, capturing direction, intensity, and persistence (Van Iddekinge et al., 2023). In contrast, performance has long been conceptualized as a function of both motivation and ability-related factors (Campbell, 1990). Accordingly, performance quality may be influenced by additional task and contextual constraints, which may explain why attributional framing more consistently affected effort than quality.

Importantly, the three-way interaction revealed a preparedness-contingent crossover effect. For less prepared individuals, sensemaking was most beneficial under lone-actor framing, whereas for more prepared individuals, systemic framing became motivationally advantageous. This finding reframes attributional framing as a developmental interpretive lens whose consequences depend on the cognitive and identity resources individuals possess. Rather than operating as universally adaptive or maladaptive, systemic awareness appears contingent upon preparedness.

Finally, present findings further advance identity work theory by demonstrating that identity work following disruptive events is not uniform across individuals, highlighting that the same experience can lead to different outcomes depending on the individual and their identity work processes. While prior research has documented diverse identity work strategies (e.g., Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; Brown, 2015; Caza et al., 2018), less attention has been paid to the patterned cognitive structures that shape why individuals engage in different forms of identity work under similar conditions. By identifying systematic differences rooted in attributional framing and perceived preparedness, this study explains variation in identity work processes and helps clarify why workplace harm leads to divergent outcomes. These findings suggest that

identity work should not be conceptualized as a uniform adaptive response to threat. This helps reconcile prior mixed findings regarding the consequences of identity work.

Practical Implications

This research suggests several significant practical implications. First, organizations must recognize that abusive supervision can constitute a profound identity disruption that extends beyond a negative interpersonal interaction and therefore have a responsibility to intervene when such abuse is identified. If left unaddressed, such disruption may carry significant organizational consequences by shaping how individuals engage in identity work and, in turn, how they sustain motivation and performance. Identity work can reduce identity threats and strengthen identification (Petriglieri, 2011), but it can also result in ambivalence, weakened identification, anxiety, or damaged identities (Gendron & Spira, 2010; Gill, 2015; Cowen & Hodgson, 2015). It may enhance fulfillment and authenticity (Maclean et al., 2015; Cable et al., 2013), yet it can simultaneously produce emotional distress or heightened anxiety (Gill, 2015).

Trauma research demonstrates that healing requires the integration of cognitive and emotional aspects of disruptive experiences into one's self-concept (Young, 1988). When identity disruption is left unacknowledged, individuals may resist processing the experience due to fear of emotional overwhelm, leading to prolonged psychological numbing and distress (Young, 1988). In organizational contexts, organizations that ignore or minimize identity-threatening events may therefore unintentionally prolong rumination and destabilization.

Research on biographical disruption further shows that individuals strive for identity continuity following disruptive events and that resumption of valued roles, including workplace roles, is central to identity re-establishment (Wolfenden & Grace, 2012). However, returning to such roles is often difficult and may require structured psychosocial support (Wolfenden &

Grace, 2012). Accordingly, organizations should not assume that employees will simply move on after abusive supervision. For example, they may do so through structured debrief meetings or restorative leadership practices. The organization may also provide access to coaching that facilitates constructive reflection and provide opportunities for role redesign or skill development that help employees re-establish a valued identity. These actions may reduce prolonged rumination and increase the likelihood that sensemaking translates into constructive motivation.

The present findings further suggest that organizations should seek to understand how individuals interpret the abusive event. Because attributional framing in the present study shaped whether sensemaking translated into work-related goal motivation and effort or into disengagement, leaders and human resource professionals may benefit from exploring whether employees view the incident as stemming from a specific individual or from broader systemic forces. Similarly, given that perceived preparedness emerged as a critical identity-relevant resource, organizations may strengthen employees' preparedness by encouraging structured reflection on past challenges, facilitating developmental conversations, and providing coaching that helps individuals integrate prior experiences into coherent coping narratives. Such practices may enhance employees' capacity to engage with adversity in ways that preserve agency, support motivation, and promote more adaptive identity work processes.

Beyond recovery, the findings also highlight the importance of leader accountability. Organizations should invest in leadership development that helps leaders recognize identity-threatening behaviours and comprehend how their actions influence employees' self-concepts. Notably, self-awareness is an important "metacompetency" that allows leaders to adapt in complex environments (Hall, 2004). Hall (2004) argues that self-awareness supports leaders' capacity to "learn how to learn," and thus it is integral for leadership development in turbulent

environments. Entrenching identity-awareness into leadership development programs may thus reduce behaviours that inadvertently harm employees' feelings of competence or identity alignment within the organization.

Importantly, empirical evidence suggests that abusive supervision is not irreversible and can be reduced through specific targeted interventions. A quasi-experimental study found that supervisors trained in supportive behaviours (benevolence, sincerity, fairness, and experiential processing) were afterwards perceived as more supportive and less abusive by their employees (Gonzalez-Morales et al., 2018). Gonzalez-Morales et al. (2018) demonstrate that relatively brief training programs can decrease subordinate perceptions of abusive supervision while increasing perceived support. These findings highlight the importance of such prevention efforts.

Building on post-traumatic growth research, leadership behaviours designed to promote growth in subordinates are associated with lower rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (Wood et al., 2020). Wood et al. (2020) demonstrate that post-traumatic growth-oriented leadership behaviours buffer the relationship between trauma exposure and psychological distress. Although abusive supervision should never be viewed in a positive light, these findings suggest that leader behaviours following disruption can shape whether employees experience prolonged distress or adaptive meaning-making.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. As detailed earlier in the dissertation, the qualitative findings reflect one theoretically informed interpretation of participants' narratives and rely on retrospective self-reports, which may be shaped by memory and current meaning-making processes. The quantitative findings are based on cross-sectional, self-report data, including measures of performance, which limits causal inference and raises concerns regarding common

method bias and generalizability. Additionally, the use of non-random sampling further constrains the extent to which findings can be generalized across populations.

In the quantitative portion, although the sample was geographically diverse, a substantial proportion of respondents were based in Sub-Saharan Africa. Cultural and institutional contexts may shape how abusive supervision is perceived, attributed, and cognitively processed. Future research should examine whether the observed moderation patterns hold across different cultural and organizational settings.

Future research could also benefit from incorporating alternative performance indicators, such as supervisor ratings, peer assessments, or objective performance metrics, to more comprehensively capture how identity work and sensemaking translate into work outcomes. Longitudinal designs would further strengthen the ability to examine how sensemaking and identity work unfold over time following abusive supervision, particularly in capturing temporal dynamics and causal relationships.

In addition, the development and validation of a quantitative measure of identity work following significant work events would allow for more rigorous testing of identity work profiles and their effects across contexts. Future studies could also examine how organizational responses, including human resource practices, leader accountability mechanisms, and peer support, shape attributional framing, preparedness, and recovery trajectories following abusive supervision. These directions would extend the present findings by situating identity work within broader and more dynamic organizational systems.

CHAPTER 8 – CONCLUSION

This dissertation examined why individuals respond differently to abusive supervision and how these differences lead to divergent identity work pathways that shape motivation and performance. Using a sequential exploratory mixed-methods design, the study demonstrated that responses to abusive supervision are not uniform reactions to negative leadership but are shaped by sensemaking processes influenced by attributional framing and perceived preparedness. Across both qualitative and quantitative phases, sensemaking emerged as the central mechanism linking abusive supervision to outcomes, while attributional framing (whether abuse was attributed to a single individual or to broader organizational or societal forces) and preparedness (whether individuals felt prior experiences equipped them to respond) determined whether sensemaking translated into motivation and performance.

The qualitative findings identified four identity work profiles, Isolated Novices, Isolated Veterans, Societal Issue Novices, and Societal Issue Veterans, each reflecting distinct ways of interpreting abuse, locating responsibility, and mobilizing identity-relevant resources. These findings suggest that while attributing abuse to an individual may preserve a sense of agency under conditions of low preparedness, preparedness fundamentally alters the consequences of attributional framing. Contrary to the original hypothesis that individual-level attributions would be most adaptive for prepared individuals, the quantitative results indicate that greater preparedness enables individuals to engage with systemic explanations without becoming immobilized, such that systemic framing may become beneficial at higher levels of preparedness. Notably, sensemaking partially mediated the relationship between abusive supervision and motivation and performance outcomes, but its effects were conditional. Attributional framing moderated the relationship between sensemaking and work-related goal motivation and effort,

and this pattern further shifted as a function of preparedness. Preparedness did not operate as a direct moderator, but instead in conjunction with attributional framing, producing a preparedness-contingent crossover effect. For less prepared individuals, sensemaking was most beneficial when abuse was framed as stemming from an isolated actor, whereas for more prepared individuals, sensemaking was most beneficial when abuse was framed as systemic.

By clarifying the cognitive and identity-based conditions under which sensemaking leads to differential motivation and performance, this research provides a foundation for future work examining how individuals navigate and recover from harmful leadership experiences over time. These findings advance identity work research by demonstrating that identity work following abusive supervision unfolds through patterned responses shaped by attributional framing and preparedness, rather than as a uniform process. Integrating qualitative insights with quantitative evidence further highlights the value of mixed-methods approaches in capturing the dynamic processes through which individuals construct meaning, regulate action, and reconfigure identity following abusive supervision.

References

- Aaltio, I., & Wang, Q. (2015). Entrepreneurship education as learning to form identities—cross-cultural perspective. *Entrepreneurship Education and Training*, 201-224. <https://doi.org/10.5772/59061>
- Abramson, L. Y., Seligman, M. E., & Teasdale, J. D. (1978). Learned helplessness in humans: critique and reformulation. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 87(1), 49-74. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-843X.87.1.49>
- Adelman, R. M., Herrmann, S. D., Bodford, J. E., Barbour, J. E., Graudejus, O., Okun, M. A., & Kwan, V. S. (2017). Feeling closer to the future self and doing better: Temporal psychological mechanisms underlying academic performance. *Journal of Personality*, 85(3), 398-408. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12248>
- Affolter, T. L. (2014). Now you see me, now you don't: Ignoring intersections and supporting silence in elite liberal arts college classrooms. In D. Mitchell, Jr., C. Simmons, & L. Greyerbiehl (Eds.), *Intersectionality and higher education: Theory, research and praxis* (pp. 158–170). Peter Lang Publishing.
- Ahmad, J., Athar, M. R., Azam, R. I., Hamstra, M. R., & Hanif, M. (2019). A resource perspective on abusive supervision and extra-role behaviors: The role of subordinates' psychological capital. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 26(1), 73-86. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051818767391>
- Ailon-Souday, G., & Kunda, G. (2003). The local selves of global workers: The social construction of national identity in the face of organizational globalization. *Organization Studies*, 24(7), 1073–1096. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01708406030247004>
- Ainsworth, S., & Hardy, C. (2004). Critical discourse analysis and identity: Why bother?. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 1(2), 225-259. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1740590042000302085>
- Akerlof, G. A. & Kranton, R. E. (2010). *Identity economics: How our identities shape our work, wages and wellbeing*. Princeton University Press.
- Akinyele, A. I., & Chen, Z. (2024). Dark clouds of leadership: Causes and consequences of toxic leadership. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 55(4), 476–503. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00208825.2024.2442185>
- Akram, Z., Li, Y., & Akram, U. (2019). When employees are emotionally exhausted due to abusive supervision. A conservation-of-resources perspective. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(18), 3300. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16183300>
- Alba, D. J. (2011). Perceptions of crisis preparedness among Rhode Island public school administrators and first responders (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database.
- Allen, L. (2005). Managing masculinity: Young men's identity work in focus groups. *Qualitative Research*, 5(1), 35-57. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794105048650>
- Allen, M. S., Jones, M. V., & Sheffield, D. (2010). The influence of positive reflection on attributions, emotions, and self-efficacy. *The Sport Psychologist*, 24(2), 211-226. <https://doi.org/10.1123/tsp.24.2.211>
- Alvesson, M. (2000). Social identity and the problem of loyalty in knowledge-intensive companies. *Journal of Management Studies*, 37(8), 1101-1124. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00218>
- Alvesson, M., & Willmott, H. (2002). Identity regulation as organizational control: Producing

- the appropriate individual. *Journal of Management Studies*, 39(5), 619-644.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00305>
- Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, 103(3), 411-423.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.103.3.411>
- Aquino, K., & Douglas, S. (2003). Identity threat and antisocial behavior in organizations: The moderating effects of individual differences, aggressive modeling, and hierarchical status. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 90(1), 195-208.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0749-5978\(02\)00517-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0749-5978(02)00517-4)
- Aroles, J., Mitev, N., & de Vaujany, F. X. (2019). Mapping themes in the study of new work practices. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 34(3), 285-299.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12146>
- Arvaja, M. (2018). Tensions and striving for coherence in an academic's professional identity work. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 23(3), 291-306.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2017.1379483>
- Aryee, S., Sun, L., Chen, Z.X. & Debrah, Y.A. (2008). Abusive supervision and contextual performance: the mediating role of emotional exhaustion and the moderating role of work unit structure. *Management and Organization Review*, 4(3), 393-411.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1740-8784.2008.00118.x>
- Ashcraft, K. L. (2006). Back to work: Sights/sites of difference in gender and organizational communication studies. In B. J. Dow & J. T. Wood (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of gender and communication* (pp. 97-122). SAGE.
- Ashforth, B. (2000). *Role transitions in organizational life: An identity-based perspective*. Routledge.
- Ashforth, B. E., Harrison, S. H., & Corley, K. G. (2008). Identification in organizations: An examination of four fundamental questions. *Journal of Management*, 34(3), 325-374.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308316059>
- Ashforth, B. E., & Kreiner, G. E. (2014). Dirty work and dirtier work: Differences in countering physical, social, and moral stigma. *Management and Organization Review*, 10(1), 81-108. <https://doi.org/10.1111/more.12044>
- Ashforth, B. E., & Mael, F. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(1), 20-39. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4278999>
- Ashforth, B. E., & Schinoff, B. S. (2016). Identity under construction: How individuals come to define themselves in organizations. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 3, 111-137. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-041015-062322>
- Ashforth, B. E., Schinoff, B. S., & Rogers, K. M. (2016). "I identify with her," "I identify with him": Unpacking the dynamics of personal identification in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 41(1), 28-60. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2014.0033>
- Ashforth, B. E., Sluss, D. M., & Saks, A. M. (2007). Socialization tactics, proactive behavior, and newcomer learning: Integrating socialization models. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 70(3), 447-462. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2007.02.001>
- Ashmore, R. D., Deaux, K., & McLaughlin-Volpe, T. (2004). An organizing framework for collective identity: articulation and significance of multidimensionality. *Psychological Bulletin*, 130(1), 80-114. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.130.1.80>
- Aspinwall, L. G., & Taylor, S. E. (1997). A stitch in time: self-regulation and proactive

- coping. *Psychological Bulletin*, 121(3), 417-436.
- Atewologun, D., Kutzer, R., Doldor, E., Anderson, D., & Sealy, R. (2017). Individual-level foci of identification at work: A systematic review of the literature. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 19(3), 273-295. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12148>
- Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 1(3), 385-405. <https://doi.org/10.1177/146879410100100307>
- Bagozzi, R. P., & Yi, Y. (1988). On the evaluation of structural equation models. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 16(1), 74-94. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02723327>
- Baird, V., & Wolak, J. (2021). Why some blame politics for their personal problems. *American Politics Research*, 49(5), 478-489. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X211013463>
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands-resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309-328. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. WH Freeman.
- Banks, G. C., Fischer, T., Gooty, J., & Stock, G. (2021). Ethical leadership: Mapping the terrain for concept cleanup and a future research agenda. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 32(2), 101471. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2020.101471>
- Bamberg, M. (2009). Identity and narration. *Handbook of narratology*, 1, 241-252.
- Bataille, C. D., & Vough, H. C. (2022). More than the sum of my parts: An intrapersonal network approach to identity work in response to identity opportunities and threats. *Academy of Management Review*, 47(1), 93-115. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2018.0026>
- Bedyńska, S., & Żołnierczyk-Zreda, D. (2015). Stereotype threat as a determinant of burnout or work engagement. Mediating role of positive and negative emotions. *International Journal of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics*, 21(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10803548.2015.1017939>
- Beech, N. (2011). Liminality and the practices of identity reconstruction. *Human Relations*, 64(2), 285-302. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726710371235>
- Beech, N., Gilmore, C., Cochrane, E., & Greig, G. (2012). Identity work as a response to tensions: A re-narration in opera rehearsals. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 28(1), 39-47. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scaman.2011.12.005>
- Beech, N., Gilmore, C., Hibbert, P., & Ybema, S. (2016). Identity-in-the-work and musicians' struggles: The production of self-questioning identity work. *Work, Employment and Society*, 30(3), 506-522. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017015620767>
- Beech, N., & Johnson, P. (2005). Discourses of disrupted identities in the practice of strategic change: The mayor, the street-fighter and the insider-out. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 18(1), 31-47. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09534810510579832>
- Beech, N., MacIntosh, R., & McInnes, P. (2008). Identity work: Processes and dynamics of identity formations. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 31(9), 957-970. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01900690801920411>
- Beech, N. (2011). Liminality and the practices of identity reconstruction. *Human Relations*, 64(2), 285-302. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726710371235>
- Beilmann, M., & Realo, A. (2012). Individualism-collectivism and social capital at the individual level. *Trames: A Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 16(3), 205-217. <https://doi.org/10.3176/tr.2012.3.01>

- Bentler, P. M., & Bonett, D. G. (1980). Significance tests and goodness of fit in the analysis of covariance structures. *Psychological Bulletin*, 88(3), 588–606. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.88.3.588>
- Bernard, H. R. (2002). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (3rd ed.). Mira Press.
- Berntsen, D., & Rubin, D. C. (2007). When a trauma becomes a key to identity: Enhanced integration of trauma memories predicts posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 21(4), 417–431. <https://doi.org/10.1002/acp.1290>
- Beyer, J. M., & Hannah, D. R. (2002). Building on the past: Enacting established personal identities in a new work setting. *Organization Science*, 13(6), 636–652. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.13.6.636.495>
- Bhandari, A., & Wagner, T. (2006). Self-reported utilization of health care services: improving measurement and accuracy. *Medical Care Research and Review*, 63(2), 217–235. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077558705285298>
- Bjursell, C., & Melin, L. (2011). Proactive and reactive plots: Narratives in entrepreneurial identity construction. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, 3(3), 218–235. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17566261111169313>
- Boje, D. (2001). *Narrative methods for organizational & communication research*. Sage.
- Bonanno, G. A. (2004). Loss, trauma, and human resilience: Have we underestimated the human capacity to thrive after extremely aversive events?. *American Psychologist*, 59(1), 20–28. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.59.1.20>
- Booker, J. A., Fivush, R., & Graci, M. E. (2021). Narrative identity informs psychological adjustment: Considering three themes captured across five time points and two event valences. *Journal of Personality*, 89(5), 1011–1026. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12668>
- Boussebaa, M., & Brown, A. D. (2017). Englishization, identity regulation and imperialism. *Organization Studies*, 38(1), 7–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840616655494>
- Bowen, H. P., & Wiersema, M. F. (1999). Matching method to paradigm in strategy research: Limitations of cross-sectional analysis and some methodological alternatives. *Strategic Management Journal*, 20(7), 625–636. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1097-0266\(199907\)20:7<625::AID-SMJ45>3.0.CO;2-V](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1097-0266(199907)20:7<625::AID-SMJ45>3.0.CO;2-V)
- Boyce, A. S., Ryan, A. M., Imus, A. L., & Morgeson, F. P. (2007). “Temporary worker, permanent loser?” a model of the stigmatization of temporary workers. *Journal of Management*, 33(1), 5–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206306296575>
- Bragelman, J. (2020). *Becoming: Adult learners' identity work toward successful learners of mathematics* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Chicago]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2023). Toward good practice in thematic analysis: Avoiding common problems and be (com)ing a knowing researcher. *International Journal of Transgender Health*, 24(1), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26895269.2022.2129597>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Conceptual and design thinking for thematic analysis. *Qualitative Psychology*, 9(1), 3–26. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000196>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019a). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019b). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Brewer, M. B., & Gardner, W. (1996). Who is this "We"? Levels of collective identity and self representations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71(1), 83–93. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.71.1.83>
- Brickson, S. L. (2013). Athletes, best friends, and social activists: An integrative model accounting for the role of identity in organizational identification. *Organization Science*, 24(1), 226–245. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1110.0730>
- Brittian, A. S., Umaña-Taylor, A. J., Lee, R. M., Zamboanga, B. L., Kim, S. Y., Weisskirch, R. S., ... Caraway, S. J. (2013). The moderating role of centrality on associations between ethnic identity affirmation and ethnic minority college students' mental health. *Journal of American College Health*, 61(3), 133–140. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2013.773904>
- Brown, A. D. (2022). Identities in and around organizations: Towards an identity work perspective. *Human Relations*, 75(7), 1205–1237. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726721993910>
- Brown, A. D. (2020). Identities in organizations. In A. D. Brown (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of identities in organizations* (pp. 1–31). Oxford University Press.
- Brown, A. D. (2017). Identity work and organizational identification. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 19(3), 296–317. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12152>
- Brown, A. D. (2015). Identities and identity work in organizations. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 17(1), 20–40. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12035>
- Brown, A. D., & Toyoki, S. (2013). Identity work and legitimacy. *Organization Studies*, 34(7), 875–896. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840612467158>
- Brownlee, K., LeBlanc, H., Halverson, G., Piché, T., & Brazeau, J. (2019). Exploring self-reflection in dual relationship decision-making. *Journal of Social Work*, 19(5), 629–641. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468017318766423>
- Bruner, J. (1991). The narrative construction of reality. *Critical Inquiry*, 18(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1086/448619>
- Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Harvard University Press
- Bryant, R. A., Harvey, A. G., Guthrie, R. M., & Moulds, M. L. (2000). A prospective study of psychophysiological arousal, acute stress disorder, and posttraumatic stress disorder. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 109(2), 341–344.
- Buhrmester, M., Talaifar, S., & Gosling, S. D. (2018). Amazon's Mechanical Turk: A new source of inexpensive, yet high-quality data? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 13(2), 149–154. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691617706516>
- Burke, P. J., & Stets, J. E. (2009). *Identity theory*. Oxford University Press.
- Burri, M., Hong-lin, C., & Baker, A. A. (2017). Joint development of teacher cognition and identity through learning to teach l2 pronunciation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 101(1), 128–142. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12388>
- Burton, J. P., Hoobler, J. M., & Kernan, M. C. (2011). When research setting is important: The influence of subordinate self-esteem on reactions to abusive supervision. *Organization Management Journal*, 8(3), 139–150. <https://doi.org/10.1057/omj.2011.24>

- Butterfield, K. D., Cook, W., Liberman, N., & Goodstein, J. (2023). Self-repair in the workplace: A qualitative investigation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 182(2), 321-340. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-021-04993-z>
- Byrne, J., & Humble, Á. M. (2007). An introduction to mixed method research. *Atlantic Research Centre for Family-Work Issues*, 1, 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.26634/jpsy.17.4.20348>
- Cable, D. M., Gino, F., & Staats, B. R. (2013). Breaking them in or eliciting their best? Reframing socialization around newcomers' authentic self-expression. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 58(1), 1-36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839213477098>
- Callero, P. L. (2003). The sociology of the self. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 29(1), 115-133. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.29.010202.100057>
- Campbell, J. P. (1990). Modeling the performance prediction problem in industrial and organizational psychology. In M. D. Dunnette & L. M. Hough (Eds.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 687-732). Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Cantarero, K., van Tilburg, W. A., Gąsiorowska, A., & Wojciszke, B. (2023). The need for sense-making as a personal resource: conceptualization and scale development. *Current Psychology*, 42(5), 3477-3488. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-01637-3>
- Cantarero, K., van Tilburg, W. A., Gąsiorowska, A., & Igou, E. R. (2022). The efficient measurement of individual differences in meaning motivation: The need for sense-making short form. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 945692. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.945692>
- Capili B. (2021). Cross-sectional studies. *Journal of Nursing*, 121(10). 59-62. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.NAJ.0000794280.73744.fe>
- Caprar, D. V., Walker, B. W., & Ashforth, B. E. (2022). The dark side of strong identification in organizations: A conceptual review. *Academy of Management Annals*, 16(2), 759-805. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2020.0338>
- Carlone, H. B., Scott, C. M., & Lowder, C. (2014). Becoming (less) scientific: A longitudinal study of students' identity work from elementary to middle school science. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 51(7), 836-869. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.21150>
- Carlson, D., Ferguson, M., Hunter, E. & Whitten, D. (2012). Abusive supervision and work-family conflict: The path through emotional labor and burnout. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 23(5), 849-859. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2012.05.003>
- Carlson, D. S., & Kacmar, K. M. (1994). Learned helplessness as a predictor of employee outcomes: An applied model. *Human Resource Management Review*, 4(3), 235-256. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822\(94\)90014-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822(94)90014-0)
- Carmassi, C., Bertelloni, C.A., Massimetti, G., Miniati, M., Stratta, P., Rossi, A., & Dell Osso, L. (2015). Impact of DSM-5 PTSD and gender on impaired eating behaviors in 512 Italian earthquake survivors. *Psychiatry Research*, 225(1-2), 64-69. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2014.10.008>
- Carmassi, C., Gesi, C., Corsi, M., Cremone, I. M., Bertelloni, C. A., Massimetti, E., ... & Dell'Osso, L. (2018). Exploring PTSD in emergency operators of a major University Hospital in Italy: A preliminary report on the role of gender, age, and education. *Annals of General Psychiatry*, 17(1), 17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12991-018-0184-4>
- Carrim, N. M. H., & Nkomo, S. M. (2016). Wedding intersectionality theory and identity work

