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Effective identity work, gender, body experience,
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Acknowledgements

At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.

— Albert Schweitzer

In the past six years there have been times in which my light, my passion for my doctoral work, got very dim and even times when I slowly watched it go out. Fortunately, in these six years there has always been someone - sometimes a close friend, colleague, or a family member and sometimes someone I hardly knew - who either asked just the right question, said exactly what I needed to hear, or allowed me to share in the achievement of their own goals and in so doing rekindled the light inside of me and inspired me to move forward. For this I am truly grateful.

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Abstract

In a short longitudinal study with 1102 male and female adolescents from Southern Germany and German-speaking Switzerland, a quantitative operationalisation of elements from Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory on identity construction was developed and evaluated with the goal of creating a measure of identity formation that accounts for some of the challenges to identity associated with the postmodern era. The Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI) aims to assess individuals' experiences of themselves in their social environments in their day-to-day identity work, focusing specifically on life coherence, authenticity, self-acceptance, acceptance and recognition from others, integration of discrepant expectations, and agency. Factor analyses produced a four-factor solution (Life Coherence, Authenticity, Acceptance, Integration). Using the factor scores in cluster analysis, three unique patterns of effective identity work were identified. Discriminant analysis showed that, in particular, the factors Authenticity and Integration were most important for distinguishing between the three groups. Consequently, the three patterns of effective identity work were named: *Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration*, *High Authenticity - Low Integration*, and *High Authenticity - High Integration*. Both the individual aspects of effective identity work and the three patterns were examined more closely with respect to gender, positive body experience and mental health. Findings suggest that the aspects of effective identity work have a positive predictive relationship with positive body image and a negative predictive relationship with mental health problems. Results on gender suggest that girls experience more authenticity than boys, that boys show slightly more positive body image than girls, and that in general girls and boys experience mental health issues to a similar degree, though emotional problems are more prevalent in girls and conduct problems more prevalent in boys. Suggestions for revisions to the EIWI are made and implications for its use in identity research are discussed.

Introduction

After sorting and reading through countless books and articles on identity dating back to the early twentieth century, it seems reasonable to ask wether another study and another book on identity in youth is really necessary. While (early) mainstream psychological theories on identity have prompted a large body of research, made invaluable contributions to the field of identity formation, and helped to establish a general understanding of what 'identity' means, some social scientists have questioned their legitimacy for the present socio-historical context and begun to explore the contextual nature of identity theories. As a result, researchers are gaining more knowledge about the role that society and societal movements inherently play in how and what theories of identity are developed and are generating new theories and approaches to identity formation that are sensitive to the context in which they are birthed.

The research described here presents the application and extension of part of Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory of identity construction: a theory that responds to some of the cultural and societal developments in Germany and accounts for the challenges of forming an identity in a postmodern society. Specifically, this dissertation describes a study that applies Keupp et al.'s theory by operationalising some of its key ideas into a quantitative self-report measure called the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI). Furthermore, this research extends the work of Keupp et al. through 1) the preliminary 'discovery' of three statistically unique patterns of effective identity work that I believe to be characteristic for young people living in a postmodern society; 2) the examination of the predictive power of effective identity work for body experience and mental health

one year later; and 3) the exploration of effective identity work, body experience, and mental health through a 'gendered lens' in order to broaden the understanding of both similarities and differences in the experience of male and female adolescents. As the first quantitative operationalisation of Keupp et al.'s seminal theory on identity in the German-speaking world, I believe that this study does indeed make a novel and useful contribution to the field of identity research and, with the inclusion of gender, body experience and mental health, offers important insights into both risk factors and protective factors for adolescent development in a postmodern context.