- in organizations: South African Indian women negotiating managerial identity. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 23(3), 261-277. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12121>
- Castleberry, A., & Nolen, A. (2018). Thematic analysis of qualitative research data: Is it as easy as it sounds?. *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*, 10(6), 807-815. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cptl.2018.03.019>
- Caza, B. B., & Creary, S. J. (2016). The construction of professional identity. In A. Wilkinson, D. Hislop, & C. Coupland (Eds.), *Perspectives on contemporary professional work* (pp. 259–285). Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781783475582>
- Caza, B. B., Vough, H., & Puranik, H. (2018). Identity work in organizations and occupations: Definitions, theories, and pathways forward. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 39(7), 889-910. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2318>
- Chan, M. E., & McAllister, D. J. (2014). Abusive supervision through the lens of employee state paranoia. *Academy of Management Review*, 39(1), 44-66. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2011.0419>
- Chase, S. E. (2018). Narrative inquiry: Toward theoretical and methodological maturity. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed., pp. 546–560). Sage.
- Chen, C. C., & Unal, A. F. (2023). Individualism-Collectivism: A Review of Conceptualization and Measurement. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Business and Management*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190224851.013.350>
- Chi, M. T. H., Glaser, R., & Farr, M. J. (Eds.). (1988). *The nature of expertise*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Chi, S. C. S., & Liang, S. G. (2013). When do subordinates' emotion-regulation strategies matter? Abusive supervision, subordinates' emotional exhaustion, and work withdrawal. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 24(1), 125-137. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2012.08.006>
- Choi, Y. S. K. & Oyserman, D. 2024. Can I make the time or is it running out? that depends in part on what difficulty implies for me. Unpublished manuscript.
- Cialdini, R. B., Brown, S. L., Lewis, B. P., Luce, C., & Neuberg, S. L. (1997). Reinterpreting the empathy–altruism relationship: When one into one equals oneness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73(3), 481-494. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.73.3.481>
- Clair, J. A., Humbert, B. K., Caruso, H. M., & Roberts, L. M. (2012). Marginal memberships: Psychological effects of identity ambiguity on professionals who are demographically different from the majority. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 2(1), 71-93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386611429041>
- Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2013). Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, 26(2), 120–123.
- Clarke, C.A., Brown, A.D. & Hope Hailey, V. (2009). Working identities? Antagonistic discursive resources and managerial identity. *Human Relations*, 62(3), 323–352. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726708101040>
- Colosi, R., Cowen, N., & Todd, M. (2023). Sexual and gender identity work on social media. *Sociology Compass*, 17(6), e13073.
- Conneely, M., McNamee, P., Gupta, V., Richardson, J. M., Priebe, S., Jones, J., ... & Giacco, D. (2020). Understanding identity changes in psychosis: a systematic review and narrative synthesis. *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, 47(2), 309-322. <https://doi.org/10.1093/schbul/sbaa124>

- Conroy, S.A. & O’Leary-Kelly, A.M. (2014). Letting go and moving on: Work-related identity loss and recovery. *Academy of Management Review*, 39(1), 67–87.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2011.0396>
- Courpasson, D., & Monties, V. (2017). “I am my body”. Physical selves of police officers in a changing institution. *Journal of Management Studies*, 54(1), 32-57.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12221>
- Cowen, M., & Hodgson, D. (2015). Damaged identities: Examining identity regulation and identity work of Gulf project managers. *International Journal of Project Management*, 33(7), 1523-1533. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2015.06.009>
- Cramer, P. (2000). Development of identity: Gender makes a difference. *Journal of Research on Personality*, 34(1), 42–72. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jrpe.1999.2270>
- Creed, W. D., DeJordy, R., & Lok, J. (2010). Being the change: Resolving institutional contradiction through identity work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(6), 1336-1364. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.57318357>
- Creek, S. J. (2013). “Not getting any because of Jesus”: The centrality of desire management to the identity work of gay, celibate Christians. *Symbolic Interaction*, 36(2), 119-136.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/symb.58>
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Croft, C., Currie, G., & Lockett, A. (2015). The impact of emotionally important social identities on the construction of a managerial leader identity: A challenge for nurses in the English National Health Service. *Organization Studies*, 36(1), 113-131.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840614556915>
- Cunningham, E. (2020). Traumatized Systems Theory: Accountability for Recurrent Systemic Harm. *Case W. Rsrv. L. Rev.*, 71, 987.
- Cushman, P. (1990). Why the self is empty: Toward a historically situated psychology. *American Psychologist*, 45(5), 599–611.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.45.5.599>
- Czarniawska, B. (1999). Management she wrote: Organization studies and detective stories. *Studies in Cultures, Organizations and Societies*, 5(1), 13-41.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10245289908523519>
- Czarniawska, B., & Wolff, R. (1998). Constructing new identities in established organization fields: Young universities in old Europe. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 28(3), 32-56. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00208825.1998.11656739>
- Dahler-Larsen, P. (1998). *Pinpointing paradoxes in the construction of community in contemporary organizations: Learning from the field of organizational culture*. In *Proceedings of the International Association for Business and Society* (Vol. 9, pp. 707–718).
- Dauenhauer, B. P. (1988). *Paul Ricoeur: The promise and risk of politics*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Davis, J. L., & Love, T. P. (2017). The effect of status on identity stability. *Sociological Perspectives*, 60(3), 497-509.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0731121416638320>
- D’Cruz, P., & Noronha, E. (2012). Clarifying my world: Identity work in the context of workplace bullying. *Qualitative Report*, 17(16), 1-29.
- Deci, E. L., Olafsen, A. H., & Ryan, R. M. (2017). Self-determination theory in work organizations: The state of a science. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and*

- Organizational Behavior*, 4, 19–43. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-032516-113108>
- Decoster, S., Camps, J., Stouten, J., Vandevyvere, L., & Tripp, T. M. (2013). Standing by your organization: The impact of organizational identification and abusive supervision on followers' perceived cohesion and tendency to gossip. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 118(3), 623–634. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1612-z>
- Deetz, S. A. (1994). The micro-politics of identity formation in the workplace: The case of a knowledge intensive firm. *Human Studies*, 17(1), 23–44. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01322765>
- Dell'Osso, L., Lorenzi, P., & Carpita, B. (2019). Autistic traits and illness trajectories. *Clinical Practice and Epidemiology in Mental Health*, 15, 94–98. <https://doi.org/10.2174/1745017901915010094>
- Dell'Osso, L., Stratta, P., Conversano, C., Massimetti, E., Akiskal, K. K., Akiskal, H. S., Rossi, A., & Carmassi, C. (2014). Lifetime mania is related to post-traumatic stress symptoms in high school students exposed to the 2009 L'Aquila earthquake. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 55(2), 357–362. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comppsy.2013.08.017>
- DeRue, D. S., & Ashford, S. J. (2010). Who will lead and who will follow? A social process of leadership identity construction in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 35(4), 627–647. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.35.4.zok627>
- DeRue, D. S., Ashford, S. J., & Cotton, N. C. (2009). *Assuming the mantle: Unpacking the process by which individuals internalize a leader identity*. In L. M. Roberts & J. E. Dutton (Eds.), *Exploring positive identities and organizations* (pp. 241–260). Psychology Press.
- Diehl, M., Semegon, A. B., & Schwarzer, R. (2006). Assessing attention control in goal pursuit: A component of dispositional self-regulation. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 86(3), 306–317. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa8603_06
- Dinh, J. E., Lord, R. G., Gardner, W. L., Meuser, J. D., Liden, R. C., & Hu, J. (2014). Leadership theory and research in the new millennium: Current theoretical trends and changing perspectives. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 25(1), 36–62. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.11.005>
- Doerflinger, J. T. and Byrka, K. (2021). Committed professionals who are also engaged parents: Can they self-symbolize across identity goals?. *Motivation Science*, 7(4), 451–474. <https://doi.org/10.1037/mot0000245>
- Donovan, S. J., Güss, C. D., & Naslund, D. (2015). Improving dynamic decision making through training and self-reflection. *Judgment and Decision Making*, 10(4), 284–295. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1930297500005118>
- Douglas, B. D., Ewell, P. J., & Brauer, M. (2023). Data quality in online human-subjects research: Comparisons between MTurk, Prolific, CloudResearch, Qualtrics, and SONA. *Plos One*, 18(3), e0279720. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0279720>
- Down, S., & Reveley, J. (2009). Between narration and interaction: Situating first-line supervisor identity work. *Human Relations*, 62(3), 379–401. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726708101043>
- Dutton, J. E., Roberts, L. M., & Bednar, J. (2010). Pathways for positive identity construction at work: Four types of positive identity and the building of social resources. *Academy of Management Review*, 35(2), 265–293. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.2010.48463334>
- Dwyer, G., Hardy, C., & Tsoukas, H. (2023). Struggling to make sense of it all: the emotional

- process of sensemaking following an extreme incident. *Human Relations*, 76(3), 420-451. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00187267211059464>
- Eakin, P. J. (2006). Narrative identity and narrative imperialism: A response to Galen Strawson and James Phelan. *Narrative*, 14(2), 180-187. <https://doi.org/10.1353/nar.2006.0001>
- Eichhorn, B. R. (2014). *Common method variance techniques* (Technical report). Cleveland State University, Department of Operations & Supply Chain Management.
- Ellis, S., Carette, B., Anseel, F., & Lievens, F. (2014). Systematic reflection: Implications for learning from failures and successes. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 23(1), 67-72. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721413504106>
- Ellis, S., & Davidi, I. (2005). After-event reviews: drawing lessons from successful and failed experience. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(5), 857-871. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.90.5.857>
- Elmore, K. C. (2014). *Improving academic effort and achievement among low-income minority youth using small-scale interventions* (Doctoral dissertation, [University of Michigan]).
- Elmore, K. C., & Oyserman, D. (2012). If 'we' can succeed, 'I' can too: Identity-based motivation and gender in the classroom. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 37(3), 176-185. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2011.05.003>
- Elmore, K., Oyserman, D., Smith, G., & Novin, S. (2016). When the going gets tough: Implications of reactance for interpretations of experienced difficulty in the classroom. *AERA Open*, 2(3), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858416664714>
- Elsbach, K. D. (2009). Identity affirmation through signature style': A study of toy car designers. *Human Relations*, 62(7), 1041-1072. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726709335538>
- Ely, R. J., & Meyerson, D. E. (2010). An organizational approach to undoing gender: The unlikely case of offshore oil platforms. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 30, 3-34. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2010.09.002>
- Epitropaki, O., Kark, R., Mainemelis, C., & Lord, R. G. (2017). Leadership and followership identity processes: A multilevel review. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 28(1), 104-129. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2016.10.003>
- Erikson, E. H. (1982). *The life cycle completed: A review*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- Erikson, E. H. (1968). On the nature of psycho-historical evidence: In search of Gandhi. *Daedalus*, 97(3), 695-730.
- Erikson, E.H. (1959). *Identity and the life cycle*. WW Norton & Company.
- Ergün, N. (2020). Identity development: Narrative identity and intergenerational narrative identity. *Psikiyatride Guncel Yaklasimlar-Current Approaches in Psychiatry*, 12(4), 455-475. <https://doi.org/10.18863/pgy.676439>
- Ersen, Ö., & Bilgiç, R. (2018). The effect of proactive and preventive coping styles on personal and organizational outcomes: Be proactive if you want good outcomes. *Cogent Psychology*, 5(1), 1492865. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2018.1492865>
- Eryigit, S., & Kerpelman, J. L. (2011, February). Cross-cultural investigation of the link between identity processing styles and the actual work of identity in the career domain. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 40(1), 43-64. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-010-9117-3>
- Essers, C., Doorewaard, H., & Benschop, Y. (2013). Family ties: Migrant female business owners doing identity work on the public-private divide. *Human Relations*, 66(12), 1645-1665. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726713486820>
- Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and

- purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1-4.
<https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Falakolaflaki, S., & Hormozi, A. K. (2015). A Comparative study of identity style in deaf and normal adolescents. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(2S1), 662-667.
<https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n2s1p662>
- Farh, C. I., & Chen, Z. (2014). Beyond the individual victim: Multilevel consequences of abusive supervision in teams. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 99(6), 1074-1095.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0037636>
- Feinberg, M., Fang, R., Liu, S., & Peng, K. (2019). A world of blame to go around: Cross-cultural determinants of responsibility and punishment judgments. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 45(4), 634-651. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014616721879431>
- Felix, B., Santos, R. D., & Teixeira, A. (2023). Tales of me: storytelling identity work, authenticity, and impression management during new CEOs' work role transitions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1-14.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1246887>
- Fetters, M.D., Curry L.A., & Creswell, J.W. (2013). Achieving integration in mixed methods ' designs- principles and practices. *Health Services Research*, 48(2), 2134-2156.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6773.12117>
- Fineman, S., & Gabriel, Y. (1996). *Experiencing organizations*. Sage.
- Fischer, T., Tian, A. W., Lee, A., & Hughes, D. J. (2021). Abusive supervision: A systematic review and fundamental rethink. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 32(6), 101540.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2021.101540>
- Fleming, P. & Spicer, A. (2003). Working at a cynical distance: Implications for power, subjectivity and resistance. *Organization*, 10(1), 157-179.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508403010001376>
- Flick, U. (2018). *An introduction to qualitative research* (6th ed.). SAGE.
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/3151312>
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977* (C. Gordon, Ed.; C. Gordon, L. Marshall, J. Mepham, & K. Soper, Trans.). Pantheon.
- Frandsen, S. (2015). Portraits of Call Centre Employees: Understanding control and identity work. *Tamara Journal of Critical Organisation Inquiry*, 13(3), 5-19.
- Freud, S. (1936). Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety. *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 5(1), 1-28.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21674086.1936.11925270>
- Fuchs, T. (2007). Fragmented selves: Temporality and identity in borderline personality disorder. *Psychopathology*, 40(6), 379-387. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000106468>
- Fuchs, C., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2009). Using single-item measures for construct measurement in management research: Conceptual issues and application guidelines. *Die Betriebswirtschaft*, 69(2), 195-210.
- Fulmer, S. M., & Frijters, J. C. (2009). A review of self-report and alternative approaches in the measurement of student motivation. *Educational Psychology Review*, 21(3), 219-246. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-009-9107-x>
- Funkenstein, A. (1993). *The incomprehensible catastrophe: Memory and narrative*. In A. Lieblich & R. Josselson (Eds.), *The narrative study of lives* (Vol. 1, pp. 22-29). Sage.
- Gabriel, Y. (1999). *Organizations in depth: The psychoanalysis of organizations*. Sage.

- Gagné, M., & Deci, E. L. (2005). Self-determination theory and work motivation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(4), 331-362. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.322>
- Gecas, V. (1982). The self-concept. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 8(1), 1-33. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.08.080182.000245>
- Gendron, Y., & Spira, L. F. (2010). Identity narratives under threat: A study of former members of Arthur Andersen. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 35(3), 275-300. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aos.2009.09.001>
- George, M. M., Strauss, K., Mell, J. N., & Vough, H. C. (2023). When “who I am” is under threat: Measures of threat to identity value, meanings, and enactment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 108(12), 1952-1978. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0001114>
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and identity in the late modern age*. Stanford University Press.
- Gill, M. J. (2015). Elite identity and status anxiety: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of management consultants. *Organization*, 22(3), 306-325. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508413514287>
- Gjernes, T. (2013). Work, sickness, absence, and identity-work. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies*, 3(3), 175-194. <https://doi.org/10.19154/njwls.v3i3.3017>
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Doubleday.
- Goh, H. S., Hosier, S., & Zhang, H. (2022). Prevalence, antecedents, and consequences of workplace bullying among nurses—a summary of reviews. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(14), 8256. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19148256>
- Gonçalves, C. A. & Rocha, C. R. M. d. (2023). Cognitive biases in decision-making: Applications on strategic management and rationality improvement. *International Journal of Scientific Management and Tourism*, 9(3), 1722-1744. <https://doi.org/10.55905/ijsmtv9n3-023>
- Gonzalez-Morales, M. G., Kernan, M. C., Becker, T. E., & Eisenberger, R. (2018). Defeating abusive supervision: Training supervisors to support subordinates. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 23(2), 151-162. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000061>
- Goodman, J. S., & Blum, T. C. (1996). Assessing the non-random sampling effects of subject attrition in longitudinal research. *Journal of Management*, 22(4), 627-652. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639602200405>
- Goswami, A. Park, H.I., & Beehr, T.A. (2020). Does the congruence between leaders’ implicit followership theories and their perceptions of actual Followers matter? *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 35(4), 519-538. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-019-09638-7>
- Götz, M., Donzallaz, M., & Jonas, K. (2020). Leader-member exchange fosters beneficial and prevents detrimental workplace behavior: Organizational identification as the linking pin. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 1788. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01788>
- Goute, A. K., Goute, A., & Jan, N. A. (2021). The Dark Side of Leadership: A Review of Literature on Abusive Supervision. *IUP Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 20(4), 153-166.
- Gray, B., Johnson, T., Kish-Gephart, J., & Tilton, J. (2018). Identity work by first-generation college students to counteract class-based microaggressions. *Organization Studies*, 39(9), 1227-1250. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840617736935>
- Greenaway, K. H., Storrs, K. R., Philipp, M. C., Louis, W. R., Hornsey, M. J., & Vohs, K. D.

- (2015). Loss of control stimulates approach motivation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 56, 235-241. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2014.10.009>
- Greene, J. C., Caracelli, V. J., & Graham, W. F. (1989). Toward a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 11(3), 255-274. <https://doi.org/10.3102/01623737011003255>
- Greenglass, E., Schwarzer, R., Jakubiec, D., Fiksenbaum, L., & Taubert, S. (1999, July). *The proactive coping inventory (PCI): A multidimensional research instrument*. Paper presented at the 20th International Conference of the Stress and Anxiety Research Society (STAR), Kraków, Poland.
- Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). Sources of conflict between work and family roles. *Academy of Management Review*, 10(1), 76-88. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1985.4277352>
- Grimell, J. (2017). Self-reorganization in transition from military to civilian life: Maria's way. *Mental Health in Family Medicine*, 13, 544-553.
- Groleau, J. M., Calhoun, L. G., Cann, A., & Tedeschi, R. G. (2013). The role of centrality of events in posttraumatic distress and posttraumatic growth. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 5(5), 477-483. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0028809>
- Gronbeck, B. E. (1980). Dramaturgical theory and criticism: The state of the art (or science?). *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 44(4), 315-330. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10570318009374017>
- Groves, R. M., Fowler Jr, F. J., Couper, M. P., Lepkowski, J. M., Singer, E., & Tourangeau, R. (2011). *Survey methodology*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). *Competing paradigms in qualitative research*. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105-117). Sage.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2011). *Applied thematic analysis*. Sage.
- Gümüştas, C., & Karataş Gümüştas, N. (2023). Abusive supervision and organisational citizenship behaviour: Moderated mediation model of burnout and organisational identity. *Central European Business Review*, 12(4), 135-159. <https://doi.org/10.18267/j.cebr.336>
- Guo, D. (2024). The hidden cost of abusive supervision: Rudeness, sabotage, and the mediating role of workplace rudeness. *BMC Psychology*, 12(1), 53-64. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-02060-6>
- Gupta, V., Eames, C., Golding, L., Greenhill, B., Qi, R., Allan, S., ... & Fisher, P. (2023). Understanding the identity of lived experience researchers and providers: a conceptual framework and systematic narrative review. *Research Involvement and Engagement*, 9(1), 26. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40900-023-00439-0>
- Gutierrez, B., Howard-Grenville, J., & Scully, M. A. (2010). The faithful rise up: Split identification and an unlikely change effort. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(4), 673-699. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.52814362>
- Haikola, A. (2025). "Forgiveness is about building your identity again after the transgression": Narrative identity and turning points in the forgiveness process. *Narrative Works*, 14(1), 29-52. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1120369ar>
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage.
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2022). *A primer on partial least*

- squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Hall, D. T. (2004). Self-awareness, identity, and leader development. In D. V. Day, S. J. Zaccaro, & S. M. Halpin (Eds.), *Leader development for transforming organizations* (pp. 153–176). Psychology Press.
- Hall, W., Schmader, T., Aday, A., Inness, M., & Croft, E. (2018). Climate control: The relationship between social identity threat and cues to an identity-safe culture. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 115(3), 446-467.
- Hannah, S. T., Woolfolk, R. L., & Lord, R. G. (2009). Leader self-structure: a framework for positive leadership. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 30(2), 269-290. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.586>
- Harman, G. H. (1967). Psychological aspects of the theory of syntax. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 64(2), 75-87. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2023773>
- Haruvi-Lamdan, N., Horesh, D., & Golan, O. (2018). PTSD and autism spectrum disorder: Comorbidity, gaps in research, and potential shared mechanisms. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice and Policy*, 10(3), 290–299. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000298>.
- Hatmaker, D. M. (2013). Engineering identity: Gender and professional identity negotiation among women engineers. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 20(4), 382-396. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2012.00589.x>
- Héliot, Y., Gleibs, I. H., Coyle, A., Rousseau, D. M., & Rojon, C. (2020). Religious identity in the workplace: A systematic review, research agenda, and practical implications. *Human Resource Management*, 59(2), 153-173. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21983>
- Helms Mills, J., Thurlow, A., & Mills, A. J. (2010). Making sense of sensemaking: the critical sensemaking approach. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, 5(2), 182-195. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17465641011068857>
- Helms Mills, J. (2003). *Making sense of organizational change*. Routledge.
- Heidemeier, H., & Moser, K. (2009). Self–other agreement in job performance ratings: A meta-analytic test of a process model. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 94(2), 353-370. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.94.2.353>
- Henderson, K. E., & O’Leary-Kelly, A. (2012). Why do employees get upset about broken promises? An examination of PCB–PCV mediators. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 2012(1), 12735. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMBPP.2012.12735>
- Herman, J. L. (1992). Complex PTSD: A syndrome in survivors of prolonged and repeated trauma. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 5(3), 377-391. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.2490050305>
- Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. (1959). *The motivation to work*. Wiley.
- Hewitt, J. P. (1997). *Self and society: A symbolic interactionist social psychology* (7th ed.). Allyn and Bacon.
- Heydarian, N. M. (2016). Developing theory with the grounded-theory approach and thematic analysis. *APS observer*, 29(4), 38-39.
- Hinkin, T. R. (1998). A brief tutorial on the development of measures for use in survey questionnaires. *Organizational Research Methods*, 1(1), 104-121. <https://doi.org/10.1177/109442819800100106>
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: a new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513-524.

066X.44.3.513

- Hodgson, D. E., & Paton, S. (2016). Understanding the professional project manager: Cosmopolitans, locals and identity work. *International Journal of Project Management*, 34(2), 352-364. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2015.03.003>
- Hogg, M. A., & Terry, D. I. (2000). Social identity and self-categorization processes in organizational contexts. *Academy of Management Review*, 25(1), 121-140. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2000.2791606>
- Hogg, M. A., Terry, D. J., & White, K. M. (1995). A tale of two theories: A critical comparison of identity theory with social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 58(4), 255-269. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2787127>
- Homberg, F., McCarthy, D., & Tabvuma, V. (2015). A meta-analysis of the relationship between public service motivation and job satisfaction. *Public Administration Review*, 75(5), 711-722. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12423>
- Horowitz, M. J. (2011). *Stress response syndromes: PTSD, grief, adjustment, and dissociative disorders*. Jason Aronson.
- Horton, K. E., Bayerl, P. S., & Jacobs, G. (2014). Identity conflicts at work: An integrative framework. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 35, S6-S22. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1893>
- Howard, J. L., Bureau, J., Guay, F., Chong, J. X., & Ryan, R. M. (2021). Student motivation and associated outcomes: A meta-analysis from self-determination theory. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 16(6), 1300-1323. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691620966789>
- Hu, L. T., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 6(1), 1-55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10705519909540118>
- Huang, L., Paterson, T. A., & Wang, S. (2024). Identity-consistent self-image maintenance following leader abuse: Integrating self-presentation and self-concept orientation perspectives. *Journal of Management*, 50(4), 1361-1392. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063221132794>
- Huber, G., & Brown, A. D. (2017). Identity work, humour and disciplinary power. *Organization Studies*, 38(8), 1107-1126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840616677632>
- Humphreys, M., & Brown, A. D. (2002). Dress and identity: A Turkish case study. *Journal of Management Studies*, 39(7), 927-952. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00318>
- Ibarra, H. (1999). Provisional selves: Experimenting with image and identity in professional adaptation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(4), 764-791. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2667055>
- Ibarra, H., & Barbulescu, R. (2010). Identity as narrative: Prevalence, effectiveness, and consequences of narrative identity work in macro work role transitions. *Academy of Management Review*, 35(1), 135-154. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.35.1.zok135>
- Ibarra, H., Ely, R. J., & Kolb, D. M. (2013). Women rising: The unseen barriers. *Harvard Business Review*, 91(9), 60-66.
- Ibarra, H., & Petriglieri, J. L. (2010). Identity work and play. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 23(1), 10-25. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09534811011017180>
- Ibrahim, I., Ali, K., Alzoubi, I. A., Alzubi, M. M., Al-Tahitah, A., & Kadhim, K. G. (2021). Impact of employee engagement and task identity on employee retention strategy mediated by job satisfaction. In *International conference on business and technology* (pp.

- 559–573). Springer International Publishing.
- Ingram, P. (2023). Identity multiplicity and the formation of professional network ties. *Academy of Management Journal*, 66(3), 720–743. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2021.0230>
- Irehill, H., Rantatalo, O., Lundmark, R., & Tafvelin, S. (2024). Nonprototypical managers: The identity work of young managers in relation to age-based stereotypes. *European Management Journal*. Advanced online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2024.12.001>
- Isangula, K. G. (2025). Navigating Barriers: Challenges and Strategies for Adopting Artificial Intelligence in Qualitative Research in Low-Income African Contexts. *Tanzania Journal of Health Research*, 25(3), 2048–2059. <https://doi.org/10.4314/thrb.v26i3.14>
- Janoff-Bulman, R. (2010). *Shattered assumptions*. Simon and Schuster.
- Janoff-Bulman, R. (2004). Posttraumatic growth: Three explanatory models. *Psychological Inquiry*, 15(1), 30–34.
- Jap, S. D., & Anderson, E. M. (2004). *Challenges and advances in marketing strategy field research*. In C. Moorman & D. R. Lehmann (Eds.), *Assessing marketing strategy performance* (pp. 269–292). Marketing Science Institute.
- Järventie-Thesleff, R., & Tienari, J. (2016). Roles as mediators in identity work. *Organization Studies*, 37(2), 237–265. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840615604500>
- Jayawickreme, E., & Blackie, L. E. (2014). Post-traumatic growth as positive personality change: Evidence, controversies and future directions. *European Journal of Personality*, 28(4), 312–331. <https://doi.org/10.1002/per.1963>
- Jean, M., Taylor, J. C., Crawford, E. R., Hall, A. V., Vaziri, H., Casper, W. J., & Johnson, R. E. (2024). Identity work support perceptions: Development and validation of a measure. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 109(8), 1287–1310. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0001177>
- Jin, D. (2023). Devils at job environment: A study on employee ego depletion from abusive supervision and workaholic coworker. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 114, 103586. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2023.103586>
- Jing, H., & Yang, R. (2025). Crisis leadership, organizational sensemaking, and organizational resilience: The moderating effect of environmental turbulence. *SAGE Open*, 15(4), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440251389335>
- Jordan, J. V. (Ed.). (1997). *Women's growth in diversity: More writings from the Stone Center*. Guilford Press.
- Jun, J., & Kyle, G. T. (2011). The effect of identity conflict/facilitation on the experience of constraints to leisure and constraint negotiation. *Leisure Research*, 43(2), 176–204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2011.11950232>
- Kane, A. A. (2010). Unlocking knowledge transfer potential: Knowledge demonstrability and superordinate social identity. *Organization Science*, 21(3), 643–660. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1090.0469>
- Kanfer, R. (1990). Motivation theory and industrial and organizational psychology. In M. D. Dunnette & L. M. Hough (Eds.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 75–170). Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Kanfer, R., Frese, M., & Johnson, R. E. (2017). Motivation related to work: A century of progress. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(3), 338–355. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000133>
- Kark, R., & Van Dijk, D. (2007). Motivation to lead, motivation to follow: The role of the self-regulatory focus in leadership processes. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(2), 500–

528. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2007.24351846>
- Kärreman, D., & Alvesson, M. (2004). Cages in tandem: Management control, social identity, and identification in a knowledge-intensive firm. *Organization*, 11(1), 149-175. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508404039662>
- Killian, C., & Johnson, C. (2006). I'm not an immigrant!: Resistance, redefinition, and the role of resources in identity work. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 69(1), 60-80. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019027250606900105>
- Killian, J., & Wenning, M. (2017). Are we having fun yet? Exploring the motivations of MPA and MPP program directors in the United States. *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 23(3), 799-810. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15236803.2017.12002288>
- Kim, K. Y., Atwater, L., Latheef, Z., & Zheng, D. (2019). Three motives for abusive supervision: The mitigating effect of subordinates attributed motives on abusive supervision's negative outcomes. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 26(4), 476-494. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051818781816>
- Kim, P. H., Dirks, K. T., Cooper, C. D., & Ferrin, D. L. (2006). When more blame is better than less: The implications of internal vs. external attributions for the repair of trust after a competence-vs. integrity-based trust violation. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 99(1), 49-65. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2005.07.002>
- Kira, M., & Balkin, D. B. (2014). Interactions between work and identities: Thriving, withering, or redefining the self?. *Human Resource Management Review*, 24(2), 131-143. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2013.10.001>
- Kitzie, V. (2019). "That looks like me or something i can do": Affordances and constraints in the online identity work of US LGBTQ+ millennials. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 70(12), 1340-1351. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.24217>
- Kline, R. B. (2016). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (4th ed.). Guilford Press.
- Knapp, J. R., Smith, B. R., Kreiner, G. E., Sundaramurthy, C., & Barton, S. L. (2013). Managing boundaries through identity work: The role of individual and organizational identity tactics. *Family Business Review*, 26(4), 333-355. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894486512474036>
- Knights, D., & Clarke, C. A. (2014). It's a bittersweet symphony, this life: Fragile academic selves and insecure identities at work. *Organization Studies*, 35(3), 335-357. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840613508396>
- Knox, S., Casulli, L., & MacLaren, A. (2021). Identity work in different entrepreneurial settings: dominant interpretive repertoires and divergent striving agendas. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 33(9-10), 717-740. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2021.1890231>
- Koerner, M. M. (2014). Courage as identity work: Accounts of workplace courage. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57(1), 63-93. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.0641>
- Kreiner, G. E., Ashforth, B. E., & Sluss, D. M. (2006a). Identity dynamics in occupational dirty work: Integrating social identity and system justification perspectives. *Organization Science*, 17(5), 619-636. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1060.0208>
- Kreiner, G. E., Hollensbe, E. C., & Sheep, M. L. (2009). Balancing borders and bridges: Negotiating the work-home interface via boundary work tactics. *Academy of Management Journal*, 52(4), 704-730. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2009.43669916>

- Kreiner, G.E., Hollensbe, E.C. & Sheep, M.L. (2006b). Where is the 'me' among the 'we'? Identity work and the search for optimal balance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(5), 1031-57. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2006.22798186>
- Kroger, J. (1997). Gender and identity: The intersection of structure, content, and context. *Sex Roles*, 36(11), 747-770. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1025627206676>
- Kulshrestha, R., Sengupta, S., Sahay, A., & Chandra, Y. (2024). Process typologies of identity construction in entrepreneurship. *The Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 33(2), 293-329. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09713557241255404>
- Kuvaas, B., & Dysvik, A. (2010). Exploring alternative relationships between perceived investment in employee development, perceived supervisor support and employee outcomes. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 20(2), 138-156. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-8583.2009.00120.x>
- Kvasková, L., Širůček, J., Ježek, S., Hrubá, L., Lacinová, L., & Macek, P. (2020). Personal goals and identity of Czech university students. *Emerging Adulthood*, 10(2), 354-359. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2167696820917813>
- Lam, L. W., & Xu, A. J. (2019). Power imbalance and employee silence: The role of abusive leadership, power distance orientation, and perceived organisational politics. *Applied Psychology*, 68(3), 513-546. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12170>
- Lancaster, G. A., Dodd, S., & Williamson, P. R. (2004). Design and analysis of pilot studies: recommendations for good practice. *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*, 10(2), 307-312. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2002.384.doc.x>
- LaPointe, K. (2013). Heroic career changers? Gendered identity work in career transitions. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 20(2), 133-146. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2012.00601.x>
- Larsen, E. A. (2018). *The influence of attribution style on beginning teachers' professional learner identities* (Doctoral dissertation, Griffith University). Griffith Research Online. <https://doi.org/10.25904/1912/1693>
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lazarus, R. S. (1991). *Emotion and adaptation*. Oxford University Press.
- Leigh, A., & Melwani, S. (2022). Am I next? The spillover effects of megathreats on avoidant behaviors at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 65(3), 720-748. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2020.1657>
- Lepisto, D. A., Crosina, E., & Pratt, M. G. (2015). Identity work within and beyond the professions: Toward a theoretical integration and extension. In A. Desilva & M. Aparicio (Eds.), *International handbook of professional identities* (pp. 11-37). Scientific & Academic Publishing.
- Lewis, P. (2013). The search for an authentic entrepreneurial identity: Difference and professionalism among women business owners. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 20(3), 252-266. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2011.00568.x>
- Leymann, H. (1992). *From bullying to expulsion from working life*. Publica.
- Lian, H., Brown, D. J., Ferris, D. L., Liang, L. H., Keeping, L. M., & Morrison, R. (2014). Abusive supervision and retaliation: A self-control framework. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57(1), 116-139. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.0977>
- Liang, Y., Chen, T., Asante, E. A., Yan, M., Deng, J., & Lam, W. (2025). An identity threat appraisal framework explaining distinct reactions to active- and passive-aggressive

- abusive supervision. *Journal of Management*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063241312657>
- Lile, J. (2015). The relationship of identity boundaries to identity statuses and styles: An empirical examination of the structural model of identity formation. *Identity, 15*(2), 113-125. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2015.1023439>
- Limberg, A., Barnow, S., Freyberger, H. J., & Hamm, A. O. (2011). Emotional vulnerability in borderline personality disorder is cue specific and modulated by traumatization. *Biological Psychiatry, 69*(6), 574-582. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biopsych.2010.10.024>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage.
- Lind, E. A. (1997). Litigation and claiming in organizations: Antisocial behavior or quest for justice? In R. A. Giacalone & J. Greenberg (Eds.), *Antisocial behavior in organizations* (pp. 150-171). Sage.
- Lind, M., Ture, S., McAdams, D., & Cowan, H. R. (2024). Narrative identity, traits, and trajectories of depression and well-being: A 9-Year longitudinal study. *Psychological Science, 35*(12), 1325-1339. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09567976241296512>
- Lind, E. A., & Tyler, T. R. (1988). *The social psychology of procedural justice*. Springer.
- Linde, C. (2001). Narrative and social tacit knowledge. *Journal of Knowledge Management, 5*(2), 160-171. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13673270110393202>
- Lindsay, P. V. L. (2023). Unmasking the invisible chains: Exploring the interplay of organizational trauma and systemic oppression for sustainable transformation. *Organization Development Review, 55*(4), 10.
- Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (2004). Positive change following trauma and adversity: A review. *Journal of Traumatic Stress: Official Publication of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, 17*(1), 11-21. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:JOTS.0000014671.27856.7e>
- Liu, C., & Kozinets, R. V. (2022). Courtesy stigma management: Social identity work among China's "leftover women". *Journal of Consumer Research, 49*(2), 312-335. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucab065>
- Liu, C., Yang, J., Liu, J., & Zhu, L. (2021). The effect of abusive supervision on employee deviant behaviors: an identity-based perspective. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 32*(4), 948-978. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2018.1511613>
- Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2002). Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation: A 35-year odyssey. *American Psychologist, 57*(9), 705-717. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.57.9.705>
- Lord, R. G., & Brown, D. J. (2001). Leadership, values, and subordinate self-concepts. *The Leadership Quarterly, 12*(2), 133-152. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843\(01\)00072-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(01)00072-8)
- Lord, R. G., Brown, D. J., & Freiberg, S. J. (1999). Understanding the dynamics of leadership: The role of follower self-concepts in the leader/follower relationship. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 78*(3), 167-203. <https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.1999.2832>
- Lounsbury, M., & Glynn, M. A. (2001). Cultural entrepreneurship: Stories, legitimacy, and the acquisition of resources. *Strategic Management Journal, 22*(6-7), 545-564. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.188>
- Löwstedt, M., & Räisänen, C. (2014). Social identity in construction: Enactments and outcomes. *Construction Management and Economics, 32*(11), 1093-1105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01446193.2014.956132>

- Luckmann, R. & Berger, P. (1964). Social mobility and personal identity. *Archives of the European Journal of Sociology*, 5(2), 331–343.
- Lutgen-Sandvik, P. (2008). Intensive remedial identity work: Responses to workplace bullying trauma and stigmatization. *Organization*, 15(1), 97–119.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508407084487>
- Luyckx, K., Duriez, B., Klimstra, T.A. & Witte, H.D. (2010). Identity statuses in young adult employees: Prospective relations with work engagement and burnout. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 77(3), 339–349. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.06.002>
- Lyons, B. J., Pek, S., & Wessel, J. L. (2017). Toward a “sunlit path”: Stigma identity management as a source of localized social change through interaction. *Academy of Management Review*, 42(4), 618–636. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2015.0189>
- Ma, Z., & Yang, X. (2023). The mediating role of passion for inventing in the relationship between abusive supervision and employee creativity. *Current Psychology*, 42(2), 1523–1535. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03939-6>
- MacCallum, R. C., Widaman, K. F., Zhang, S., & Hong, S. (1999). Sample size in factor analysis. *Psychological Methods*, 4(1), 84–99. <https://doi.org/1082-989X/99/S3.00>
- MacIntyre, A. (2007). *After virtue: A study in moral theory* (3rd ed.). University of Notre Dame Press.
- Mackey, J. D., Frieder, R. E., Brees, J. R., & Martinko, M. J. (2017). Abusive supervision: A meta-analysis and empirical review. *Journal of Management*, 43(6), 1940–1965.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206315573997>
- Maclean, M., Harvey, C., Gordon, J., & Shaw, E. (2015). Identity, storytelling and the philanthropic journey. *Human Relations*, 68(10), 1623–1652.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726714564199>
- Maher, C., Hadfield, M., Hutchings, M., & De Eyto, A. (2018). Ensuring rigor in qualitative data analysis: A design research approach to coding combining NVivo with traditional material methods. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17(1), 1609406918786362. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918786362>
- Maher, H., & Winston, C. N. (2017). What it feels like to be me: Linking emotional intelligence, identity, and intimacy. *Journal of Adolescence*, 56, 162–165.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2017.02.012>
- Maier, C., Thatcher, J. B., Grover, V., & Dwivedi, Y. K. (2023). Cross-sectional research: A critical perspective, use cases, and recommendations for IS research. *International Journal of Information Management*, 70(1), 102625.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2023.102625>
- Maitlis, S. (2020). Posttraumatic growth at work. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 7(1), 395–419. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-012119-044932>
- Maitlis, S. (2009). Who am I now? Sensemaking and identity in posttraumatic growth. In L. M. Roberts, J. E. Dutton, & G. M. Spreitzer (Eds.), *Exploring positive identities and organizations: Building a theoretical and research foundation* (pp. 71–100). Psychology Press.
- Maitlis, S., & Christianson, M. (2014). Sensemaking in organizations: Taking stock and moving forward. *Academy of Management Annals*, 8(1), 57–125.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/19416520.2014.873177>

- Maitlis, S., Vogus, T. J., & Lawrence, T. B. (2013). Sensemaking and emotion in organizations. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 3(3), 222-247. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386613489062>
- Mallett, O., & Wapshott, R. (2015). Making sense of self-employment in late career: Understanding the identity work of olderpreneurs. *Work, Employment and Society*, 29(2), 250-266. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017014546666>
- Manzi, F., & Heilman, M. E. (2021). Breaking the glass ceiling: For one and all?. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 120(2), 257-277. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pspa0000260>
- Marcia, J. E. (1980). Identity in adolescence. In J. Adelson (Ed.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (pp. 159–187). Wiley.
- Markus, H., & Wurf, E. (1987). The dynamic self-concept: A social psychological perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 38(1), 299-337. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.ps.38.020187.001503>
- Marsh, H. W., Hau, K. T., & Wen, Z. (2004). In search of golden rules: Comment on hypothesis-testing approaches to setting cutoff values for fit indexes and dangers in overgeneralizing Hu and Bentler's (1999) findings. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 11(3), 320-341. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15328007sem1103_2
- Martin, J., Feldman, M. S., Hatch, M. J., & Sitkin, S. B. (1983). The uniqueness paradox in organizational stories. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 28(3), 438-453. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2392251>
- Maslow, A. H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. Harper and Row.
- Masood, H., Karakowsky, L., & Podolsky, M. (2021). Exploring job crafting as a response to abusive supervision. *Career Development International*, 26(2), 174-200. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-06-2020-0163>
- Masood, H., Mercer, M., & Karakowsky, L. (2024). Future past tense of abusive supervision: a narrative inquiry. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 45(5), 811-831. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-05-2023-0267>
- Matilla, A.S. & Enz, C.A. (2002). The Role of Emotions in Service Encounters. *Journal of Service Research*, 4(4), 268-277. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670502004004004>
- Matthew, C. T., & Sternberg, R. J. (2009). Developing experience-based (tacit) knowledge through reflection. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 19(4), 530-540. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2009.07.001>
- Mawritz, M. B., Mayer, D. M., Hoobler, J. M., Wayne, S. J., & Marinova, S. V. (2012). A trickle-down model of abusive supervision. *Personnel Psychology*, 65(2), 325-357. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2012.01246.x>
- Mayo, E. (1933). *The human problems of an industrial civilization*. MacMillan.
- McAdams, D. P. (2013). The psychological self as actor, agent, and author. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 8(3), 272-295. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691612464657>
- McAdams, D. P. (1996). Personality, modernity, and the storied self: A contemporary framework for studying persons. *Psychological Inquiry*, 7(4), 295-321. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327965pli0704_1
- McAdams, D. P. (1993). *The stories we live by: Personal myths and the making of the self*. Guilford Press.
- McAdams, D.P. & McLean, K.C. (2013). Narrative identity. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 22(3), 233–238. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721413475622>

- McAdams, D. P., Reynolds, J., Lewis, M., Patten, A. H., & Bowman, P. J. (2001). When bad things turn good and good things turn bad: Sequences of redemption and contamination in life narrative and their relation to psychosocial adaptation in midlife adults and in students. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27(4), 474-485.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167201274008>
- McAlpine, L. (2012). Identity-trajectories: Doctoral journeys from past to present to future. *The Australian Universities' Review*, 54(1), 38-46.
- McCabe, K. O. & Fleeson, W. (2016). Are traits useful? explaining trait manifestations as tools in the pursuit of goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 110(2), 287-301.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039490>
- McGuire, J. K., Doty, J. L., Catalpa, J. M., & Ola, C. (2019). Body image, minority stress, and identity development in transgender and gender-diverse adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence*, 18, 96-107. 10.1016/j.bodyim.2016.06.004
- McLean, K. C., Boggs, S., Haraldsson, K., Lowe, A., Fordham, C., Byers, S., & Syed, M. (2019). Personal identity development in cultural context: The socialization of master narratives about the gendered life course. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 44(2), 116-126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025419854150>
- McLean, K. C., & Pasupathi, M. (2012). Processes of identity development: Where I am and how I got there. *Identity*, 12(1), 8-28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2011.632363>
- McLean, K. C., Pasupathi, M., & Pals, J. L. (2007). Selves creating stories creating selves: A process model of self-development. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 11(3), 262-278. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868307301034>
- McLean, K. C., Shucard, H., & Syed, M. (2017). Applying the master narrative framework to gender identity development in emerging adulthood. *Emerging Adulthood*, 5(2), 93-105.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2167696816656254>
- McLean, K. C., & Syed, M. (2016). Personal, master, and alternative narratives: An integrative framework for understanding identity development in context. *Human Development*, 58(6), 318-349. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000445817>
- McLean, K. C., Syed, M., Pasupathi, M., Adler, J. M., Dunlop, W. L., Drustrup, D., ... & McCoy, T. P. (2020). The empirical structure of narrative identity: The initial Big Three. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 119(4), 920-944.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000247>
- Meca, A., Ritchie, R. A., Beyers, W., Schwartz, S. J., Picariello, S., Zamboanga, B. L., ... Benitez, C. G. (2015). Identity centrality and psychosocial functioning: A person-centered approach. *Emerging Adulthood*, 3(5), 327-339.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2167696815593183>
- Mercer, M., & Karakowsky, L. (2025). Hidden in plain sight: Abusive leaders and group blind spots. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 15(1), 68-92.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/20413866251313730>
- Mikkelsen E.G. & Einarsen S. (2002). Basic assumptions and symptoms of post-traumatic stress among victims of bullying at work. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 11(1), 87-111. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13594320143000861>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis*. Sage.
- Miscenko, D., & Day, D. V. (2016). Identity and identification at work. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 6(3), 215-247. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386615584009>
- Mishra, S., Chaudhuri, M., & Dey, A. K. (2020). Deflating power imbalance through personal

- identity enhancement. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, 16(1), 98-126. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QROM-03-2020-1902>
- Mitchell, M. S., & Ambrose, M. L. (2007). Abusive supervision and workplace deviance and the moderating effects of negative reciprocity beliefs. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(4), 1159–1168. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.4.1159>
- Morrison, E. W., & Phelps, C. C. (1999). Taking charge at work: Extrarole efforts to initiate workplace change. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42(4), 403-419. <https://doi.org/10.5465/257011>
- Mueller, V., & Morley, C. (2020). Blaming individuals for burnout: Developing critical practice responses to workplace stress. *Social Alternatives*, 39(3), 20-28. <https://doi.org/10.3316/informit.767920662624987>
- Mumford, M. D. (2011). A hale farewell: The state of leadership research. *Leadership Quarterly*, 22, 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.12.001>
- Mumtaz, M. (2024). The double-edged sword: Unraveling the dual outcomes of workplace humor on the social identity of employees. *International Review of Social Psychology*, 37(1), 18, <https://doi.org/10.5334/irsp.935>
- Nash, J.C. (2008). Re-thinking intersectionality. *Feminist Review*, 89(1), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1057/fr.2008.4>
- Neimeyer, R. A. (2004). Fostering posttraumatic growth: A narrative elaboration. *Psychological Inquiry*, 15(1), 53-59.
- Nexhip, A. Riley, M., & Robinson, K. (2024). Professional identity and workplace motivation: A case study. *Journal of Management and Organization*, 30(2), 270–286. <https://doi.org/10.1177/18333583221115898>
- Nezlek, J. B. (2007). A multilevel framework for understanding relationships among traits, states, situations and behaviours. *European Journal of Personality*, 21(6), 789-810. <https://doi.org/10.1002/per.640>
- Ng, K., Niven, K., & Hoel, H. (2020). ‘I could help, but...’: a dynamic sensemaking model of workplace bullying bystanders. *Human Relations*, 73(12), 1718-1746. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726719884617>
- Nguyen, T. M., Nham, T. P., Froese, F. J., & Malik, A. (2019). Motivation and knowledge sharing: A meta-analysis of main and moderating effects. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 23(5), 998-1016. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-01-2019-0029>
- Niedhammer, I., Pineau, E., & Bertrais, S. (2023). Study of the variation of the 12-month prevalence of exposure to workplace bullying across national French working population subgroups. *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health*, 96(2), 213-224. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00420-022-01916-x>
- Nusair, K., & Hua, N. (2010). Comparative assessment of structural equation modeling and multiple regression research methodologies: E-commerce context. *Tourism Management*, 31(3), 314-324. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.03.010>
- Obodaru, O. (2017). Forgone, but not forgotten: Toward a theory of forgone professional identities. *Academy of Management Journal*, 60(2), 523–553. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2013.0432>
- Obling, A. R. (2022). Professional identity reconstruction: Attempts to match people with new role expectations and environmental demands. *Management Learning*, 54(4), 468-488. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13505076211070906>
- Ogbu, J. U. (2004). Collective identity and the burden of “acting White” in Black history,

- community, and education. *The Urban Review*, 36(1), 1-35.
<https://doi.org/10.1023/B:URRE.0000042734.83194.f6>
- Oliver, D. (2015). Identity work as a strategic practice. In D. Golsorkhi, L. Rouleau, D. Seidl, & E. Vaara (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of strategy as practice* (pp. 331–344). Cambridge University Press.
- Olmos-Vega, F. M., Stalmeijer, R. E., Varpio, L., & Kahlke, R. (2023). A practical guide to reflexivity in qualitative research: AMEE Guide No. 149. *Medical Teacher*, 45(3), 241-251. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2022.2057287>
- Owens, T. J., Robinson, D. T., & Smith-Lovin, L. (2010). Three faces of identity. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 36(1), 477-499. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.34.040507.134725>
- Oyserman, D. (2019). The essentialized self: Implications for motivation and self-regulation. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 29, 336–343. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcpy.1093>
- Oyserman, D. (2015). *Pathways to success through identity-based motivation*. Oxford University Press.
- Oyserman, D. (2013). Not just any path: Implications of identity-based motivation for disparities in school outcomes. *Economics of Education Review*, 33, 179–190.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2012.09.002>
- Oyserman, D. (2009). Identity-based motivation: Implications for action-readiness, procedural-readiness, and consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 19(3), 250–260.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2009.05.008>
- Oyserman, D. (2007). Social identity and self-regulation. In A. W. Kruglanski & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Social psychology: Handbook of basic principles* (pp. 432–453). Guilford Press.
- Oyserman, D., Coon, H. M., & Kemmelmeier, M. (2002). Rethinking individualism and collectivism: Evaluation of theoretical assumptions and meta-analyses. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128(1), 3-72. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.128.1.3>
- Oyserman, D., & A. Dawson. (2021). Successful learning environments both support and harness students' identity-based motivation. *Journal of Experimental Education* 89(3), 508–522.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220973.2021.1873091>.
- Oyserman, D., & Dawson, A. (2019). Identity-based motivation and the paradox of the future self: Getting going requires thinking about time (later) in time (now). *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 42, e269. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X19000633>
- Oyserman, D., Destin, M., & Novin, S. (2015). The context-sensitive future self: Possible selves motivate in context, not otherwise. *Self and Identity*, 14(2), 173–188.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15298868.2014.965733>
- Oyserman, D., Elmore, K., & Smith, G. (2012). Self, self-concept, and identity. In M. R. Leary & J. P. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity* (2nd ed., pp. 69–104). Guilford Press.
- Oyserman, D., Fryberg, S., & Yoder, N. (2007). Identity-based motivation and health. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 93(6), 1011–1027. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.93.6.1011>
- Oyserman, D., & Horowitz, E. (2023). From possible selves and future selves to current action: An integrated review and identity-based motivation synthesis. *Advances in Motivation Science*, 10, 73–147. <https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.adms.2022.11.003>
- Oyserman, D., & James, L. (2011). Possible identities. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 117–145). Springer.
- Oyserman, D., Johnson, E., & James, L. (2010). Seeing the destination but not the path: Effects

- of socioeconomic disadvantage on school-focused possible self content and linked behavioral strategies. *Self and Identity*, 10(4), 474-492.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15298868.2010.487651>
- Oyserman, D., Lewis Jr, N. A., Yan, V. X., Fisher, O., O'Donnell, S. C., & Horowitz, E. (2017). An identity-based motivation framework for self-regulation. *Psychological Inquiry*, 28(2-3), 139-147. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2017.1337406>
- Ozyilmaz, A., & Koc, S. (2024). Personal identity: How it moderates the relation between social identity and workplace performance. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 30(6), 1845-1872. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2022.90>
- Pachankis, J. E. (2007). The psychological implications of concealing a stigma: a cognitive-affective-behavioral model. *Psychological Bulletin*, 133(2), 328-345.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.133.2.328>
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533-544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- Pasupathi, M. (2003). Emotion regulation during social remembering: Differences between emotions elicited during an event and emotions elicited when talking about it. *Memory*, 11(2), 151-163. <https://doi.org/10.1080/741938212>
- Peer, E., Brandimarte, L., Samat, S., & Acquisti, A. (2017). Beyond the Turk: Alternative platforms for crowdsourcing behavioral research. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 70, 153-163. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2017.01.006>
- Peng, M. Y.-P. (2022). Evaluating the impact of employees' perception of identity threat, social capital, and knowledge sharing behaviour. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 967456.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.936304>
- Petriglieri, G. (2020). A psychodynamic perspective on identity as fabrication. In A. D. Brown (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of identities in organizations* (pp. 169–184). Oxford University Press.
- Petriglieri, G. (2011a). Identity workspaces: The case of business schools. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 10(4), 645–670.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.9.1.zqr44>
- Petriglieri, J. L. (2011b). Under threat: Responses to and the consequences of threats to individuals' identities. *Academy of Management Review*, 36(4), 641-662.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2009.0087>
- Petriglieri, G., Ashford, S. J., & Wrzesniewski, A. (2018). Agony and ecstasy in the gig economy: Cultivating holding environments for precarious and personalized work identities. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 63(2), 165–200.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839218759646>
- Pinder, C. C. (2014). *Work motivation in organizational behavior*. Psychology Press.
- Petriglieri, G., & Petriglieri, J. L. (2010). Identity workspaces: The case of business schools. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 9(1), 44-60.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.9.1.zqr44>
- Petriglieri, G., & Stein, M. (2012). The unwanted self: Projective identification in leaders' identity work. *Organization Studies*, 33(9), 1217-1235.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840612448158>
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J.-Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method

- biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(5), 879–903.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.9.1.zqr44>
- Podsakoff, P. M., & Organ, D. W. (1986). Self-reports in organizational research: Problems and prospects. *Journal of Management*, 12(4), 531–544.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/014920638601200408>
- Polkinghorne, D. (1991). Narrative and self-concept. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 1(2–3), 135–153. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jnlh.1.2-3.04nar>
- Pratt, M. G. (2012). Rethinking identity construction processes in organizations: Three questions to consider. *Constructing Identity in and Around Organizations*, 15(1), 21–49.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199640997.003.0002>
- Pratt, M.G., Rockmann, K.W., & Kaufmann, J.B. (2006). Constructing professional identity: The role of work and identity learning cycles in the customization of identity among medical residents. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(2), 235–262.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2006.20786060>
- Queirós, A., Faria, D., & Almeida, F. (2017). Strengths and limitations of qualitative and quantitative research methods. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 3(9), 369–387.
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.887089>
- Rafferty, A. E., & Restubog, S. L. D. (2011). The influence of abusive supervisors on followers' organizational citizenship behaviours: The hidden costs of abusive supervision. *British Journal of Management*, 22(2), 270–285. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2010.00732.x>
- Rai, K., Dua, S., & Yadav, M. (2019). Association of financial attitude, financial behaviour and financial knowledge towards financial literacy: A structural equation modeling approach. *FIIB Business Review*, 8(1), 51–60. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2319714519826651>
- Renn, O., Laubichler, M., Lucas, K., Kröger, W., Schanze, J., Scholz, R. W., & Schweizer, P. J. (2022). Systemic risks from different perspectives. *Risk Analysis*, 42(9), 1902–1920.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/risa.13657>
- Reynolds-Kueny, C., & Shoss, M. K. (2021). Sensemaking and negative emotion sharing: Perceived listener reactions as interpersonal cues driving workplace outcomes. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 36(3), 461–478. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-020-09686-4>
- Ricoeur, P. (1992) *Oneself as another*. University of Chicago Press.
- Ricoeur, P. (1991). Narrative identity. *Philosophy Today*, 73–81.
- Rindfleisch, A., Malter, A. J., Ganesan, S., & Moorman, C. (2008). Cross-sectional versus longitudinal survey research: Concepts, findings, and guidelines. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 45(3), 261–279. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.45.3.261>
- Rivera, D. P., Forquer, E. E., & Rangel, R. (2010). Microaggression and the life experience of Latina/o Americans. In D. W. Sue (Ed.), *Microaggressions and marginality: Manifestation, dynamics, and impact* (pp. 59–83). John Wiley & Sons.
- Rizvi, Y. S., & Sikand, R. (2020). Learned helplessness at the workplace and its impact on work involvement: An empirical analysis. *Global Business Review*, 0972150920976693.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0972150920976693>
- Ronen, S., & Donia, M. B. (2020). Stifling my fire: The impact of abusive supervision on employees' motivation and ensuing outcomes at work. *Revista de Psicología del Trabajo y de las Organizaciones*, 36(3), 205–214. <https://doi.org/10.5093/jwop2020a20>
- Rose, M. (2012). Dwelling as marking and claiming. *Environment and Planning D: Society and*

- Space*, 30(5), 757-771. <https://doi.org/10.1068/d6809>
- Rostron, A. (2022). How to be a hero: How managers determine what makes a good manager through narrative identity work. *Management Learning*, 53(3), 417-438. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13505076211007275>
- Rothfuss, P. (2010). *The name of the wind* (The Kingkiller Chronicle, Book 1). DAW Books.
- Rovetta, A., Bortolotti, A., & Palumbo, R. (2025). Integrating team and organizational identity: A systematic literature analysis. *Frontiers in Organizational Psychology*, 2, 1439269. <https://doi.org/10.3389/forgp.2024.1439269>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness*. Guilford Press.
- Sainz, M., & Baldissarri, C. (2021). Abusive leadership versus objectifying job features: Factors that influence organizational dehumanization and workers' self-objectification. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 51(8), 825-837. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12803>
- Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (4th ed.). Sage.
- Samaranayake, R., Jayarathna, D., & Mithursan, A. (2021). *Impact of identity fusion and pro-group motivation on employees' productivity* (MPRA Working Paper No. 120948). Munich Personal RePEc Archive.
- Sandberg, J., & Tsoukas, H. (2020). Sensemaking reconsidered: Towards a broader understanding through phenomenology *Organization Theory*, 1(1), 2631787719879937. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2631787719879937>
- Saeed, I., Khan, J., Zada, M., & Zada, S. (2024). Employee sensemaking in organizational change via knowledge management: Leadership role as a moderator. *Current Psychology*, 43(7), 6657-6671. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-04849-x>
- Sawatsky, A. P., et al. (2024). Identity work: A qualitative study of residents navigating professional identity struggles. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 13(1), 540-552. <https://doi.org/10.5334/pme.1549>
- Schermelleh-Engel, K., Moosbrugger, H., & Müller, H. (2003). Evaluating the fit of structural equation models: Tests of significance and descriptive goodness-of-fit measures. *Methods of Psychological Research*, 8(2), 23-74.
- Schlenker, B. R. (2003). Self-presentation. In M. R. Leary & J. P. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity* (pp. 492-518). Guilford Press.
- Schwalbe, M. L., & Mason-Schrock, D. (1996). *Identity work as group process*. In B. Markovsky, M. J. Lovaglia, & R. Simon (Eds.), *Advances in group processes* (Vol. 13, pp. 113-147). JAI Press.
- Schwartz, S. J. (2001). The evolution of Eriksonian and, neo-Eriksonian identity theory and research: A review and integration. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 1(1), 7-58. <https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532706XSCHWARTZ>
- Schwartz, H. S. (1992). *Narcissistic process and corporate decay: The theory of the organizational ideal*. NYU Press.
- Schwartz, S. J., Ertanir, B., Harkness, A., Zamboanga, B. L., Bessaha, M. L., Bartholomew, J. B., ... & Martinez Jr, C. R. (2025). The role of personal identity as a resource for college students during COVID-19. *Journal of American College Health*, 73(1), 244-254. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2023.2214244>
- Schwartz, S. J., Kurtines, W. M., & Montgomery, M. J. (2005). A comparison of two strategies for facilitating identity formation processes in emerging adults: An exploratory study. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 20(3), 309-345.

- <https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558404273119>
- Schwarz, N. (2012). Feelings-as-information theory. In P. A. M. Van Lange, A. W. Kruglanski, & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of theories in social psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 289–308). Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446249215.n15>
- Schwarzer, R., & Reuter, T. (2023). Manage stress at work through preventive and proactive coping. In E. A. Locke & C. L. Pearce (Eds.), *Principles of organizational behavior: The handbook of evidence-based management* (3rd ed., pp. 463–482). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781394320769.ch23>
- Schyns, B., & Schilling, J. (2013). How bad are the effects of bad leaders? A meta-analysis of destructive leadership and its outcomes. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 24(1), 138–158. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2012.09.001>
- Searle, B. J., & Lee, L. (2015). Proactive coping as a personal resource in the expanded job demands–resources model. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 22(1), 46–69. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038439>
- Sellers, R. M., Smith, M. A., Shelton, J. N., Rowley, S. A. J., & Chavous, T. M. (1998). Multidimensional model of racial identity: A reconceptualization of African American racial identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 2(1), 18–39. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr0201_2
- Shaharyar, M., Baloch, M. A., Tariq, M. A., Mushtaq, S., & Mushtaq, A. (2014). Impact of performance appraisal on employee performance. *Journal of Resources Development and Management*, 3, 22–24.
- Shaw, K., & Timmons, S. (2010). Exploring how nursing uniforms influence self image and professional identity. *Nursing Times*, 106(10), 21–23.
- Shewach, O. R., Sackett, P. R., & Quint, S. (2019). Stereotype threat effects in settings with features likely versus unlikely in operational test settings: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 104(12), 1514–1534 <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000420>
- Shipp, A. J., & Jansen, K. J. (2011). Reinterpreting time in fit theory: Crafting and recrafting narratives of fit in medias res. *Academy of Management Review*, 36(1), 76–101. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2009.0077>
- Silitshena, R. (2022). Self-identity is a function of a good motivational model. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 13(13), 34–41. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v11n4p39>
- Sims, D. (2005). Living a story and storying a life: A narrative understanding of distributed self. In A. Pullen & S. Linstead (Eds.), *Organization and identity* (pp. 86–104). Routledge.
- Sluss, D. M., & Ashforth, B. E. (2007). Relational identity and identification: Defining ourselves through work relationships. *The Academy of Management Review*, 32(1), 9–32. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2007.23463672>
- Smith, G. C., & Oyserman, D. (2015). Just not worth my time? Experienced difficulty and time investment. *Social Cognition*, 33(2), 85–103. <https://doi.org/10.1521/soco.2015.33.2.1>
- Snow, D. A., & Anderson, L. (1987). Identity work among the homeless: The verbal construction and avowal of personal identities. *American Journal of Sociology*, 92(6), 1336–1371. <https://doi.org/10.1086/228668>
- Snow, D. A., & McAdam, D. (2000). Identity work processes in the context of social movements: Clarifying the identity/movement nexus. In S. Stryker, T. J. Owens, & R. W. White (Eds.), *Self, identity, and social movements* (pp. 41–67). University of Minnesota Press.
- Stafford, T., Holroyd, J., & Scaife, R. (2018). *Confronting bias in judging: A framework for*

- addressing psychological biases in decision making* (Manuscript under review).
<https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/nzskm>
- Stahl, G., Nguyen, T., & Fairbairn, K. (2025). Brothers in arms: working-class men, social mobility and fraternal bonds. *Journal of Family Studies*, 1-22.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2025.2505098>
- Stanojević, D., Krstić, M., Jaredić, B., & Dimitrijević, B. (2014). Proactive coping as a mediator between resources and outcomes: A structural equations modeling analysis. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 9(4), 871-885. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-013-9274-2>
- Steel, P., & König, C. J. (2006). Integrating theories of motivation. *Academy of Management Review*, 31(4), 889-913. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2006.22527462>
- Stets, J. E., & Burke, P. J. (2000). Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 63(3), 224-237. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2695870>
- Strahan, R., & Gerbasi, K. C. (1972). Short, homogeneous versions of the Marlow-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 28(2), 191-193.
[https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-4679\(197204\)28:2<191::AID-JCLP2270280220>3.0.CO;2-G](https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-4679(197204)28:2<191::AID-JCLP2270280220>3.0.CO;2-G)
- Styhre, A. (2012). *Organizations and the bioeconomy: The management and commodification of the life sciences*. Routledge.
- Srinivas, N. (2013). Could a subaltern manage? Identity work and habitus in a colonial workplace. *Organization Studies*, 34(11), 1655-1674.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840612467151>
- Stone, G. P. (1962). Review of *Identity and anxiety: Survival of the person in mass society*, by M. Stein, A. J. Vidich, & D. M. White. *Journal of Health and Human Behavior*, 3(1), 55-57.
- Stratta, P., Capanna, C., Dell'Oso, L., Carmassi, C., Patriarca, S., Di Emidio, G., Ricciardi, I., Collazzoni, A., & Rossi, A. (2015). Resilience and coping in trauma spectrum symptoms prediction: A structural equation modeling approach. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 77, 55- 61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2014.12.035>
- Stratton, S. J. (2021). Population research: convenience sampling strategies. *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, 36(4), 373-374. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049023X21000649>
- Strietholt, S. (2026). Situating identity-based motivation theory in second language acquisition: Foundations, comparisons, and implications. *The Modern Language Journal*, 1-16.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.70032>
- Stroebe, M. & Schüt, H. (2010). The dual process model of coping with bereavement: A decade on. *OMEGA - Journal of Death and Dying*, 61(4), 273-289.
<https://doi.org/10.2190/OM.61.4.b>
- Stryker, S., & Serpe, R. T. (1982). Commitment, identity salience, and role behavior: Theory and research example. In W. Ickes & E. S. Knowles (Eds.), *Personality, roles, and social behavior* (pp. 199-218). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4613-9469-3_7
- Sukhodolsky, D. G., Golub, A., & Cromwell, E. N. (2001). Development and validation of the anger rumination scale. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 31(5), 689-700.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(00\)00171-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(00)00171-9)
- Sungu, L.J., Hu, E., & Weng, Q. (2020). Goal Commitment Buffers the Negative Effects of Perceived Abusive Supervision. *The Journal of Psychology*, 154 (4), 273-291.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.2019.1709403>
- Sveningsson, S., & Alvesson, M. (2003). Managing managerial identities: Organizational

- fragmentation, discourse and identity struggle. *Human Relations*, 56(10), 1163-1193.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00187267035610001>
- Sveningsson, S., & Larsson, M. (2006). Fantasies of leadership: Identity work. *Leadership*, 2(2), 203-224. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715006062935>
- Swann Jr, W.B., Johnson, R. E., & Bosson, J. K. (2009). Identity negotiation at work. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 29, 81-109. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2009.06.005>
- Tannenbaum, S. I., & Cerasoli, C. P. (2013). Do team and individual debriefs enhance performance? A meta-analysis. *Human Factors*, 55(1), 231-245.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0018720812448394>
- Tajfel, H., Turner, J. C., Austin, W. G., & Worchel, S. (2001). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In M. A. Hogg & D. Abrams (Eds.), *Intergroup relations: Essential readings* (pp. 94–109). Psychology Press.
- Taylor, S. (2005). Self-narration as rehearsal: A discursive approach to the narrative formation of identity. *Narrative Inquiry*, 15(1), 45-50. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ni.15.1.03tay>
- Taylor, F.W. (1947). *Shop management*. Harper & Brothers. (Original work published 1903).
- Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundations of mixed methods research: Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioral sciences*. Sage.
- Tedeschi, J.T. (2001). Social power, influence, and aggression. In J. P. Forgas & K. D. Williams (Eds.), *Social influence: Direct and indirect processes* (pp. 109–128). Psychology Press.
- Tedeschi, R.G., & Calhoun, L. G. (2004). Posttraumatic growth: conceptual foundations and empirical evidence". *Psychological Inquiry*, 15(1), 1-18.
https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327965pli1501_01
- Tepper, B.J. (2007). Abusive supervision in work organizations: Review, synthesis, and research agenda. *Journal of Management*, 33(3), 261-289.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206307300812>.
- Tepper, B.J. (2000). Consequences of abusive supervision. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(2), 178-190. <https://doi.org/10.5465/1556375>
- Tepper, B. J., Mitchell, M. S., Haggard, D. L., Kwan, H. K., & Park, H. M. (2015). On the exchange of hostility with supervisors: An examination of self-enhancing and self-defeating perspectives. *Personnel Psychology*, 68(4), 723-758.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12094>
- Tepper, B. J., Moss, S. E., Lockhart, D. E., & Carr, J. C. (2007). Abusive supervision, upward maintenance communication, and subordinates' psychological distress. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(5), 1169-1180. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2007.20159918>
- Tepper, B. J., Simon, L., & Park, H. M. (2017). Abusive supervision. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 4(1), 123-152.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-041015-062539>
- Terry, G., Hayfield, N., Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. In C. Willig & W. S. Rogers (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 17–37). SAGE.
- Tett, R. P., & Burnett, D. D. (2003). A personality trait-based interactionist model of job performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(3), 500-517. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.3.500>
- Thau, S., & Mitchell, M. S. (2010). Self-gain or self-regulation impairment? Tests of competing explanations of the supervisor abuse and employee deviance relationship through perceptions of distributive justice. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 95(6), 1009-

1031. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0020540>
- Thomas, J. B., Clark, S. M., & Gioia, D. A. (1993). Strategic sensemaking and organizational performance: Linkages among scanning, interpretation, action, and outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal*, 36(2), 239-270. <https://doi.org/10.5465/256522>
- Thomas, R., & Linstead, A. (2002). Losing the plot? Middle managers and identity. *Organization*, 9(1), 71-93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/135050840291004>
- Tomo, A., & Mangia, G. (2025). Public employees' identity work and sensemaking of their (home) workplace during and after the lockdown. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 38(6), 735-756. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPSM-10-2024-0324>
- Tongco, M. D. C. (2007). Purposive sampling as a tool for informant selection. *Ethnobotany Research & Applications*, 5, 147-158
- Torrens-Burton, A., Goss, S., Sutton, E., Barawi, K., Longo, M., Seddon, K., ... & Harrop, E. (2021). 'It was brutal. It still is': A qualitative analysis of the challenges of bereavement during the covid-19 pandemic reported in two national surveys. *Palliative Care & Social Practice*, 16, 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/26323524221092456>
- Tracy, S. J., & Trethewey, A. (2005). Fracturing the real-self↔ fake-self dichotomy: Moving toward "crystallized" organizational discourses and identities. *Communication Theory*, 15(2), 168-195. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2005.tb00331.x>
- Tremblay, M. A., Blanchard, C. M., Taylor, S., Pelletier, L. G., & Villeneuve, M. (2009). Work extrinsic and intrinsic motivation scale: its value for organizational psychology research. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue Canadienne des Sciences du Comportement*, 41(4), 213-226. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015167>
- Trinh, V. D., & Faulkner, S. L. (2023). Using the communication theory of identity to examine identity negotiation among LGBTQ+ college students with multiple conflicting salient identities. *Communication Quarterly*, 71(2), 154-174. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01463373.2022.2136009>
- Tröster, C. & Van Quaquebeke, N. (2020). When victims help their abusive supervisors: The role of LMX, self-blame, and guilt. *Academy of Management Journal*, 64(6), 1793-1815. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2019.0559>
- Trusson, D., Trusson, C., & Casey, C. (2021). Reflexive self-identity and work: Working women, biographical disruption and agency. *Work, Employment and Society*, 35(1), 116-136. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017020926441>
- Turner, J. C., & Onorato, R. (1999). Social identity, personality, and the self-concept: A self-categorization perspective. In T. R. Tyler, R. Kramer, & O. John (Eds.), *The psychology of the social self* (pp. 11-46). Erlbaum.
- Tyler, T. R., & S. Abetz, J. (2019). Interpersonal discourses between parent and LGBTQ child. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services*, 31(3), 267-289. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538720.2019.1596859>
- Ugazio, V., Fellin, L., Pennacchio, R., Negri, A., & Colciago, F. (2012). Is systemic thinking really extraneous to common sense?. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 34(1), 53-71. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6427.2011.00538.x>
- Ursache, A. and Raver, C. C. (2013). Trait and state anxiety: relations to executive functioning in an at-risk sample. *Cognition and Emotion*, 28(5), 845-855. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699931.2013.855173>
- Vaara, E., & Tienari, J. (2007). M&A as stereotyping: Banal ideas and self-serving explanations.

- In D. Angwin (Ed.), *Mergers and acquisitions*. Blackwell.
- Van der Kolk, B. A. (2003). The neurobiology of childhood trauma and abuse. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics*, 12(2), 293-317. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s1056-4993\(03\)00003-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s1056-4993(03)00003-8)
- van der Steen, M. P. (2022). Identity work of management accountants in a merger: The construction of identity in liminal space. *Management Accounting Research*, 56, 100792. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mar.2022.100792>
- Van Iddekinge, C. H., Aguinis, H., Mackey, J. D., & DeOrtentiis, P. S. (2018). A meta-analysis of the interactive, additive, and relative effects of cognitive ability and motivation on performance. *Journal of Management*, 44(1), 249-279. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206317702220>
- Van Iddekinge, C. H., Arnold, J. D., Aguinis, H., Lang, J. W., & Lievens, F. (2023). Work effort: A conceptual and meta-analytic review. *Journal of Management*, 49(1), 125-157. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063221087641>
- Van Maanen, J. (2009). Identity work and control in occupational communities. In Sim B. Sitkin, Laura B. Cardinal, & Katinka M. Bijlsman-Frankema (Eds.), *Control in organizations: New directions in theory and research* (pp. 111-166). Cambridge University Press.
- Vansteenkiste, M., Ryan, R. M., & Soenens, B. (2020). Basic psychological need theory: Advancements, critical themes, and future directions. *Motivation and Emotion*, 44(1), 1-31. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-019-09818-1>
- Venkatesh, V., Brown, S. A., & Bala, H. (2013). Bridging the qualitative–quantitative divide: Guidelines for conducting mixed methods research in information systems. *MIS Quarterly*, 37(1), 21–54. <https://doi.org/10.25300/MISQ/2013/37.1.02>
- Vignoles, V. L., Regalia, C., Manzi, C., Golledge, J., & Scabini, E. (2006). Beyond self-esteem: Influence of multiple motives on identity construction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(2), 308-333. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.2.308>
- Vogel, R. M., & Bolino, M. C. (2020). Recurring nightmares and silver linings: Understanding how past abusive supervision may lead to posttraumatic stress and posttraumatic growth. *Academy of Management Review*, 45(3), 549-569. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2017.0350>
- Vogel, R. M., & Mitchell, M. S. (2017). The motivational effects of diminished self-esteem for employees who experience abusive supervision. *Journal of Management*, 43(7), 2218-2251. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314566462>
- Vosylis, R., Erentaitė, R., & Crocetti, E. (2018). Global versus domain-specific identity processes: Which domains are more relevant for emerging adults?. *Emerging Adulthood*, 6(1), 32-41. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2167696817694698>
- Vough, H. C., & Caza, B. B. (2017). Where do I go from here? Sensemaking and the construction of growth-based stories in the wake of denied promotions. *Academy of Management Review*, 42(1), 103-128. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2013.0177>
- Vough, H. C., Caza, B. B., & Maitlis, S. (2020). Making sense of myself: Exploring the relationship between identity and sensemaking. In M. G. Pratt, M. Schultz, B. E. Ashforth, & D. Ravasi (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identities in organizations* (pp. 244–260). Oxford University Press.
- Vroom, V. H. (1964). *Work and motivation*. Wiley.
- Walsh, B. M., & Gordon, J. R. (2008). Creating an individual work identity. *Human Resource Management Review*, 18(1), 46–61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2007.09.001>

- Wang, M., Lu, C. Q., & Lu, L. (2023). The positive potential of presenteeism: An exploration of how presenteeism leads to good performance evaluation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 44(6), 920-935. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2604>
- Wang, G., Van Iddekinge, C.H., Zhang, L., Bishof, J. (2019). Meta-analytic and primary investigations of the role of followers in ratings of leadership behavior in organizations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 104(1), 70–106. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000345>
- Wang, X., Zhu, J., Liu, L., & Chen, X. (2017). Cognitive-processing bias in chinese student teachers with strong and weak professional identity. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8, 784. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00784>
- Wang, P., Zou, L., Huang, M., Amdu, M. K., & Guo, T. (2024). Work-related identity discrepancy and employee proactive behavior: The effects of face-pressure and benevolent leadership. *Acta Psychologica*, 248, 104354. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2024.104354>
- Waterman, A. S., & Schwartz, S. J. (2013). Eudaimonic identity theory. In A. S. Waterman (Ed.), *The best within us: Positive psychology perspectives on eudaimonia* (pp. 99–118). American Psychological Association.
- Watkins, E., Moberly, N. J., & Moulds, M. L. (2008). Processing mode causally influences emotional reactivity: Distinct effects of abstract versus concrete construal on emotional response. *Emotion*, 8(3), 364–378. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1528-3542.8.3.364>
- Watson, T. J. (2009a). Entrepreneurial action, identity work and the use of multiple discursive resources: The case of a rapidly changing family business. *International Small Business Journal*, 27(3), 251-274. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242609102274>
- Watson, T.J. (2009b) Narrative, life story and manager identity: A case study in autobiographical identity work. *Human Relations*, 62(3), 425–452. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726708101044>
- Watson, T.J. (2008). Managing identity: Identity work, personal predicaments and structural circumstances. *Organization*, 15(1). 121–43. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508407084488>
- Wegge, J., Van Dick, R., Fisher, G. K., Wecking, C., & Moltzen, K. (2006). Work motivation, organisational identification, and well-being in call centre work. *Work & Stress*, 20(1), 60-83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02678370600655553>
- Wehrle, K., Klehe, U. C., Kira, M., & Zikic, J. (2018). Can I come as I am? Refugees' vocational identity threats, coping, and growth. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 105, 83-101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2017.10.010>
- Weick, K. E. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations*. Sage.
- Weick, K. E. (1979). *The social psychology of organizing* (2nd ed.). Addison-Wesley.
- Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the process of sensemaking. *Organization Science*, 16(4), 409-421. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1050.0133>
- Weiner, B. (1985). An attributional theory of achievement motivation and emotion. *Psychological Review*, 92(4), 548-573. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.92.4.548>
- Weinzimmer, L. G. & Esken, C. A. (2017). Learning from mistakes: How mistake tolerance positively affects organizational learning and performance. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 53(3), 322-348. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886316688658>
- Wertsch, J. (1991) *Voices of the mind: A sociocultural approach to mediated action*. Harvard University Press.
- Westen, D., & Graça, M. (2024). Managerial identity work: A systematic review and conceptual

- model. *Journal of Business Economics*, 94(2), 511–529. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11301-024-00481-6>
- White, K., Stackhouse, M., & Argo, J. J. (2018). When social identity threat leads to the selection of identity-reinforcing options: The role of public self-awareness. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 144, 60–73. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2017.09.007>
- Widarko, A., & Anwarodin, M. K. (2022). Work motivation and organizational culture on work performance: organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) as mediating variable. *Golden Ratio of Human Resource Management*, 2(2), 123-138. <https://doi.org/10.52970/grhrm.v2i2.207>
- Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Wingfield, A. H. (2021). *Flatlining: Race, work, and health care in the new economy*. University of California Press.
- Winkler, I. (2018). Identity work and emotions: A review. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 20(1), 120-133. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12119>
- Wolfenden, B., & Grace, M. (2012). Identity continuity in the face of biographical disruption: ‘It’s the same me’. *Brain Impairment*, 13(2), 203-211. <https://doi.org/10.1017/BrImp.2012.16>
- Wood, M. D., Walker, T., Adler, A. B., & Crouch, C. L. (2020). Post-traumatic growth leadership: Mitigating stress in a high-risk occupation. *Occupational Health Science*, 4(1), 103-122. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41542-019-00052-2>
- Workman-Stark, A. (2025). ‘Me, us, and them’: policing and the dynamics of identity work. *Police Quarterly*, 28(1), 78-103. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10986111241246311>
- Wright, C., Nyberg, D., & Grant, D. (2012). “Hippies on the third floor”: Climate change, narrative identity and the micro-politics of corporate environmentalism. *Organization Studies*, 33(11), 1451-1475. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840612463316>
- Xiao, H., Togola, M., Zhang, Z., & Yu, D. (2024). A relative deprivation perspective of the differentiation of abusive supervision in groups. *Scientific Reports*, 14(1), 22828. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-74386-5>
- Yang, H., Wang, Z., Song, J., Lu, J., Huang, X., Zou, Z., & Pan, L. (2020). The positive and negative rumination scale: Development and preliminary validation. *Current Psychology*, 39(2), 483-499. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-018-9950-3>
- Yang, Y., Zhang, L., Qu, W., & Fan, W. (2024). The effect of future self-continuity on intertemporal decision making: A mediated moderating model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15, 1437065. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1437065>
- Yao, Y., Chen, J., Chi, H., Hang, Y., & Qiao, Z. (2025). Perceived abusive supervision and mental health among Chinese graduate students: The chain mediating roles of autonomy need and professional identity. *BMC Psychology*, 13, 959. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-025-03324-5>
- Young, M. B. (1988). Understanding identity disruption and intimacy: One aspect of post-traumatic stress. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 10(1), 30-43. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00922431>
- Yu, K., Lin, W., Wang, L., Ma, J., Wei, W., Wang, H., ... & Shi, J. (2016). The role of affective commitment and future work self salience in the abusive supervision–job performance

- relationship. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 89(1), 28-45.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12101>
- Yuan, X., Xu, Y., & Li, Y. (2020). Resource depletion perspective on the link between abusive supervision and safety behaviors. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 162(1), 213-228.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3983-2>
- Zamawe, F. C. (2015). The implication of using NVivo software in qualitative data analysis: Evidence-based reflections. *Malawi Medical Journal*, 27(1), 13-15. <https://doi.org/10.4314/mmj.v27i1.4>
- Zellars, K. L., Tepper, B. J., & Duffy, M. K. (2002). Abusive supervision and subordinates' organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(6), 1068-1076.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.6.1068>
- Zhang, Y., Peng, Q., Dong, W., Hou, C., & Chen, C. (2023). Professional identity and sense of coherence affect the between compassion fatigue and work engagement among Chinese hospital nurses. *BMC Nursing*, 22(1), 472. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12912-023-01596-z>
- Zhang, H., Kwan, H. K., Zhang, X., & Wu, L. Z. (2014). High core self-evaluators maintain creativity: A motivational model of abusive supervision. *Journal of Management*, 40(4), 1151-1174. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206312460681>
- Zhou, L. (2024). Coping with abusive supervision in project teams: The mediating role of team proactive behaviour. *Behavioral Sciences*, 14(6), 456-469.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14060456>
- Zoellner, T., & Maercker, A. (2006). Posttraumatic growth in clinical psychology—A critical review and introduction of a two component model. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 26(5), 626-653. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2006.01.008>
- Zohar, D., & Luria, G. (2003). The use of supervisory practices as leverage to improve safety behavior: A cross-level intervention model. *Journal of Safety Research*, 34(5), 567-577.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsr.2003.05.006>

Appendix A: Conceptual Figures and Table Synthesized from the Literature

Table 1. Past Definitions of Identity Work

Authors	Identity Work Definition
Snow & Anderson (1987)	“...the range of activities individuals engage in to create, present, and sustain personal identities that are congruent with and supportive of the self-concept. So defined, identity work may involve a number of complementary activities: (a) procurement or arrangement of physical settings and props; (b) cosmetic face work or the arrangement of personal appearance; (c) selective association with other individuals or groups; and (d) verbal construction and assertion of personal identities” (p. 1348)
Ibarra (1999)	“...not just a process of producing possible selves but also one in which people select and discard the possibilities they have considered” (p. 779)
Svenningson & Alvesson (2003)	“...people being engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness.” (p. 1165)
Watson (2008)	“... the mutually constitutive processes whereby people strive to shape a relatively coherent and distinctive notion of personal selfidentity and struggle to come to terms with and, within limits, to influence the various social identities which pertain to them in the various milieu in which they live their lives.” (p. 129)

Table 2. Dominant Identity Work Theoretical Perspectives

Theory	Articles Applying the Theory	Type of Identities
Social identity theory	Tajfel and Turner (1979)* Alvesson (2000) Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) Löwstedt and Räsänen (2014) Kreiner et al. (2006a)	Collective identities
Critical theory	Foucault (1980)* Alvesson and Wilmott (2002) Boussebaa and Brown (2017)	Collective identities
Identity theory	Stryker and Serpe (1982)* DeRue and Ashford (2010) Järventie-Thesleff and Tienari (2016) Knapp et al. (2013)	Role identities
Narrative theory	Bruner (1991)* Beech and Johnson (2005) Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) Watson (2009b) Wright et al. (2012)	Personal identities

Note. Asterisks indicate the foundational papers.

Table 3. Fischer et al.'s (2021) Moderating Factors in the Relationship Between Abusive Supervision and Performance

Follower Factors	Leader Factors	Relationship Factors	Job Design Characteristics	Team/Group/Firm/Country Context
Cultural value Power distance orientation Collectivism Conscientiousness Agreeableness Proactiveness Neuroticism Emotional stability Rumination Intention to quit Job mobility Reciprocity beliefs Self-esteem Demographic similarity/dissimilarity Follower causal attributions Job embeddedness Reason for working Mindfulness Perception of aggressive humour Emotional intelligence Positive affect Locus of control Entitlement Economic hardship Moral identity Trait self-regulation Employee competence uncertainty Social standing uncertainty Leadership ideal self- concepts Vision Interaction avoidance Avoidance coping Organizational tenure	LMX- differentiation Perceived supervisor support Supervisor as role model Supervisor moral identity internalization Perceived supervisor power Perceived intent of the supervisor Vicarious abusive supervision Leader attributed performance promotion Employee's perception of supervisor's organizational embodiment Abusive supervision variability Chronic sense of power Neuroticism Supervisor coercive power Supervisor Machiavellianism Team-leader- attributed initiation motives Leader attributed performance promotion	LMX History of aggression Family motivation Boundary strength at home Leader- member independence Dyad tenure	Meaning of work Role ambiguity Job complexity Job autonomy/personal control Role clarity Meaningful work Job resources adequacy Job demand	Abuse-intolerant climate Hostile-aggressive climate Counterproductive behaviour norm Work unit structure Co-worker support Distributive or procedural justice Co-worker approval of organizational deviance Upward hostility Co-worker aggressive modelling Peer abusive supervision Team abusive supervision Team performance Group potency Rivalry Perceived organizational support Co-worker support Peer abusive supervision/climate HRM effectiveness perceptions Union satisfaction Group trust Team psychological empowerment Cooperative goals Fear of retaliation Confucian cultural values

Self-enhancement motive Relational self- construal Empathic concern Injury initiating attributions Role modelling Affective commitment Sensitivity to mistreatment Promotion regulatory focus Traditionality Continuance commitment Hierarchical level Job embeddedness Goal commitment Critical thinking Cognitive ability Political skills Susceptibility to emotional contagion Self-control Psychological capital Learning goal orientation Psychological contract fulfillment Promotion focus Organizational identification Spiritual intelligence Self-efficacy Resource management ability Integration Moral identity Exclusion beliefs Future work self- salience Core self-evaluation Intention to quit Perceived mobility	Leader based perceived insider status Perceived remorse attribution Leader's dependence on the follower Political skill			
---	--	--	--	--

Performance promotion attribution Lone wolf tendencies Psychological ownership Hostile attribution bias				
---	--	--	--	--

Figure 1. Proposed Model of Identity Work.

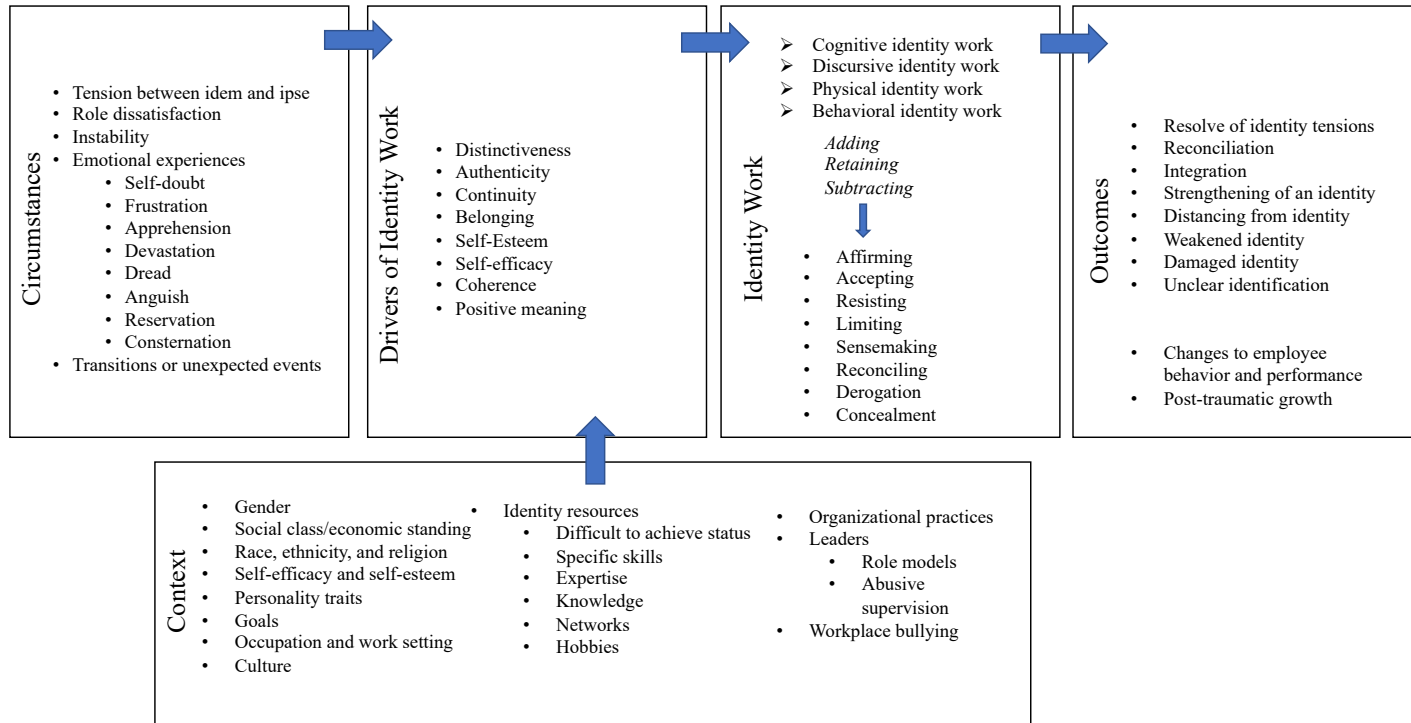
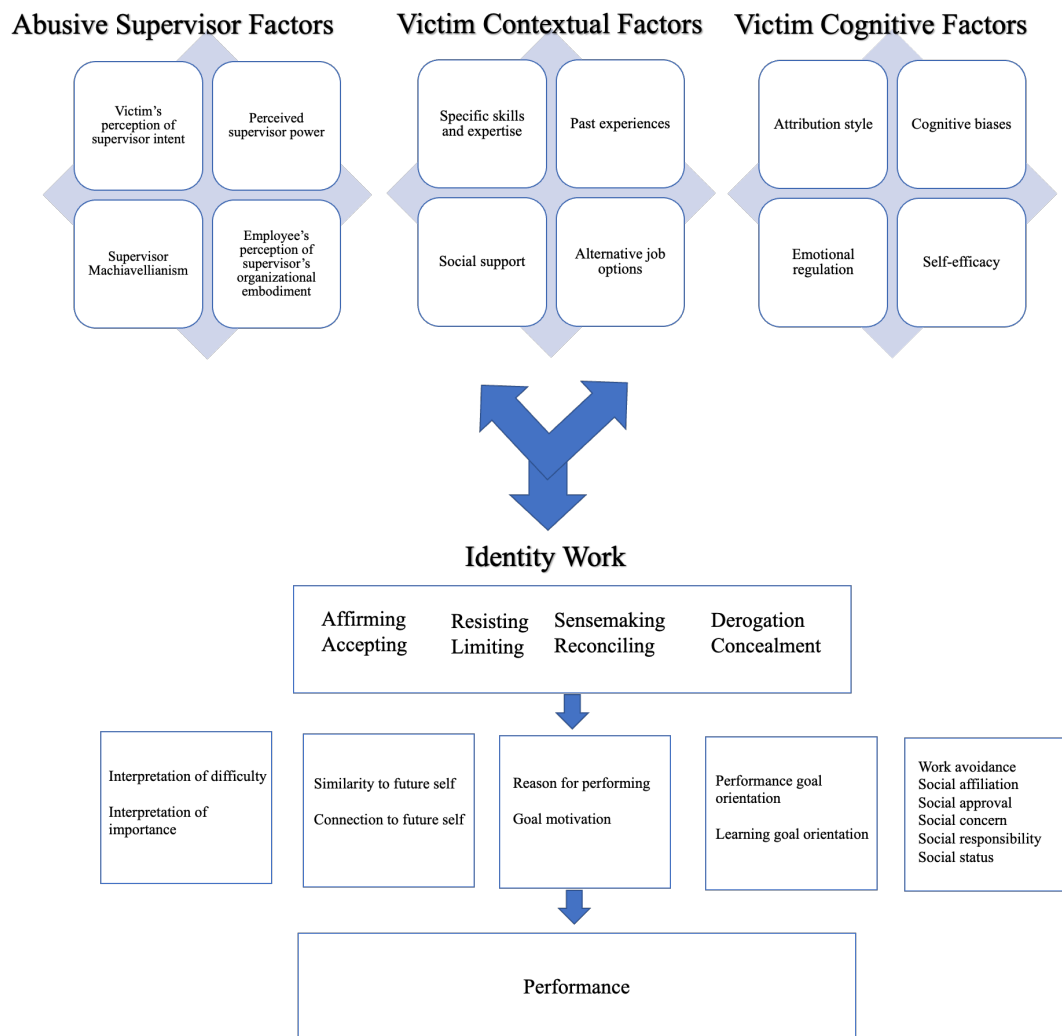


Figure 2. Tentative Model of the Contexts of Identity Work, Goal Setting, Motivation, and Performance



Appendix B: Study 1 (Qualitative Study) Supporting Materials

Interview Questions (Before Pilot)

Demographic Questions

Gender

Age

Position/Industry (current and during abusive supervision)

Educational background

Geographic location

Years of experience

Length of employment under abusive supervisor

Marital status/Family status

Can you tell me about your experiences with your abusive supervisor?

Prompt: What were the factors that made your abusive supervisor abusive?

Prompt: Can you provide an overview of your interactions and experiences with your abusive supervisor?

Prompt: Can you tell me a particular story that highlights their abuse towards you?

Prompt: What characteristics would you use to describe your abusive supervisor?

How would you describe your relationship with your abusive supervisor?

Prompt: What do you think is the reason that the supervisor behaved abusively?

Prompt: How would you describe your abusive supervisor's leadership style?

Prompt: How did your abusive supervisor behave towards others in the workplace?

Prompt: Did you consider your supervisor as a mentor or a role model at any point?

Prompt: Was there ever a time in your working relationship with your supervisor where it was good? Can you describe this time?

At what point did you begin to acknowledge that you were victim to an abusive supervisor?

Prompt: What made you come to this conclusion?

Prompt: How did you initially react to the abusive supervisor?

Prompt: Why did you not realize or acknowledge your supervisor's abuse earlier?

Prompt: Why didn't you leave earlier?

What do you attribute the abuse to?

Prompt: Has your attributions of the abuse changed over time? In what way?

How would you describe your career before you entered this organization?

Prompt: What were other organizational cultures like at other organizations at previous jobs?

Prompt: How would you describe your past workplaces in terms of the leadership styles and supervisory behaviors you encountered?

Prompt: How did your past experiences shape your expectations or preparedness to handle this current experience of abusive supervision?

Prompt: Have you noticed any triggers of past experiences when you think about the abusive supervision you are current describing? If so, can you describe them?

Following the abusive supervision, did you ever question or reflect on who you are as a person?

Can you describe your thoughts about yourself that culminated following the abusive supervision?

Prompt: Were there any elements of your personal beliefs, values, or sense of self challenged due to the abusive supervision?

Prompt: How did this experience impact your sense of confidence, self-esteem, or self-worth?

Can you describe the attempts or actions you took to re-establish or rediscover your personal identity following the abusive supervision?

Prompt: Did you feel the need to redefine or revisit who you are as a person following the abusive supervision?

Prompt: Following the abusive supervision, what steps did you take to explore who you are as a person, what you stand for, and what your values are to regain a sense of self?

Prompt: Can you share the self-exploration exercises you undertook to gain a better understanding of your values, goals, or purpose following the abusive supervision?

Prompt: Can you describe any changes in your self-perception, self-confidence, or self-expression following the abusive supervision?

In what ways did the abusive supervision impact your motivation and engagement at work?

Prompt: Did it change the goals that you had for that job? For yourself outside of that job?

Prompt: How did it impact your motivation to perform well in your job?

Prompt: Can you describe a specific example or instance in which the abusive supervision directly impacted your motivation?

Prompt: How did the abusive supervision impact your willingness to go above and beyond in your job?

Prompt: Have you observed any changes to your productivity or performance as a result of the abusive supervision?

Prompt: Did the abusive supervision affect your willingness to contribute ideas or collaborate with colleagues?

How did you cope with the challenges posed by the abusive supervisor within the workplace?

Prompt: What were your emotional reactions to the abusive supervision?

Prompt: Can you describe the coping mechanisms you had in place to navigate the challenges presented by the abusive supervisor?

Prompt: Did you feel that any particular strategies or resources helped you develop effective coping mechanisms in response to the abusive supervisor?

Prompt: How did your coping mechanisms change over time as you continued to face the challenges posed by the abusive supervisor?

Did you find that your personal identity played a role in the coping strategies you utilized? If so, how?

Prompt: Can you think of any part of your personal identity (personal beliefs, values, or characteristics) that played a role in the coping strategies you employed?

Prompt: Did you find that certain aspects of your identity, such as your cultural background, gender, personality, or life experiences, influenced the coping mechanisms you utilized? If so, in what ways?

Prompt: In what ways did engaging in personal identity work (such as self-reflection, self-affirmation) help you maintain resilience and navigate the difficulties associated with the abusive supervisor? In what ways did engaging in personal identity work prevent you from navigating the difficulties associated with the abusive supervisor?

Prompt: Did you find that your personal goals, aspirations, or sense of purpose affected the coping strategies you employed?

Prompt: Were there any conflicts or tensions between your personal identity and the coping strategies you used? If so, how did you navigate those conflicts?

Prompt: Looking back, how do you feel that your personal identity impacted the effectiveness or outcomes of the coping strategies you employed?

Did you seek any formal or informal support systems (e.g., colleagues, HR, another supervisor, counselling, friends and family) to address the issues related to the abusive supervisor? If so, what was your experience with those support systems?

Prompt: Why did you choose the specific formal or informal support systems that you did? What influenced your decision?

Prompt: Did you face any challenges when seeking support from the formal or informal systems?

Did the support systems you sought help you gain new perspectives or insights into your personal identity and the effects of the abusive supervision? If so, can you share some of those insights?

How would you describe the organizational culture and climate in relation to personal growth and development of employees' individuality?

Prompt: Were there any policies or practices that allowed or hindered your ability to engage in personal identity work or embrace their individuality following abusive supervision?

Prompt: How did the organizational response to complaints about abusive supervision impact your ability to express or explore your true self?

Prompt: Were there any training or development programs offered by the organization that allowed employees to embrace or enhance their personal strengths and values?

Prompt: How do you feel the organization impacted your ability to heal from the effects of abusive supervision?

Looking back at the experience, how do you feel that the process of rediscovering your personal identity has impacted your well-being and fulfillment in your both your work and personal life?

Interview Questions (After Pilot)

Demographic Questions

Gender

Age

Position/Industry (current and during abusive supervision)

Educational background

Geographic location

Years of experience

Length of employment under abusive supervisor

Marital status/Family status

Abusive Supervisor Factors

Can you tell me about your experiences with your abusive supervisor?

Prompt: What were the factors that made your abusive supervisor abusive?

Prompt: Can you tell me a particular story that highlights their abuse towards you?

How did you come to realize it was abusive? What was the moment? How did you make sense of it?

Prompt: What characteristics would you use to describe your abusive supervisor?

When this happened did this shake up your world views in any way? Did you expect this sort of behaviour before?

Why do you think your supervisor treated you in the way that you described? What do you believe was their underlying intention or motive behind their actions?

Prompt: Can you provide any specific incidents or behaviours that led you to interpret their actions in that way? How did those incidents influence your perception of their intent?

Prompt: Have your attributions of the abuse changed over time? In what way?

In your experience working under your supervisor, could you provide an example or describe a situation where you feel their actions, decisions, or leadership style particularly exemplified or contradicted the values and culture of your organization?

Prompt: How do you think their behaviour reflects the broader ethos of your company?

Do you feel it is reflective of the org? Or they are a lone actor? Is it reflective of your views of society?

Victim Factors

Could you elaborate on the skills and expertise you have developed throughout your career, especially during your time under your abusive supervisor?

Prompt: How do you believe these skills have helped you cope with or navigate challenging situations, including instances of abusive supervision?

How would you describe your career before you entered this organization?

Prompt: How did your past experiences shape your expectations or preparedness to handle this current experience of abusive supervision?

Prompt: Have you noticed any triggers of past experiences when you think about the abusive supervision you are current describing? If so, can you describe them?

How did you cope with the challenges posed by the abusive supervisor within the workplace?

Prompt: What were your emotional reactions to the abusive supervision?

Prompt: Did you feel that any particular strategies or resources helped you develop effective coping mechanisms in response to the abusive supervisor?

Prompt: How did your coping mechanisms change over time as you continued to face the challenges posed by the abusive supervisor?

Did you seek any formal or informal support systems (e.g., colleagues, HR, another supervisor, counselling, friends and family) to address the issues related to the abusive supervisor? If so, what was your experience with those support systems?

Prompt: Did you face any challenges when seeking support from the formal or informal systems?

Amidst the challenges posed by the abusive supervision, how did you perceive your ability to effectively handle the situation and its impact on your work?

Prompt: Could you provide an example of how your belief in your capabilities and skills influenced your response to the difficulties you faced, and how you managed to stay resilient during that time?

What were the key factors that influenced your decision to remain in the position despite experiencing abusive supervision?

Prompt: Could you share any specific circumstances or considerations that played a role in your choice to stay, and how did you manage the challenges associated with this decision?

Prompt: During the period when you were experiencing abusive supervision, did you feel you had viable alternative job options or opportunities to transition to a more supportive work environment?

How did the organizational response to complaints about abusive supervision impact your ability to express or explore your true self?

Prompt: Were there any policies or practices that allowed or hindered your ability to engage in personal identity work or embrace their individuality following abusive supervision?

Prompt: Were there any training or development programs offered by the organization that allowed employees to embrace or enhance their personal strengths and values?

Prompt: How do you feel the organization impacted your ability to heal from the effects of abusive supervision?

Identity Work

Following the abusive supervision, did you ever question or reflect on who you are as a person? Can you describe your thoughts about yourself that culminated following the abusive supervision?

Prompt: Were there any elements of your personal beliefs, values, or sense of self challenged due to the abusive supervision?

Prompt: How did this experience impact your sense of confidence, self-esteem, or self-worth? Did you find yourself pushing back against the negative treatment from your supervisor?

Prompt: How did you resist the impact of their actions on your self-esteem and professional confidence?

Can you describe the attempts or actions you took to re-establish or rediscover your personal identity following the abusive supervision?

Prompt: Did you feel the need to redefine or revisit who you are as a person following the abusive supervision?

Prompts: Following the abusive supervision, what steps did you take to explore who you are as a person, what you stand for, and what your values are to regain a sense of self?

Prompts: Can you share the self-exploration exercises you undertook to gain a better understanding of your values, goals, or purpose following the abusive supervision?

Prompt: Can you describe any changes in your self-perception, self-confidence, or self-expression following the abusive supervision?

Did you find that your personal identity played a role in the coping strategies you utilized? If so, how?

Prompt: Can you think of any part of your personal identity (personal beliefs, values, or characteristics) that played a role in the coping strategies you employed?

Prompt: Did you find that certain aspects of your identity, such as your cultural background, gender, personality, or life experiences, influenced the coping mechanisms you utilized? If so, in what ways?

Prompt: In what ways did engaging in personal identity work (such as self-reflection, self-affirmation) help you maintain resilience and navigate the difficulties associated with the abusive supervisor? In what ways did engaging in personal identity work prevent you from navigating the difficulties associated with the abusive supervisor?

Prompt: Looking back, how do you feel that your personal identity impacted the effectiveness or outcomes of the coping strategies you employed?

Did your experience with your supervisor lead you to place boundaries on how much you invest emotionally in your work?

Following your encounter with abusive supervision, did you feel the need to hide the impact of this experience?

How did you talk to yourself following this event?

Looking back at the experience, how do you feel that the process of rediscovering your personal identity has impacted your well-being and fulfillment in your both your work and personal life?

Did this impact your relationships with others?

Motivation and Performance

In what ways did the abusive supervision impact your motivation and engagement at work?

Prompt: Did it change the goals that you had for that job? For yourself outside of that job?

Prompt: Can you describe a specific example or instance in which the abusive supervision directly impacted your motivation?

Prompt: Have you observed any changes to your productivity or performance as a result of the abusive supervision?

Prompt: Did the abusive supervision affect your willingness to contribute ideas or collaborate with colleagues?

Do you feel like you have different life goals?

Following your challenging experience, did you find yourself redefining what success means to you in your career? How did this experience shape your understanding of what you want to achieve in your professional life?

Table 4. Demographic of Participants in the Qualitative Study

Participant	Gender	Age	Position and industry	Highest level of education	Time worked under an abusive supervisor	Location	Years of experience	Marital/family status
P1	Man	50s	Director of Administration, Department of Health Research	PhD	1 year	Canada	27 years	Married, step kids
P2	Man	30s	Manager, Insurance Company	Masters degree	3.5 years	Canada	13 years	Married with a child
P3	Woman	60s	Lawyer, Finance Technology	JD Law	7 years	Canada	25 years	Single, one adult child
P4	Man	20s	Welder, Manufacturing	High school	3 years	Canada	9 years	Single
P5	Woman	40s	Senior Development Program, Tourism and Hospitality	Masters degree	1 year	USA	20 years	Divorced, engaged, one child
P6	Man	20s	Senior Customer Experience Associate, Banking	Completing undergraduate degree	1 year	Canada	6 years	Single
P7	Man	30s	Social Worker, Mental Health Institution	Masters degree	2 years	Canada	10 years	Single
P8	Woman	30s	Accounting Clerk, Car Dealership	Undergraduate degree	2 months	USA	8 years	In a relationship
P9	Man (trans)	40s	Social Worker, Foster Care and LGBTQ Teens	Masters degree	3 years	USA	15 years	Married, children
P10	Woman	50s	Customer Service, Health	High school	1 year	USA	20 years	Married, adult children, grandchildren
P11	Woman	30s	Research, Not for Profit	Undergraduate degree	9 months	Singapore	2 years	Single
P12	Woman	30s	Scientific Glass Blower, Lab Equipment	Undergraduate degree	5 years	USA	15 years	Married
P13	Woman	40s	Social Worker, Not for Profit	Associates degree	5 years	USA	8 years	Separated with a child

P14	Man	30s	Speech Writer, Head of Communications, Federal Government	Masters degree	8 months	USA	2 years	Single
P15	Woman	20s	Compliance Officer, Banking	Post-graduate certificate	2 years	South Africa	3 years	Single
P16	Woman	20s	Clinical Lab Scientist, Biotechnology	Masters	2 years	USA	5 years	Single
P17	Man	40s	Email Marketing Specialist, Ecommerce	Undergraduate degree	1 year	USA	5 years	Married
P18	Man	40s	Health and Human Services Consultant, Public sector	PhD	1 year	USA	20 years	Married
P19	Woman	50s	Missionary Team Lead, Faith- Based Sector	PhD	4.5 years	USA	21 years	Married, adult children
P20	Woman	20s	Researcher and Recruitment, Human Resources	Undergraduate degree	5 months	Czechia	5 months	Single
P21	Man	30s	Director of Security Operations, Healthcare (Cyber Security)	Masters degree	2 years	USA	13 years	Married, children
P22	Man	20s	Bank Teller, Banking	Undergraduate degree	3 years	Canada	5 years	Single
P23	Man	30s	Research Writer, Law	Masters degree	6 months	USA	13 years	Married, children
P24	Man	50s	Senior Web Developer, Healthcare	Undergraduate degree	1.5 years	USA	30 years	Married, children
P25	Man	20s	Housing and Residential Life, Campus Services	Undergraduate degree	2 years	USA	5 years	Single
P26	Woman	20s	Research, Government	Masters degree	~1.5 years	Philippine s	9 years	Married
P27	Woman	50s	Social Work, Government	Completing a masters degree	3 years	USA	38 years	Divorced, adult children

P28	Man	30s	Tax Agent, Federal	Completing an undergraduate degree	3 years	Canada	14 years	Married
-----	-----	-----	-----------------------	--	---------	--------	----------	---------

Table 5: Categorizations of Groups in the Qualitative Study

PERCEPTION OF CAUSE X PREPAREDNESS	Perceived Lone Actor	Perceived Societal Embodiment
Past Events Did Not Prepare	<i>Isolated Novices</i> (7 participants)	<i>Societal Issue Novice</i> (9 participants)
Past Events Did Prepare	<i>Isolated Veteran</i> (5 participants)	<i>Societal Issue Veteran</i> (7 participants)

Figure 3. Process Model of Identity Work Following Abusive Supervision: A 2×2 Typology of Perception of Cause and Preparedness

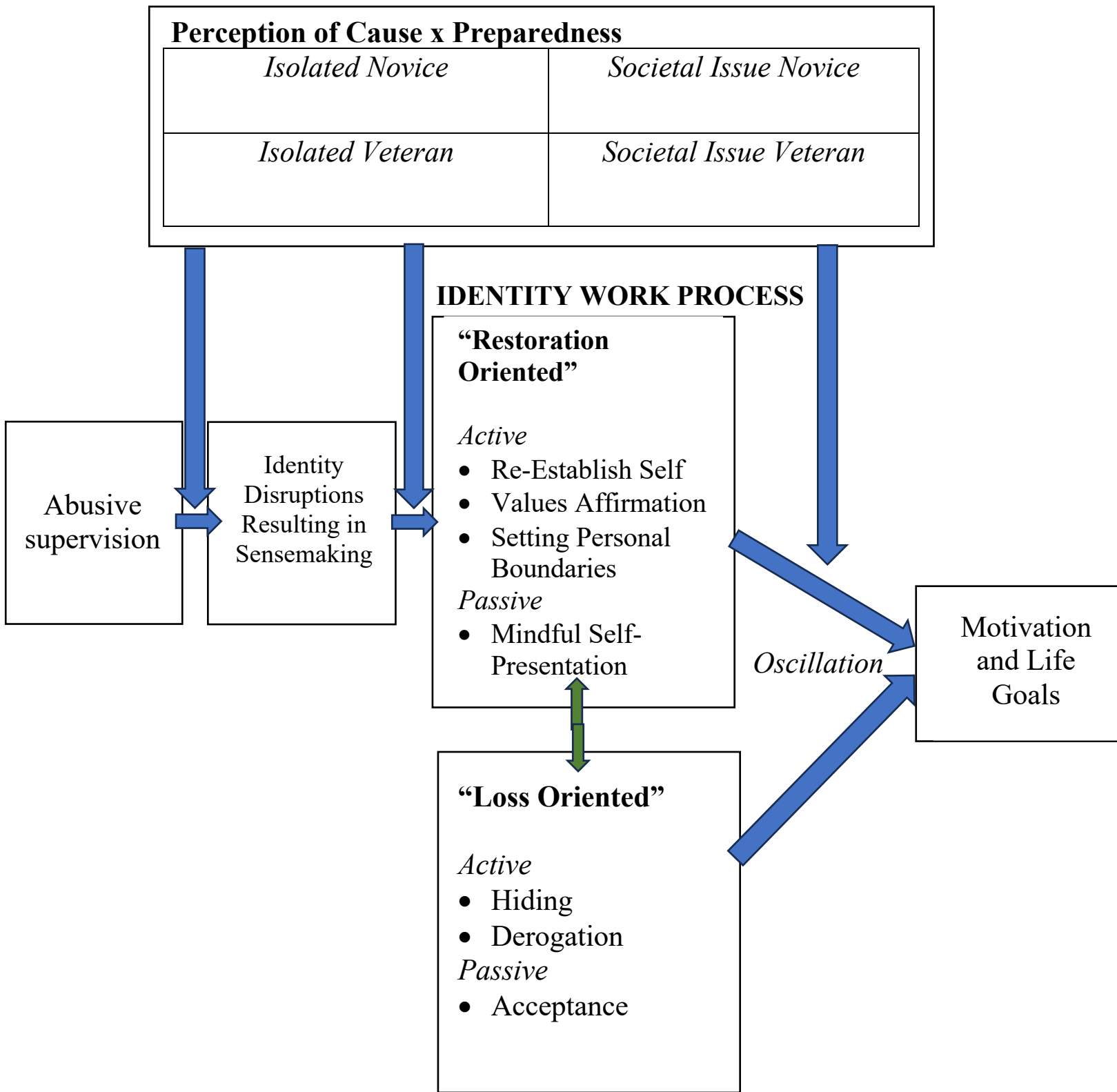
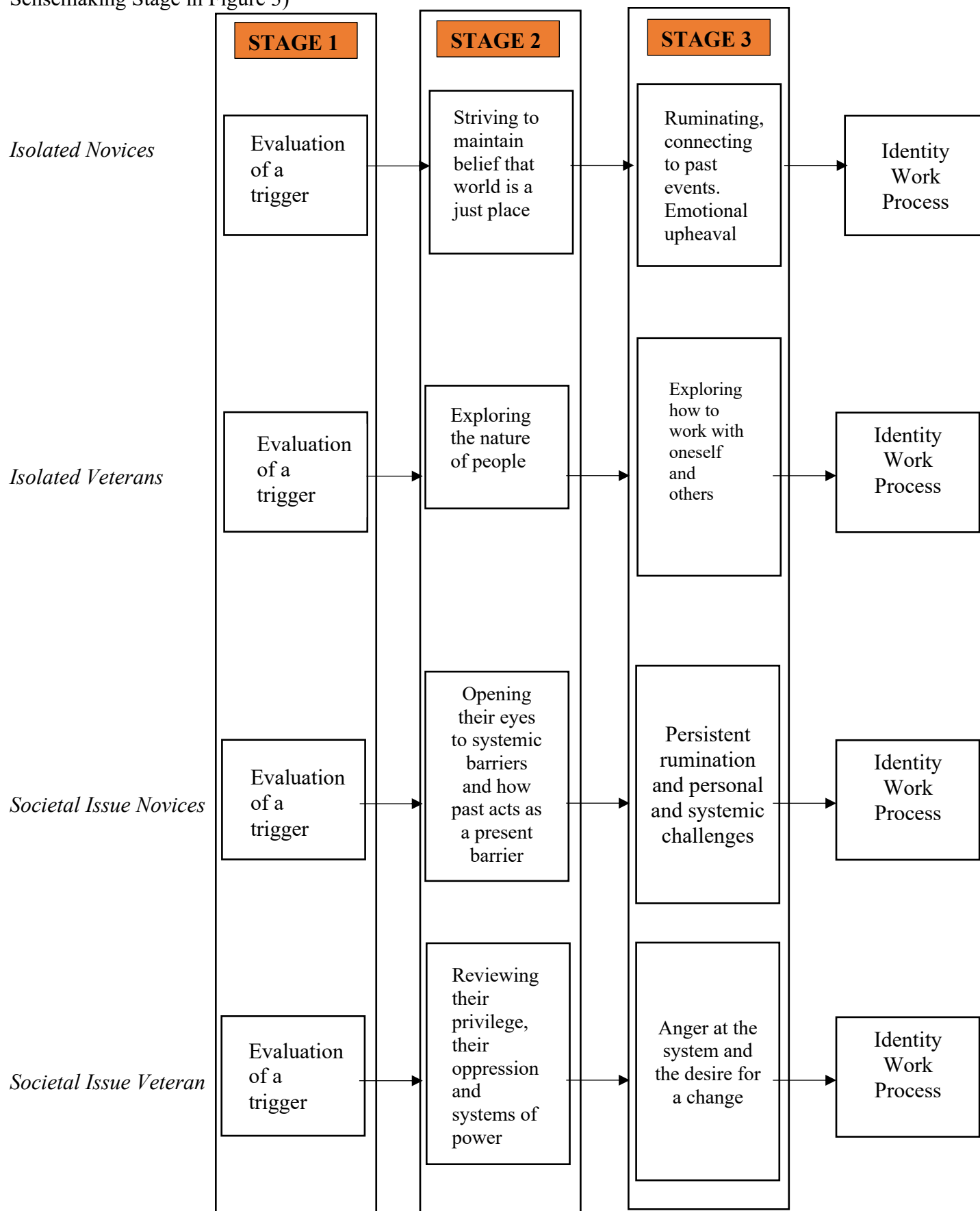


Figure 4. Sensemaking Processes of the Four Qualitative Groups (Expansion of the Sensemaking Stage in Figure 3)



Note. This figure expands the sensemaking stage from figure 3.

Figure 5. A Typology of Identity Work Processes Following Abusive Supervision Across Attribution and Preparedness Profiles

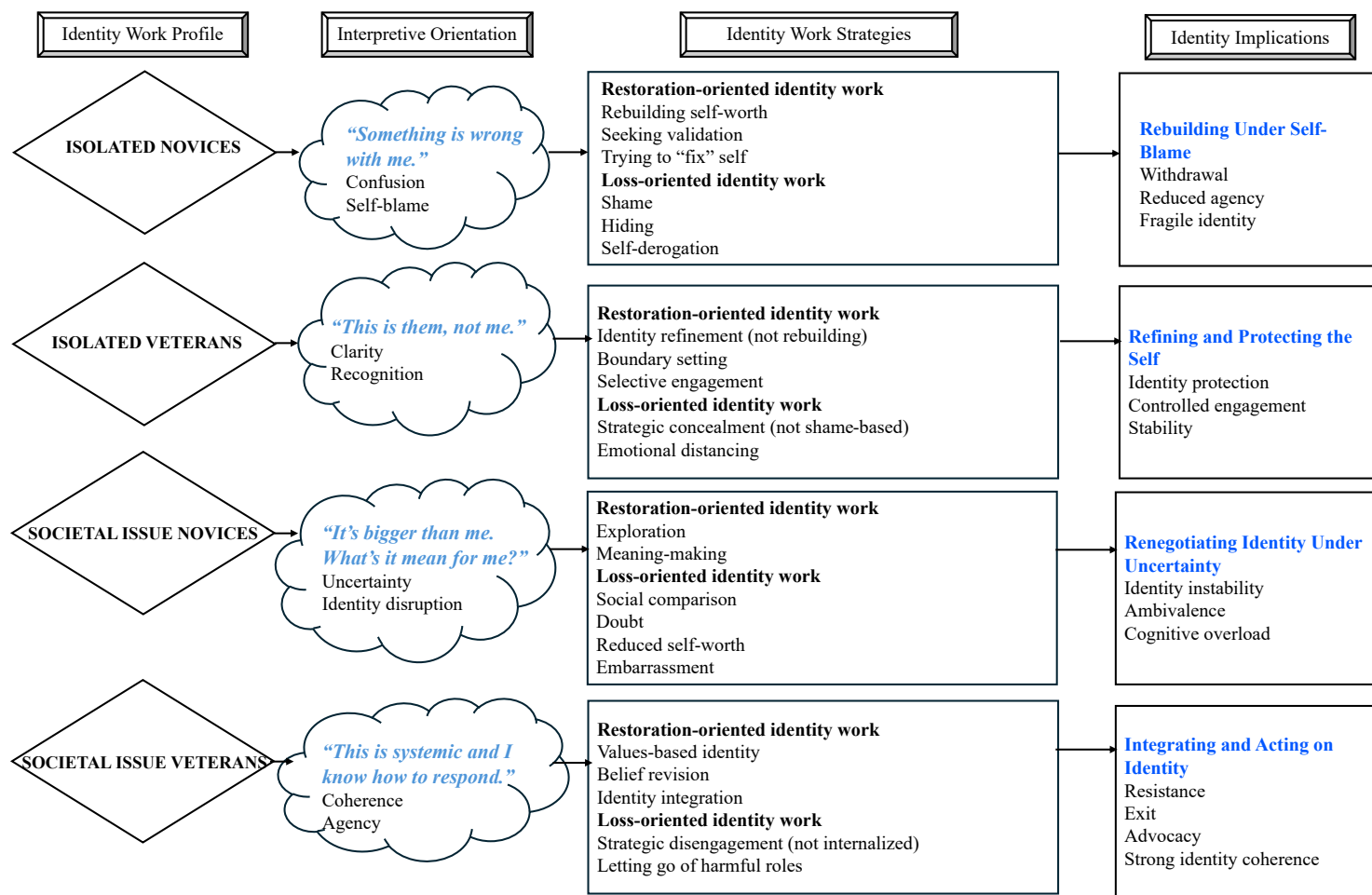
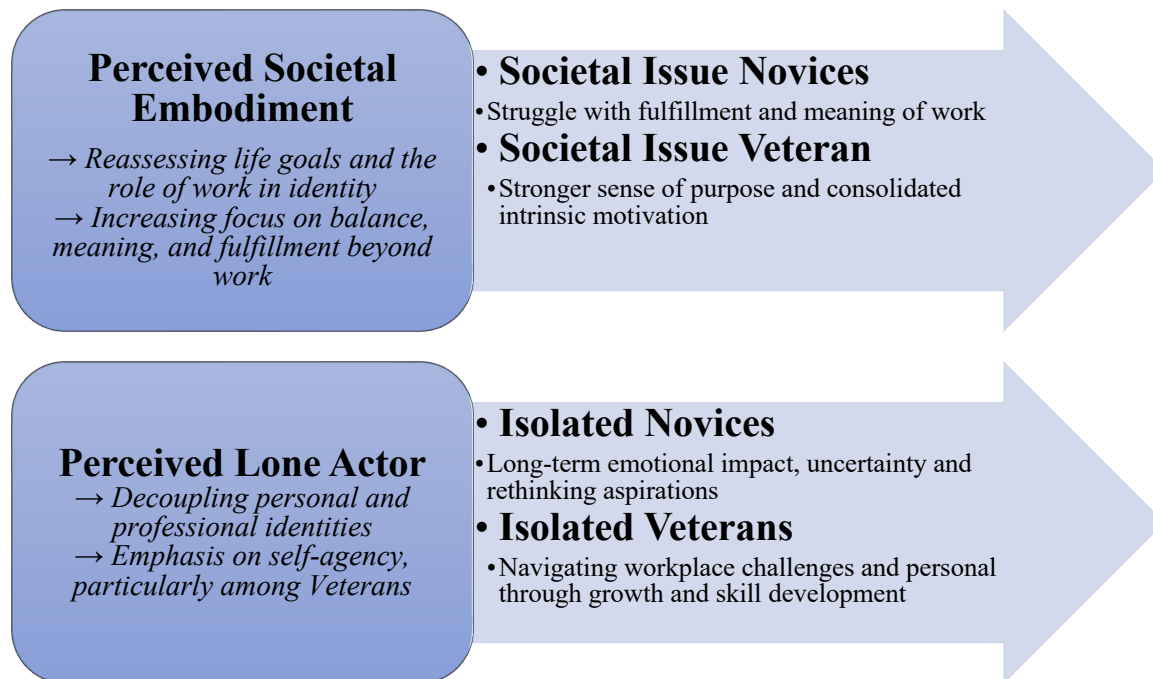


Figure 6. Differences in Goal Setting and Motivation in the Qualitative Study



Appendix C: Study 2 (Quantitative Study) Supporting Materials

Social Desirability Scale

Strahan, R., & Gerbasi, K. C. (1972). Short, homogeneous versions of the Marlow-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 28(2), 191-193.
[https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-4679\(197204\)28:2<191::AID-JCLP2270280220>3.0.CO;2-G](https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-4679(197204)28:2<191::AID-JCLP2270280220>3.0.CO;2-G)

Below are several statements about you as a person in general. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement about how characteristic each item is of you.

I am always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.
 I always try to practice what I preach.
 I never resent being asked to return a favour.
 I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.
 I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.
 I like to gossip at times. (R)
 There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone. (R)
 I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget. (R)
 At times, I have really insisted on having things my own way. (R)
 There have been occasions when I felt like smashing things. (R)

Abusive Supervision Scale

Screening item: "Have you experienced abusive supervision as defined by Tepper (2000) within the past 12 months?"

Tepper, B. J. (2000). Consequences of abusive supervision. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(2), 178-190. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1556375>

"My boss ..."

Ridicules me
 Tells me my thoughts or feelings are stupid
 Gives me the silent treatment
 Puts me down in front of others
 Invades my privacy
 Reminds me of my past mistakes and failures
 Doesn't give me credit for jobs requiring a lot of effort
 Blames me to save himself/herself embarrassment
 Breaks promises he/she makes
 Expresses anger at me when he/she is mad for another reason
 Makes negative comments about me to others
 Is rude to me
 Does not allow me to interact with my coworkers
 Tells me I'm incompetent

Lies to me

The Proactive Coping Inventory

Greenglass, E., Schwarzer, R., Jakubiec, D., Fiksenbaum, L., & Taubert, S. (1999, July). The proactive coping inventory (PCI): A multidimensional research instrument. In *20th international conference of the stress and anxiety research society (STAR)*, Cracow, Poland (Vol. 12, p. 14).

The following statements deal with reactions you may have to various situations. Indicate how true each of these statements is depending on how you feel about the situation.

Subscales were removed from the following survey.

Proactive Coping Scale

I am a “take charge” person.

I try to let things work out on their own. (R)

After attaining a goal, I look for another, more challenging one.

I like challenges and beating the odds.

I visualise my dreams and try to achieve them.

Despite numerous setbacks, I usually succeed in getting what I want.

I try to pinpoint what I need to succeed.

I always try to find a way to work around obstacles; nothing really stops me.

I often see myself failing so I don’t get my hopes up too high. (R)

When I apply for a position, I imagine myself filling it.

I turn obstacles into positive experiences.

If someone tells me I can’t do something, you can be sure I will do it.

When I experience a problem, I take the initiative in resolving it.

When I have a problem, I usually see myself in a no-win situation. (R)

Reflective Coping Scale

I imagine myself solving difficult problems.

Rather than acting impulsively, I usually think of various ways to solve a problem.

In my mind I go through many different scenarios in order to prepare myself for different outcomes.

I tackle a problem by thinking about realistic alternatives.

When I have a problem with my co-workers, friends, or family, I imagine beforehand how I will deal with them successfully.

Before tackling a difficult task I imagine success scenarios.

I take action only after thinking carefully about a problem.

I imagine myself solving a difficult problem before I actually have to face it.

I address a problem from various angles until I find the appropriate action.

When there are serious misunderstandings with co-workers, family members or friends, I practice before how I will deal with them.

I think about every possible outcome to a problem before tackling it.

Strategic Planning Scale

I often find ways to break down difficult problems into manageable components.
 I make a plan and follow it.
 I break down a problem into smaller parts and do one part at a time.
 I make lists and try to focus on the most important things first.

Preparedness Question

When you reflect on your past experiences that were challenging, difficult, or even abusive situations (work or personal life), did those experiences prepare you to handle the current abusive situation more effectively?

Yes, those past experiences have prepared me to handle this situation better.
 No, past experiences did not prepare me to handle this situation.

Perceived Cause of Abuse Question

When you were being abused by a supervisor, did you focus more on understanding the supervisor's individual traits (e.g., personality, emotions), or did you spend more time reflecting on the broader power structures, organizational dynamics, or societal issues that might have influenced their behaviour?

I focused on understanding the supervisor's personality and individual traits.
 I focused primarily on the broader power structures and organizational factors.

Sensemaking

Cantarero, K., van Tilburg, W. A., Gasiorowska, A., & Igou, E. R. (2022). The efficient measurement of individual differences in meaning motivation: The need for sense-making short form. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 945692. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.945692>

Please indicate how much each of the following statements reflects how you typically are, using the scale provided.

I search for activities that serve a purpose
 When I make sense of a situation it is pleasant to me
 I prefer to do things that are meaningful
 I like it when things serve a purpose
 I don't usually try to find purpose of things (R)
 When I am in a new situation I try to find meaning in it
 I tend to search for meaning of discrepant situations until I find it

Goal Motivation

Greenaway, K. H., Storrs, K. R., Philipp, M. C., Louis, W. R., Hornsey, M. J., & Vohs, K. D. (2015). Loss of control stimulates approach motivation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 56, 235-241. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2014.10.009>

The wording of the questions was modified from the original source to align with the present research.

Answer the following questions.

Outside of Work

I put a lot of effort toward achieving my goals outside of work.

I am committed to achieving my goals outside of work.

I am willing to work toward achieving my goals outside of work.

At Work

I put a lot of effort toward achieving my goals at work.

I am committed to achieving my goals at work.

I am willing to work toward achieving my goals at work.

Work Motivation

Tremblay, M. A., Blanchard, C. M., Taylor, S., Pelletier, L. G., & Villeneuve, M. (2009). Work extrinsic and intrinsic motivation scale: its value for organizational psychology research. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue Canadienne des Sciences du Comportement*, 41(4), 213-226. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015167>

Using the scale below, please indicate to what extent each of the following items corresponds to the reasons why you are presently involved in your work

Because this is the type of work I chose to do to attain a certain lifestyle.

For the income it provides me.

I ask myself this question, I don't seem to be able to manage the important tasks related to this work.

Because I derive much pleasure from learning new things.

Because it has become a fundamental part of who I am.

Because I want to succeed at this job, if not I would be very ashamed of myself.

Because I chose this type of work to attain my career goals.

For the satisfaction I experience from taking on interesting challenges

Because it allows me to earn money.

Because it is part of the way in which I have chosen to live my life.

Because I want to be very good at this work, otherwise I would be very disappointed.

I don't know why, we are provided with unrealistic working conditions.

Because I want to be a "winner" in life.

Because it is the type of work I have chosen to attain certain important objectives.

For the satisfaction I experience when I am successful at doing difficult tasks.
 Because this type of work provides me with security.
 I don't know, too much is expected of us.
 Because this job is a part of my life.

Note. Intrinsic motivation 4,8,15; integrated regulation 5,10,18; identified regulation 1,7,14; introjected regulation 6,11,13; external 2,9,16; amotivation 3,12,17

Performance

Kuvaas, B., & Dysvik, A. (2010). Exploring alternative relationships between perceived investment in employee development, perceived supervisor support and employee outcomes. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 20(2), 138-156.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-8583.2009.00120.x>

Please respond to all responses on a scale.

Work Effort

I try to work as hard as possible.
 I intentionally expend a great deal of effort in carrying out my job.
 I almost always expend more than an acceptable level of effort.
 I usually don't hesitate to put in extra effort when it is needed.
 I volunteer to do things for my work group.

Work Quality

The quality of my work is usually high.
 The quality of my work is top-notch.
 Others in my organization look at my work as typical high quality work.
 I deliver higher quality than what can be expected from someone with the type of job I have.
 I rarely complete a task before I know that the quality meets high standards.

Identity Work

After experiencing abusive supervision, how often do you...

Re-establish Self

take steps to reaffirm your professional identity (e.g., seeking new opportunities, reassessing your career path).
 work on re-establishing trust in your judgment and decision-making abilities.

Values Affirmation

reflect on your core values to remind yourself of what is important to you.
 draw strength from your values (e.g., honesty, integrity).

Setting Personal Boundaries

set clear boundaries with supervisors or coworkers to protect your well-being.
assertively communicate your personal limits to supervisors or colleagues.

Mindful Self-Presentation

consciously remind yourself of your strengths and abilities.
present yourself as someone who is strong and capable.

Hiding

intentionally hide your emotions in front of colleagues or supervisors.
hide your workplace struggles from close friends or family to avoid feeling judged or vulnerable.

Derogation

engage in negative self-talk or self-blame regarding your work performance.
doubt your value or worth in your workplace.

Acceptance

accept your professional limitations or weaknesses and not allow it to define your identity or self-worth.
come to accept that certain situations are beyond your control and focus on what you can change.

Demographic Questions

1. Assigned sex at birth:

☐ Male

☐ Female

2. Age:

☐ 18–24

☐ 25–34

☐ 35–44

☐ 45–54

☐ 55–64

☐ 65 or older

3. Position Level

☐ Entry-level employee

☐ Mid-level employee

☐ Supervising manager

☐ Senior manager (such as executive)

4. Industry Sector

Primary Sector

- ☐ Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting
- ☐ Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction

Goods Producing

- ☐ Utilities
- ☐ Construction
- ☐ Manufacturing

Services

- ☐ Wholesale trade
- ☐ Retail trade
- ☐ Transportation and warehousing
- ☐ Information and cultural industries
- ☐ Finance and insurance
- ☐ Real estate and rental and leasing
- ☐ Professional, scientific, and technical services
- ☐ Management of companies and enterprises
- ☐ Administrative and support, waste management, and remediation services
- ☐ Educational services
- ☐ Health care and social assistance
- ☐ Arts, entertainment, and recreation
- ☐ Other services
- ☐ Public administration

5. Is your organization for-profit or non-profit?

- ☐ For profit
- ☐ Non-profit / NGO

6. Highest level of education completed

- ☐ Some high school (no diploma)
- ☐ High school diploma or equivalent (e.g., GED)
- ☐ Some college or university (no degree)
- ☐ College diploma or certificate (e.g., community or technical college, non-trade)
- ☐ Apprenticeship or skilled trade certification (e.g., electrician, plumber, welder)
- ☐ Bachelor's degree (e.g., BA, BSc, BEd)
- ☐ Postgraduate diploma or certificate
- ☐ Master's degree (e.g., MA, MSc, MBA)
- ☐ Doctoral degree (e.g., PhD, EdD)
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

7. Where are you currently located while experiencing abusive supervision?

- ☐ North America (e.g., U.S., Canada, Mexico)
- ☐ Europe
- ☐ Asia
- ☐ South America
- ☐ Africa
- ☐ Australia / Oceania
- ☐ Middle East
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

8. Where is your supervisor's office currently located while you are experiencing abusive supervision?

- ☐ North America (e.g., U.S., Canada, Mexico)
- ☐ Europe
- ☐ Asia
- ☐ South America
- ☐ Africa
- ☐ Australia / Oceania
- ☐ Middle East
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

8. Where were you born?

- ☐ North America (e.g., U.S., Canada, Mexico)
- ☐ Europe
- ☐ Asia
- ☐ South America
- ☐ Africa
- ☐ Australia / Oceania
- ☐ Middle East
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

9. Do you work in a unionized environment or under a collective agreement?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. What is your current work arrangement?

- ☐ Fully in-person
- ☐ Fully remote / work from home
- ☐ Hybrid (mix of in-person and remote)
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

11. How many years of total work experience do you have (across all jobs)?

- ☐ Less than 1 year

- ☐ 1–3 years
- ☐ 4–6 years
- ☐ 7–10 years
- ☐ 11–15 years
- ☐ 16–20 years
- ☐ More than 20 years

12. How long have you worked under your abusive supervisor?

- ☐ Less than 1 month
- ☐ 1–3 months
- ☐ 4–6 months
- ☐ 7–12 months
- ☐ 1–2 years
- ☐ 3–5 years
- ☐ More than 5 years
- ☐ Prefer not to say

13. When did you most recently experience an abusive supervisor relationship?

- ☐ I am currently experiencing this
- ☐ Within the past 1–3 months
- ☐ Within the past 4–6 months
- ☐ Within the past 7–12 months

13. Have you experienced more than one instance of abusive supervision in your working career?

- ☐ Yes, I have experienced abuse from multiple supervisors
- ☐ No, I have only experienced this once
- ☐ I'm not sure

14. What is your current marital status?

- ☐ Single, never married
- ☐ In a committed relationship (not married and not living together)
- ☐ Married or common-law
- ☐ Separated or divorced
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

15. Do you have children?

- ☐ I have only young children (under 18)
- ☐ I have only adult children (18 or older)
- ☐ I have both young and adult children

☐ I do not have children

16. Are you a caregiver for another dependent family member (other than your children)?

A caregiver is someone who provides regular assistance with daily activities or medical needs to a family member who cannot fully care for themselves due to age, illness, or disability.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Table 6. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Characteristics	Type	n (%)
Sex	Female	206 (50.36)
	Male	209 (49.64)
Age	18-34 (Early)	237 (56.70)
	35-54 (Mid)	146 (34.93)
	55+ (Late)	35 (8.37)
Position	Entry-level	68 (16.35)
	Mid-level	197 (47.36)
	Manager/supervisor	151 (36.30)
Education	Non-university education	90 (21.63)
	Bachelor's-level or postgraduate	205 (49.28)
	Graduate degree	121 (29.09)
Work Experience	Early (≤ 6 years)	187 (44.95)
	Mid (7-15 years)	133 (31.97)
	Late (16+ years)	96 (23.08)
Industry	Goods producing	56 (13.40)
	Service producing	362 (86.60)
For-Profit	For-profit	349 (84.71)
	Non-profit (NGO)	63 (15.29)
Unionized/Collective Agreement	Yes	255 (61.89)
	No	157 (38.11)
Participant Location	North America	80 (19.14)
	Latin America/Caribbean	24 (5.74)
	East Asia	1 (0.24)
	South Asia	2 (0.48)
	Southeast Asia	4 (0.96)
	Oceania	5 (1.20)
	Middle East and North Africa	13 (3.11)
	Western Europe	46 (11.00)
	Eastern Europe	12 (2.87)
	Central Europe	14 (3.35)
	Southern Europe	3 (0.72)
	Sub-Saharan Africa	214 (51.20)
Leader Location	North America	82 (19.71)
	Latin America/Caribbean	21 (5.05)
	South Asia	4 (0.96)
	Southeast Asia	3 (0.72)
	Oceania	4 (0.96)
	Middle East and North Africa	14 (3.37)
	Western Europe	48 (11.54)
	Eastern Europe	11 (2.64)
	Central Europe	16 (3.85)
	Southern Europe	3 (0.72)

Participant's Place of Birth	Sub-Saharan Africa	210 (50.48)
	North America	71 (16.96)
	Latin America/Caribbean	24 (5.74)
	East Asia	7 (1.67)
	South Asia	6 (1.44)
	Southeast Asia	2 (0.48)
	Oceania	5 (1.20)
	Middle East and North Africa	16 (3.83)
	Western Europe	41 (9.81)
	Eastern Europe	11 (2.63)
	Central Europe	15 (3.59)
	Southern Europe	3 (0.72)
	Sub-Saharan Africa	217 (51.96)
	On-site/hybrid	371 (89.61)
Work Arrangement	Remote	43 (10.39)
Abuse Duration	Less than 1 month	8 (1.91)
	1-6 months	85 (20.34)
	7-12 months	78 (18.66)
	1-2 years	140 (33.49)
	3-5 years	77 (18.42)
	6-10 years	20 (4.78)
	More than 11 years	9 (2.15)
	Prefer not to say	1 (0.24)
Abuse Recency	Currently experiencing	114 (27.34)
	Within past 1-3 months	112 (26.86)
	Within past 4-6 months	78 (18.71)
	Within past 7-12 months	113 (27.10)
Multiple Incidents of Abuse	Yes	183 (43.88)
	No	225 (53.96)
	Not sure	9 (2.16)
Relationship Status	Single	134 (32.13)
	Committed relationship (not married)	109 (26.14)
	Married or common law	158 (37.89)
	Separated or divorced	9 (2.16)
	Widowed	7 (1.68)
Children	Yes (under 18)	200 (47.85)
	Yes (over 18)	29 (6.94)
	Yes (under and over 18)	39 (9.33)
	No	150 (35.89)
Caregiver (other than children)	Yes	151 (36.12)
	No	267 (63.88)

Note. Percentages are based on valid responses. A total of 420 participants completed the survey; valid N varies by characteristic due to missing data

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Min	Max
Abusive Supervision	1	5
Sensemaking	1.7	5
Goal Motivation at Work	2	5
Goal Motivation Outside of Work	1	5
Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	1	5
Work Motivation (Integrated)	1	5
Work Motivation (Identified)	1	5
Work Motivation (Introjected)	1	5
Work Motivation (External)	1.5	5
Work Motivation (Amotivation)	1	5
Work Performance (Effort)	1	5
Work Performance (Quality)	1.4	5
Perception of Cause (one item)	0	1
Preparedness (Proactive)	1.64	5
Preparedness (Reflective)	1.09	5
Preparedness (Strategic Planning)	1.25	5
Social Desirability	1	5

* **Note.** N = 420. Values reflect scale means computed by averaging item responses. The minimum values at times exceed the minimum of the response scale (1) when no participant selected the lowest response option across all items.

Table 8. Correlations

	M	SD	α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Abusive Supervision	2.97	0.88	.92	-															
2. Sensemaking	3.98	0.49	.81	.23***	-														
3. Goal Motivation at Work	4.54	0.65	.89	.09	.42***	-													
4. Goal Motivation Outside of Work	4.47	0.71	.90	.08	.38***	.45***	-												
5. Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	3.80	0.95	.87	.18***	.44***	.52***	.39***	-											
6. Work Motivation (Integrated)	3.77	1.01	.87	.20***	.42***	.49***	.33***	.70***	-										
7. Work Motivation (Identified)	3.83	0.96	.85	.19***	.41***	.50***	.37***	.66***	.76***	-									
8. Work Motivation (Introjected)	3.64	1.06	.78	.28***	.48***	.45***	.32***	.64***	.71***	.69***	-								
9. Work Motivation (External)	4.17	0.80	.67*	.14**	.20***	.11*	.06	.06	.08	.23***	.19***	-							
10. Work Motivation (Amotivation)	2.47	1.12	.83	.19***	.06	-.23***	-.12*	-.04	-.06	-.02	.13**	.13**	-						
11. Work Performance (Effort)	4.17	.76	.85	.23***	.52***	.66***	.41***	.57***	.60***	.53***	.59***	.14**	-.09	-					
12. Work Performance (Quality)	4.12	0.71	.80	.17***	.41***	.55***	.49***	.52***	.47***	.44***	.42***	.10*	-.11*	.67***	-				
13. Preparedness (Proactive)	3.85	0.62	.91	.13**	.42***	.61***	.53***	.52***	.45***	.48***	.39***	.09	-.33***	.56***	.62***	-			
14. Preparedness (Reflective)	4.11	0.63	.89	.27***	.53***	.52***	.42***	.45***	.42***	.44***	.45***	.17***	-.12*	.51***	.52***	.67***	-		
15. Preparedness (Strategic Planning)	4.11	0.75	.80	.27***	.50***	.51***	.42***	.52***	.51***	.50***	.49***	.16**	-.06	.52***	.52***	.65***	.75***		
16. Social Desirability	3.55	0.67	.76	.05	.21***	.30***	.26***	.24***	.18***	.17***	.13**	-.02	-.24***	.29***	.27***	.36***	.34***	.30***	

Note. N = 420. All correlations are Pearson correlations. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. For two-item scales, the Spearman–Brown coefficient is reported in place of α , shown in the α column for consistency; composite reliability and omega cannot be reliably estimated for two-item measure

Table 9. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model Fit

Model	$\chi^2(\text{df})$	RMSEA (90% CI)	CFI	TLI	AIC	BIC
Single-factor	$\chi^2(3402) = 12893.70, p < .001$	.08	.52	.51	91,375.17	92,393.31
Three-factor	$\chi^2(3399) = 10535.58, p < .001$	.07	.64	.63	89,023.05	90,053.31
Five-factor	$\chi^2(3392) = 8729.07, p < .001$	.06	.73	.72	87,230.54	88,289.08
Fifteen-factor	$\chi^2(3054) = 5299.07, p < .001$	.04	.88	.88	80,497.52	81,903.53

Table 10. CFA Loadings and Reliability/Validity Indicators for Study Measures

Construct	Item	Loading (λ)	ω	CR	AVE	$\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$
Abusive Supervision	AS1	.65	.92	.92	.45	.67
	AS2	.67				
	AS3	.54				
	AS4	.74				
	AS5	.54				
	AS6	.68				
	AS7	.50				
	AS8	.73				
	AS9	.56				
	AS10	.70				
	AS11	.75				
	AS12	.76				
	AS13	.63				
	AS14	.74				
	AS15	.61				
Sensemaking	Sensemak1	.76	.82	.82	.45	.67
	Sensemak2	.59				
	Sensemak3	.77				
	Sensemak4	.74				
	rSensemak5	.37				
	Sensemak6	.75				
	Sensemak7	.60				
Goal Motivation at Work	GMatwork1	.87	.89	.89	.73	.86
	GMatwork2	.86				
	GMatwork3	.84				
Goal Motivation Outside of Work	GMoutwork1	.87	.91	.91	.77	.88
	GMoutwork2	.89				
	GMoutwork3	.87				
Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	WM_Intr1	.60	.81	.81	.59	.77

	WM_Intr2	.84				
	WM_Intr3	.83				
Work Motivation (Integrated)	WM_Intreg1	.83	.85	.85	.65	.80
	WM_Intreg2	.75				
	WM_Intreg3	.83				
Work Motivation (Identified)	WM_Idreg1	.58	.80	.80	.58	.76
	WM_Idreg2	.85				
	WM_Idreg3	.82				
Work Motivation (Introjected)	WM_Intrjreg1	.73	.79	.79	.55	.74
	WM_Intrjreg2	.78				
	WM_Intrjreg3	.72				
Work Motivation (External)	WM_ExtReg1	.83	-	-	.53	.73
	WM_ExtReg2	.61				
Work Motivation (Amotivation)	WM_Amotiv1	.62	.77	.77	.53	.73
	WM_Amotiv2	.78				
	WM_Amotiv3	.78				
Work Performance (Effort)	WP_WE1	.81	.84	.84	.55	.74
	WP_WE2	.83				
	WP_WE3	.76				
	WP_WE4	.63				
	WP_WE5	.66				
Work Performance (Quality)	WP_WQ1	.78	.80	.80	.54	.74
	WP_WQ2	.87				
	WP_WQ3	.79				
	WP_WQ4	.77				
	WP_WQ5	.34				
Preparedness (Proactive)	PCI_PCS1	.59	.91	.91	.49	.70
	PCI_PCS3	.70				
	PCI_PCS4	.71				
	PCI_PCS5	.72				
	PCI_PCS6	.77				
	PCI_PCS7	.58				
	PCI_PCS8	.79				

	PCI_PCS10	.62				
	PCI_PCS11	.78				
	PCI_PCS12	.69				
	PCI_PCS13	.73				
Preparedness (Reflective)	PCI_RC1	.64	.89	.89	.43	.66
	PCI_RC2	.70				
	PCI_RC3	.67				
	PCI_RC4	.64				
	PCI_RC5	.65				
	PCI_RC6	.72				
	PCI_RC7	.64				
	PCI_RC8	.60				
	PCI_RC9	.75				
	PCI_RC10	.44				
	PCI_RC11	.71				
Preparedness (Strategic Planning)	CI_SPS1	.78	.80	.80	.51	.72
	PCI_SPS2	.72				
	PCI_SPS3	.72				
	PCI_SPS4	.63				

Note. All loadings are standardized.

Table 11. Descriptive Statistics, Interfactor Correlations, and Convergent Validity Indicators

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	AVE	√AVE
1. Abusive Supervision	-															.45	.67
2. Sensemaking	.23	-														.45	.67
3. Goal Motivation at Work	.09	.42	-													.73	.86
4. Goal Motivation Outside of Work	.08	.38	.45	-												.77	.88
5. Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	.18	.44	.52	.39	-											.59	.77
6. Work Motivation (Integrated)	.20	.42	.49	.33	.70	-										.65	.80
7. Work Motivation (Identified)	.19	.41	.50	.37	.66	.76	-									.58	.76
8. Work Motivation (Introjected)	.28	.48	.45	.32	.64	.71	.69	-								.55	.74
9. Work Motivation (External)	.14	.20	.11	.06	.06	.08	.23	.19	-							.53	.73
10. Work Motivation (Amotivation)	.19	.06	-.23	-.12	-.04	-.06	-.02	.13	.13	-						.53	.73
11. Work Performance (Effort)	.23	.52	.66	.41	.57	.60	.53	.59	.14	-.09	-					.55	.74
12. Work Performance (Quality)	.17	.41	.55	.49	.52	.47	.44	.42	.10	-.11	.67	-				.54	.74
13. Preparedness (Proactive)	.13	.42	.61	.53	.52	.45	.48	.39	.09	-.33	.56	.62	-			.49	.70

14. Preparedness (Reflective)	.27	.53	.52	.42	.45	.42	.44	.45	.17	-.12	.51	.52	.67	-	.43	.66
15. Preparedness (Strategic Planning)	.27	.50	.51	.42	.52	.51	.50	.49	.16	-.06	.52	.52	.65	.75	.51	.72

Note. N = 420. Correlations are based on the full analytic sample used in the MLMV SEM. All correlations are Pearson correlations. The square root of AVE values are reported in the final column. Discriminant validity is supported when the square root of AVE exceeds interfactor correlations.

Table 12. Structural Equation Model Fit Indices

Model	Outcome	CFI	TLI	AIC	BIC
Full Mediation	Performance	.89	.89	26407.61	26702.54
	Motivation	.83	.82	26338.012	26705.68
Partial Mediation	Performance	.90	.90	26395.25	26712.38
	Motivation	.83	.82	26327.40	26727.39

Table 13. Direct Effects for the Partial Mediation Structural Equation Model

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	b	SE	z	p	β (StdYX)
Abusive Supervision Sensemaking	Sensemaking	.20	.04	5.01	p<.001	.22
	Goal Motivation at Work	1.04	.14	7.34	p<.001	.54
	Goal Motivation Outside of Work	.83	.14	6.10	p<.001	.40
	Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	2.36	.25	9.49	p<.001	.52
	Work Motivation (Integrated)	2.21	.23	9.49	p<.001	.52
	Work Motivation (Identified)	2.09	.22	9.48	p<.001	.52
	Work Motivation (Introjected)	2.28	.24	9.47	p<.001	.52
	Work Motivation (External)	1.90	.20	9.36	p<.001	.49
	Work Motivation (Amotivation)	2.07	.22	9.49	p<.001	.52
	Work Performance (Effort)	.78	.06	12.31	p<.001	.78

Abusive Supervision	Work Performance (Quality)	.61	.06	9.97	p<.001	.52
	Goal Motivation at Work	-.13	.05	-2.54	p=.01	-.08
	Goal Motivation Outside of Work	-.09	.06	-1.56	p=.20	-.05
	Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	-.19	.07	-2.72	p = .01	-.06
	Work Motivation (Integrated)	-.15	.06	-2.38	p=.02	-.05
	Work Motivation (Identified)	-.13	.07	-2.08	p=.04	-.05
	Work Motivation (Introjected)	-.16	.06	-2.38	p=.02	-.05
	Work Motivation (External)	-.10	.06	-1.70	p = .09	-.04
	Work Motivation (Amotivation)	-.13	.06	-2.10	p=.04	-.05
	Work Performance (Effort)	.11	.05	2.39	p=.02	.10
	Work Performance (Quality)	.06	.05	1.25	p=.21	.06

Note. b = unstandardized structural coefficient; β (StdYX) = fully standardized coefficient (Stata StdYX). Direct effects are reported from two separate SEMs: one estimating motivational outcomes and a second estimating performance outcomes.

Table 14. Indirect Effects of Abusive Supervision on Outcomes Through Sensemaking

Dependent Variable	Indirect β	SE	z	95% CI	p
Goal Motivation at Work	.21	.04	4.87	[.12, .29]	p<.001
Goal Motivation Outside of Work	.17	.04	4.46	[.09, .24]	p<.001
Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	.48	.09	5.34	[.30, .65]	p<.001
Work Motivation (Integrated)	.45	.08	5.34	[.28, .61]	p<.001
Work Motivation (Identified)	.42	.08	5.34	[.27, .58]	p<.001
Work Motivation (Introjected)	.46	.09	5.32	[.29, .63]	p<.001
Work Motivation (External)	.38	.07	5.34	[.24, .52]	p<.001
Work Motivation (Amotivation)	.42	.08	5.34	[.26, .57]	p<.001
Work Performance (Effort)	.15	.04	3.88	[.07, .22]	p<.001
Work Performance (Quality)	.11	.03	3.78	[.05, .17]	p<.001

Note. Indirect effects are from two separate mediation models corresponding to motivational outcomes and performance outcomes, respectively.

Table 15. Total Effects of Abusive Supervision on Outcomes

Dependent Variable	Total β	SE	z	p
Goal Motivation at Work	.08	.05	1.65	p=.10
Goal Motivation Outside of Work	.08	.05	4.46	p=.11
Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	.29	.05	5.34	p<.001
Work Motivation (Integrated)	.29	.05	5.34	p<.001
Work Motivation (Identified)	.29	.05	5.34	p<.001
Work Motivation (Introjected)	.30	.05	5.32	p<.001
Work Motivation (External)	.29	.05	5.34	p<.001
Work Motivation (Amotivation)	.29	.05	5.34	p<.001
Work Performance (Effort)	.25	.05	3.88	p<.001
Work Performance (Quality)	.17	.05	3.78	p<.001

Note. Total effects represent the sum of the direct effect of abusive supervision on outcome sand the indirect effect operating through sensemaking. Estimates are standardized coefficients. Motivation and performance outcomes were estimated in separate models

Table 16. Descriptive Statistics by Causal Framing Group

	Societal Issue Mean (SD)	Isolated Actor Mean (SD)	F	p
Sensemaking (latent factor score)	.04 (.52)	-.02 (.59)	1.13	p=.29
Goal Motivation at Work	4.56 (.62)	4.53 (.67)	.26	p=.61
Goal Motivation Outside of Work	4.46 (.73)	4.48 (.69)	.06	p=.81
Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	3.69 (.75)	3.74 (.78)	.45	p=.50
Work Motivation (Integrated)	3.62 (.70)	3.67 (.74)	.42	p=.52
Work Motivation (Identified)	3.59 (.66)	3.65 (.71)	.75	p=.39
Work Motivation (Introjected)	3.64 (.72)	3.70 (.77)	.62	p=.43
Work Motivation (External)	3.65 (.65)	3.69 (.67)	.32	p=.58
Work Motivation (Amotivation)	3.52 (.65)	3.58 (.70)	.76	p=.38
Work Performance (Effort)	4.12 (.75)	4.21 (.76)	1.74	p=.19
Work Performance (Quality)	4.07 (.74)	4.15 (.69)	1.06	p=.30

Note. Societal issue (n = 168) and isolated actor (n = 252) groups were based on participants' causal framing (Cause_iso; 0 = societal issue, 1 = isolated actor). Sensemaking values are standardized latent factor scores, with positive values indicating above-average sensemaking. Other variables are composite scores. Group differences were tested using one-way ANOVA.

Table 17. Structural Equation Model Results for Hypothesis 3 (Moderation Test)

	Independent Variable	β (StdYX)	SE	z	p
Goal Motivation at Work	Sensemaking	.35	.07	4.94	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.00	.04	-.05	p=.96
	Sensemaking x Causal Framing	.17	.07	2.34	p=.02
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.00	.04	-.05	p=.96
Goal Motivation Outside of Work	Sensemaking	.43	.07	5.89	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.03	.04	.75	p=.45
	Sensemaking x Causal Framing	-.05	.08	-.66	p=.51
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.00	.05	-.10	p=.92
Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	Sensemaking	.42	.07	6.01	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.05	.04	1.21	p=.23
	Sensemaking x Causal Framing	.07	.07	.92	p=.36
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.16	.04	3.94	p<.001
Work Motivation (Integrated)	Sensemaking	.40	.07	5.67	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.05	.04	1.12	p=.26
	Sensemaking x Causal Framing	.06	.07	.83	p=.40
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.19	.04	4.51	p<.001
Work Motivation (Identified)	Sensemaking	.39	.07	5.50	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.06	.04	1.35	p=.18
	Sensemaking x Causal Framing	.06	.07	.89	p=.37
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.20	.04	4.75	p<.001
Work Motivation (Introjected)	Sensemaking	.40	.07	5.71	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.05	.04	1.28	p=.20
	Sensemaking x Causal Framing	.05	.07	.52	p=.65
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.18	.04	4.33	p<.001

Work Motivation (External)	Sensemaking	.37	.07	5.28	p< .001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.04	.04	1.00	p=.32
	Sensemaking x Causal Framing	.09	.07	1.24	p=.21
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.20	.04	4.71	p<.001
Work Motivation (Amotivation)	Sensemaking	.37	.07	5.08	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.06	.04	1.33	p=.19
	Sensemaking x Causal Framing	.08	.07	1.13	p=.22
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.20	.04	4.90	p<.001
Work Performance (Effort)	Sensemaking	.42	.07	6.38	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.09	.04	2.17	p=.03
	Sensemaking x Causal Framing	.14	.07	2.17	p=.03
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.12	.04	3.06	p<.001
Work Performance (Quality)	Sensemaking	.32	.07	4.37	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.07	.04	1.55	p=.12
	Sensemaking x Causal Framing	.12	.07	1.72	p=.09
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.08	.04	1.86	p=.06

Note. Values are standardized coefficients (StdYX) estimated using MLMV. Cause is a binary variable (0 = societal issue, 1 = isolated actor). SMxCause represents the interaction between sensemaking (latent factor score) and causal framing. All models control for covariates (not shown).

Table 18. Structural Equation Model Results for Hypothesis 4 (Moderation Test)

	Independent Variable	β	SE	z	p
Goal Motivation at Work	Sensemaking	0.174	.051	3.45	p<.001
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	0.51	.04	11.68	p<.001
	Sensemaking x Preparedness	-.04	.04	-.99	p=.32
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	-.07	.04	-1.80	p=.07
Goal Motivation Outside of Work	Sensemaking	.13	.06	2.25	p=.02
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.44	.05	8.89	p<.001
	Sensemaking x Preparedness	-.03	.05	-.55	p=.58
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	-.06	.04	-1.30	p=.19
Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	Sensemaking	.25	.05	4.90	p<.001
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.42	.05	9.20	p<.001
	Sensemaking x Preparedness	.06	.04	1.49	p=.14
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.10	.04	2.56	p=.01
Work Motivation (Integrated)	Sensemaking	.24	.05	4.63	p<.001
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.38	.05	8.07	p<.001
	Sensemaking x Preparedness	.05	.04	1.12	p=.26
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.13	.04	3.27	p<.001
Work Motivation (Identified)	Sensemaking	.25	.05	4.78	p<.001
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.35	.05	7.14	p<.001
	Sensemaking x Preparedness	.04	.04	.97	p=.33
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.15	.04	3.60	p<.001
Work Motivation (Introjected)	Sensemaking	.25	.05	4.66	p<.001
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.36	.05	7.38	p<.001

	Sensemaking x Preparedness	.04	.04	0.95	p=.34
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.13	.04	3.19	p<.001
Work Motivation (External)	Sensemaking	.27	.05	5.19	p<.001
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.33	.05	6.73	p<.001
	Sensemaking x Preparedness	.06	.04	1.24	p=.22
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.15	.04	3.54	p<.001
Work Motivation (Amotivation)	Sensemaking	.23	.05	4.42	p<.001
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.35	.05	7.06	p<.001
	Sensemaking x Preparedness	.03	.05	.69	p=.49
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.16	.04	3.77	p<.001
Work Performance (Effort)	Sensemaking	.31	.05	6.40	p<.001
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.39	.05	8.58	p<.001
	Sensemaking x Preparedness	.01	.04	.03	p=.98
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.01	.04	1.83	p=.07
Work Performance (Quality)	Sensemaking	.10	.05	1.98	p=.05
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.55	.04	12.82	p<.001
	Sensemaking x Preparedness	.00	.04	.18	p=.85
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.07	.04	.18	p=.86

Note. Values are standardized coefficients estimated using MLMV. Preparedness is the standardized composite (prep_z). SMxPrep represents the interaction between sensemaking (latent factor score) and preparedness. All models include covariates (not shown). Indirect effects are fully standardized (StdYX) estimates.

Table 19. Descriptive Statistics by Preparedness Group (Novices vs. Veterans)

	Novice Mean (SD)	Veteran Mean (SD)	F	p
Sensemaking (latent factor score)	-.31	.27	-	-
Goal Motivation at Work	4.21 (.75)	4.83 (.36)	122.90	p<.001
Goal Motivation Outside of Work	4.15 (.77)	4.75 (.49)	95.17	p<.001
Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	3.33 (.72)	4.06 (.63)	123.51	p<.001
Work Motivation (Integrated)	3.30 (.68)	3.96 (.61)	107.09	p<.001
Work Motivation (Identified)	3.30 (.66)	3.91 (.59)	98.87	p<.001
Work Motivation (Introjected)	3.32 (.71)	3.98 (.64)	100.02	p<.001
Work Motivation (External)	3.36 (.63)	3.94 (.57)	99.00	p<.001
Work Motivation (Amotivation)	3.25 (.65)	3.83 (.59)	94.26	p<.001
Work Performance (Effort)	3.75 (.78)	4.54 (.50)	155.38	p<.001
Work Performance (Quality)	3.73 (.73)	4.46 (.48)	150.98	p<.001

Note. Novice (n = 195) and Veteran (n = 225) groups were based on a dichotomized standardized preparedness composite (prep_z). Sensemaking values are standardized latent factor scores, with positive values indicating above-average sensemaking. All other variables are composite scores. Group differences were tested using one-way ANOVA.

Table 20. Structural Equation Model Results for Hypothesis 5 (Sensemaking $\times$ Causal Framing $\times$ Preparedness)

	Independent Variable	β (StdYX)	SE	z	p
Goal Motivation at Work	Sensemaking	.11	.08	1.40	p=.16
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.05	.04	1.16	p=.25
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.49	.07	7.09	p<.001
	SM $\times$ Cause $\times$ Prep	-.23	.08	-3.03	p<.001
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	-.07	.04	-1.71	p=.09
Goal Motivation Outside of Work	Sensemaking	.13	.09	1.46	p=.15
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.02	.05	.41	p=.68
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.51	.08	6.61	p<.001
	SM $\times$ Cause $\times$ Prep	.05	.09	.53	p=.60
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	-.06	.04	-1.43	p=.15
Work Motivation (Intrinsic)	Sensemaking	.23	.08	2.97	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.08	.04	1.94	p=.05
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.41	.07	5.62	p<.001
	SM $\times$ Cause $\times$ Prep	-.16	.08	-2.14	p=.03
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.10	.04	2.58	p=.01
Work Motivation (Integrated)	Sensemaking	.23	.08	2.80	p=.01
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.08	.04	1.87	p=.06
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.38	.07	5.13	p<.001
	SM $\times$ Cause $\times$ Prep	-.17	.08	-2.14	p=.03
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.13	.04	3.28	p<.001
Work Motivation (Identified)	Sensemaking	.24	.08	2.95	p=.003
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.09	.04	2.03	p=.04
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.33	.08	4.34	p<.001
	SM $\times$ Cause $\times$ Prep	-.16	.08	-1.98	p=.05
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.14	.04	3.63	p<.001

Work Motivation (Introjected)	Sensemaking	.27	.08	3.24	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.09	.04	2.10	p=.04
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.32	.08	4.24	p<.001
	SM × Cause × Prep	-.19	.08	-2.30	p=.02
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.13	.04	3.22	p<.001
Work Motivation (External)	Sensemaking	.26	.08	3.08	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.08	.04	1.87	p=.06
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.30	.08	4.00	p<.001
	SM × Cause × Prep	-.20	.08	-2.42	p=.02
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.15	.04	3.61	p<.001
Work Motivation (Amotivation)	Sensemaking	.21	.08	2.44	p=.02
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.09	.04	2.07	p=.04
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.35	.08	4.63	p<.001
	SM × Cause × Prep	-.17	.08	-2.12	p=.03
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.15	.04	3.79	p<.001
Work Performance (Effort)	Sensemaking	.27	.08	3.47	p<.001
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.14	.04	3.39	p<.001
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.36	.07	5.21	p<.001
	SM × Cause × Prep	-.24	.08	-3.14	p<.001
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.07	.04	1.89	p=.06
Work Performance (Quality)	Sensemaking	-.01	.08	-.08	p=.93
	Cause_iso (Causal Framing)	.07	.04	1.59	p=.11
	Prep_z (Preparedness)	.60	.07	8.54	p<.001
	SM × Cause × Prep	-.03	.08	-.40	p=.69
	Abuse_mean (Abusive Supervision)	.01	.04	.15	p=.88

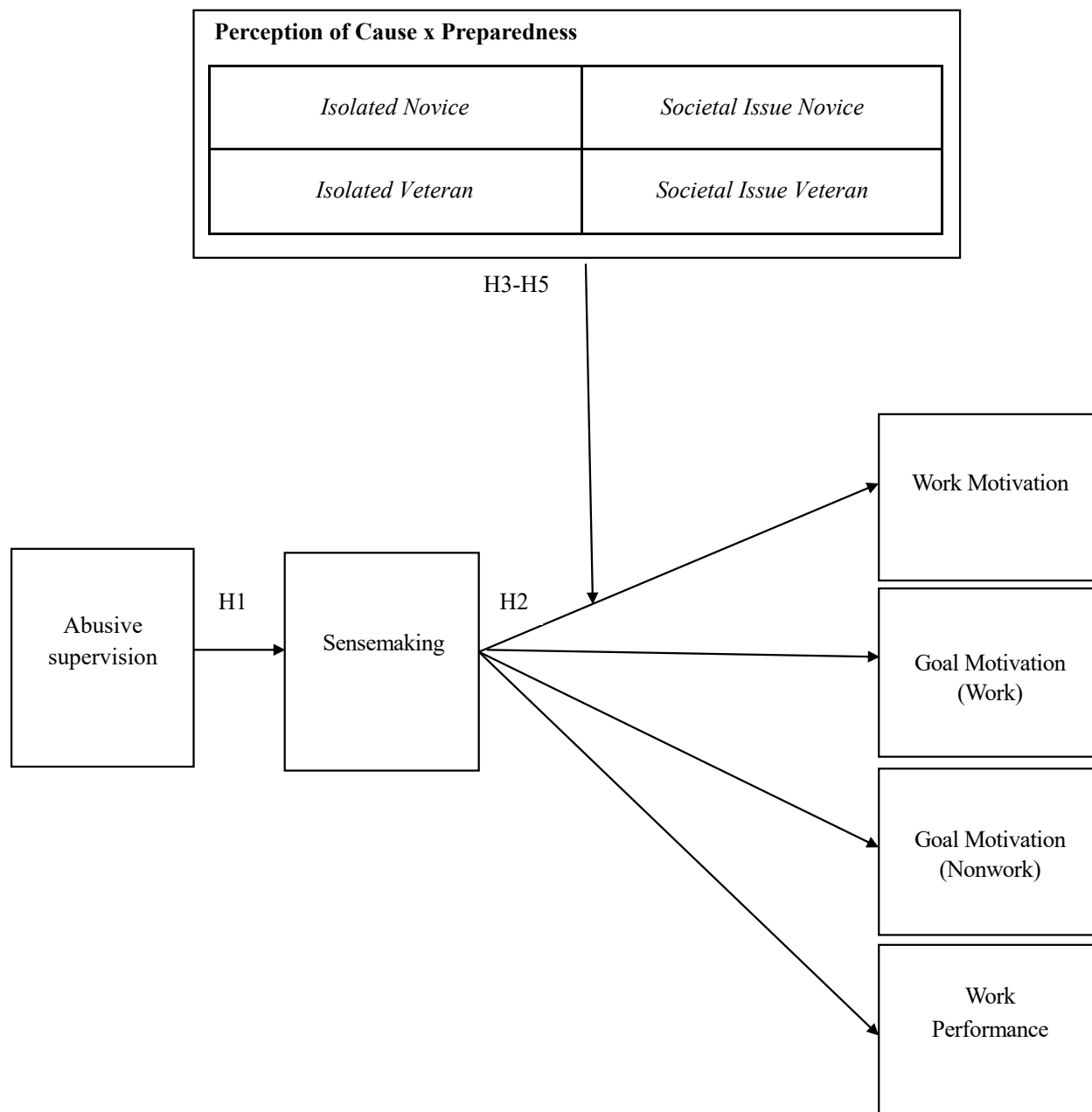
Note. Values are standardized coefficients estimated using SEM with MLMV (N = 420). SM × Cause × Prep represents the three-way interaction between sensemaking, preparedness, and causal framing. All models control for covariates (not shown). All lower-order

two-way interaction terms (Sensemaking $\times$ Causal Framing, Sensemaking $\times$ Preparedness, and Causal Framing $\times$ Preparedness) were included in the model but are not shown for brevity.

Table 21. Conditional Effects of Sensemaking on Goal Motivation at Work by Causal Framing and Preparedness

Causal Framing	Preparedness	b	SE	z	p
Societal issue <i>f</i>	Novice	.00	.10	.01	P=.99
Isolated actor	Novice	.32	.07	4.49	p<.001
Societal issue	Veteran	.26	.12	2.10	p=.04
Isolated actor	Veteran	.12	.10	1.19	p=.23

Note. Conditional effects were estimated separately for causal framing groups (0 = societal issue, 1 = isolated actor) and at low and high levels of preparedness (−1 SD and +1 SD). Coefficients are reported as simple slopes (b) from the MLMV interaction model rather than standardized coefficients. A parallel pattern was observed for work effort; conditional effects are described in the text.

Figure 7. Conceptual Model

Note: H1–H2 = direct and mediated effects; H3–H4 = individual moderation; H5 = interaction effect.

Figure 8. Structural Equation Model Results for the Partial Mediation of Abusive Supervision, Sensemaking, and Outcomes

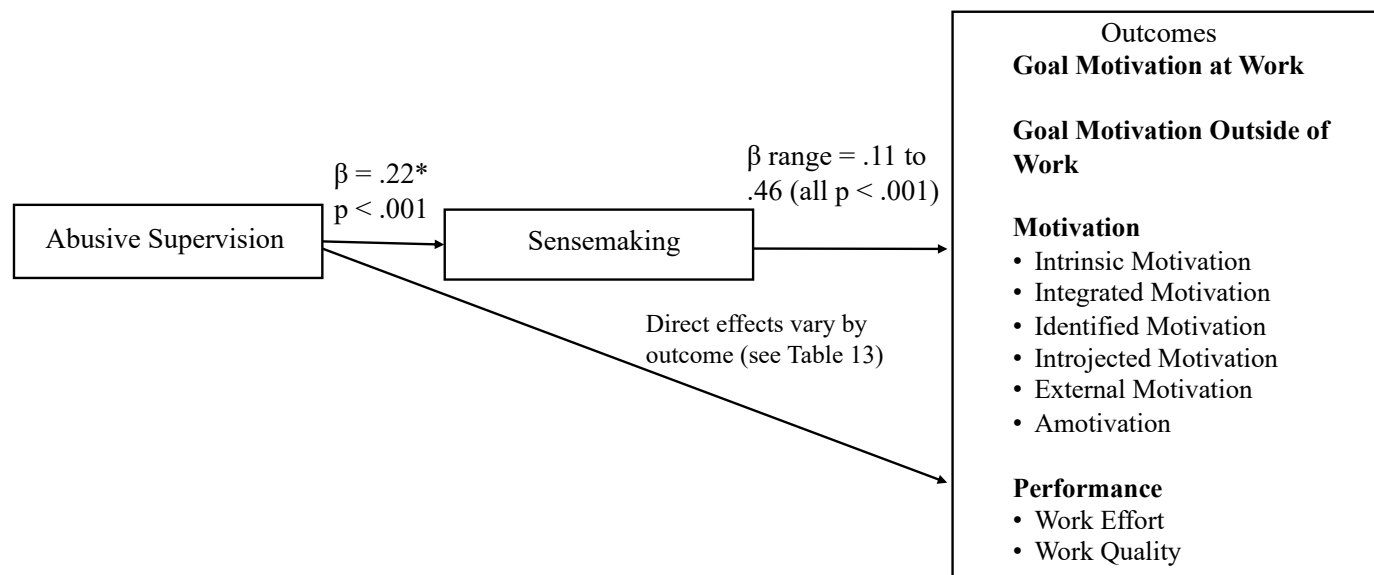
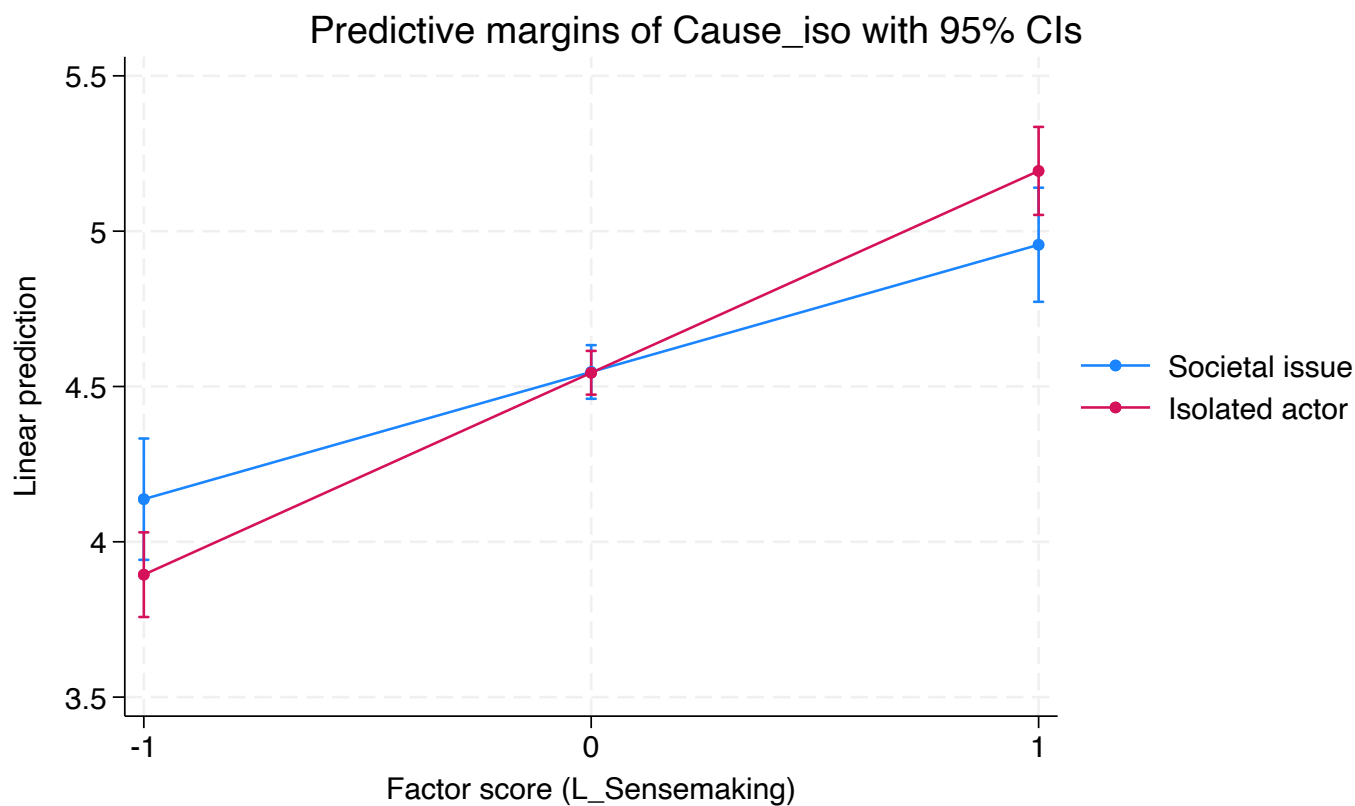
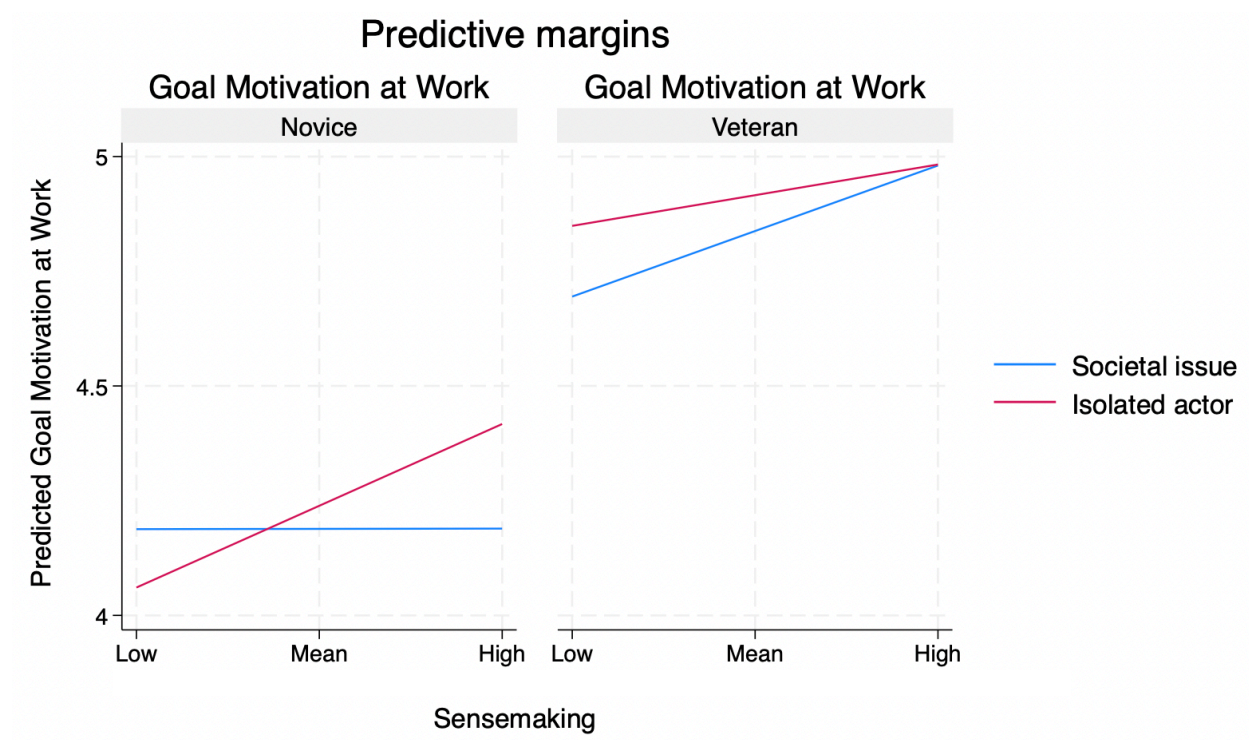


Figure 9. Simple Slopes Plot: Sensemaking x Causal Framing of Goal Motivation at Work



Note. A similar pattern emerged for work effort, such that the Sensemaking $\times$ Causal Framing interaction was significant ($\beta = .14$, $p = .03$). Specifically, the positive association between sensemaking and effort was stronger when abusive supervision was framed as an isolated actor than as a societal issue.

Figure 10. Three Way Interaction of Sensemaking x Preparedness



Note. Panels represent preparedness level (left: novices, -1 SD; right: veterans, $+1$ SD). Predicted values are plotted at low (-1 SD), mean, and high ($+1$ SD) levels of sensemaking. Lines represent causal framing groups (societal issue = 0; isolated actor = 1).

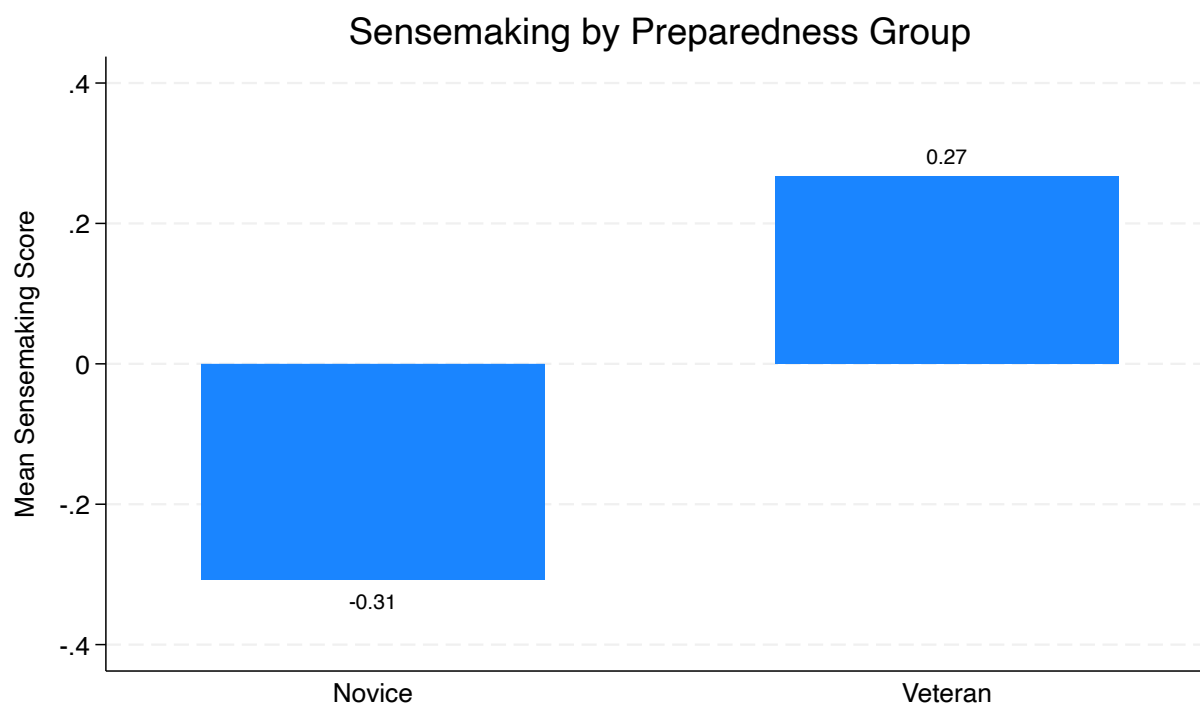
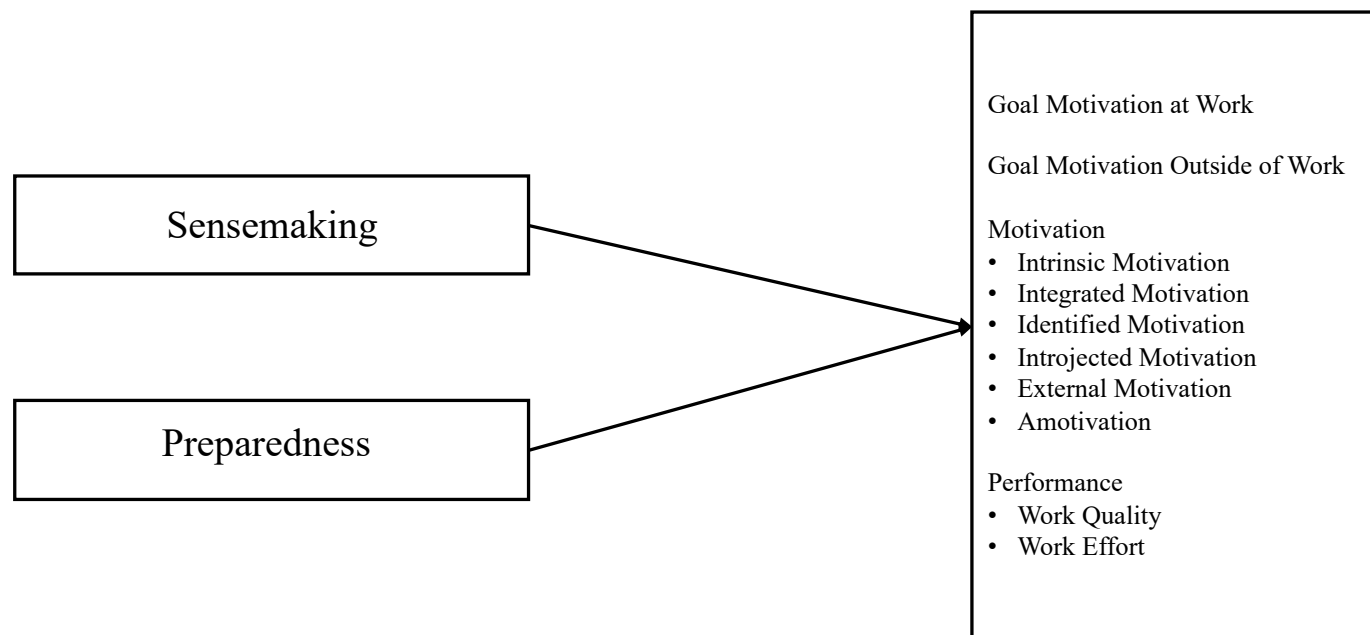
Figure 11. Preparedness Group Difference in Sensemaking

Figure 12. Additive Effects of Sensemaking and Preparedness on Motivation, Goals, and Performance



Note. Preparedness was tested as a moderator; however, no significant interaction effects were observed; the figure therefore illustrates the additive direct effects of sensemaking and preparedness on motivation, goal motivation, and performance outcomes