In the first chapter (Theoretical Framework), I set the stage for the empirical investigation by describing and discussing theoretical and empirical literature relevant to the present study. Since the core of this empirical work is the application and extension Keupp et al.'s (2002) recently-generated theory of identity formation, I felt it necessary to embed this study in a theoretical framework that 1) begins with a synopsis of the most influential theory on identity in psychology to date (i.e., Erikson's identity theory), 2) acknowledges the critique and evolution of this theory in light of significant societal and intellectual movements, 3) summarises Keupp et al.'s effort to generate a context-sensitive theory for identity development in postmodern Germany, and 4) outlines two of the leading approaches to the measurement of identity formation in psychology. I the following section, I delve into how gender has been perceived in psychology and discuss the theory and research connecting identity and gender, gender and body experience, and the body and identity. In the final section of the theoretical framework, I introduce mental health as a core aspect of adolescent development and discuss the ways it has been connected (in both theory and research) to identity formation, gender, and body experience. In the second chapter (The Present Study), I describe the scope and design of the larger project in which the present study is embedded, then I narrow in on the specific focus of the present study, and outline the objectives that are then broken down into research questions and (when appropriate) hypotheses. In the third chapter (Method), I describe in detail how the study was conducted including which

measurement instruments were used and which procedures were followed during data collection and in preparation for data analysis. In addition, I briefly describe the types of analysis used to investigate the research questions. In the final section of the third chapter, I introduce the sample of participant and describe its characteristics based on country of sampling (Germany vs. Switzerland), age, gender, cohort, education, and national and religious background. In the fourth chapter (Results), I present the results of the current study. The results are divided into three parts: in Part One, I focus on the development and evaluation of the Effective Identity Work Inventory and describe the process of 'discovering' three patterns of effective identity work and how these patterns differ from one another; in Part Two, I present the statistical connections found between gender, body experience, and effective identity work; and finally, in Part Three, I demonstrate the impact that gender, body experience, and effective identity work have on the mental health of the adolescents in the present study. I begin the fifth chapter (Discussion) by discussing the most important and interesting results and interpreting their meaning in connection with Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory and other related theoretical and empirical works. Since this study presents a first attempt to operationalise part of Keupp et al.'s theory, I also use the Discussion to consider some of the shortcomings of this first version of the Effective Identity Work Inventory and make suggestions for a revised version that, from my perspective, could offer a more accurate representation of Keupp et al.'s theory and improve the construct validity of the measure. Furthermore, I take a closer look at other limitations of the study, discuss how this research could be extended and what questions could be examined in future research endeavors, and, at the end, summarise what I feel to be the central tenets of this work. Finally, the Epilogue presents a personal account of my journey leading up to and during my time as a doctoral candidate. It represents my wish to be as transparent as possible about the subjective role that my own experiences have played in developing, conducting, analysing, and interpreting this research. Although I have placed this reflection at the very end of this thesis, some readers might prefer

to begin with the Epilogue as a way of figuratively "putting on" the glasses through which I see this work. Others may prefer to read this thesis with their own glasses before being influenced by my own perspective.

Regardless of how one chooses to read this report and whether one's own interests lie in work related to identity formation, gender similarities and differences, body experience or body image, mental health, or adolescent development in general, I trust that the insights presented here are both meaningful and useful for theorists, researchers, and practicioners alike.

Chapter 1

Theoretical Framework

1.1 Identity in theory and research

The question "who am I?" is not one which most people can answer quickly or with much certainty. While it may sound trivial, this question unveils a depth of complexity (Vignoles, Schwartz, & Luyckx, 2011) and presents one of the most important developmental tasks that individuals face (Meeus, 2011). The process hidden beneath this question and its answer has come to be called *identity formation*. Both the outcome of this process and the process itself have been the subject of interest among academics and non-academics alike for a very long time. This process of forming an identity has been described at different times and by different authors as a search (Erikson, 1968), a struggle (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003), a production (Hall, 1990) or construction, and work (Keupp et al., 2002). While each of these descriptions takes a slightly different approach to the subject, they all share a post-structural understanding of identity that encompasses a consistent and coherent sense of oneself which is both connected to and yet distinguishable from others. Within these perspectives, one's identity (or identities) is neither stagnant nor stable but dynamic and changeable. This contrasts with earlier essentialist views of identity which saw identity as encompassing enduring and unchanging qualities in a person.

Identity is a foundation which guides thought and behavior. It can be viewed by oneself on the inside ("who you think you are") or by others on the outside ("who you act as being") (Vignoles et al., 2011, p. 2) and can be seen as one whole or as multiple part-identities. Both the depth of complexity surrounding identity formation processes and the limitless nature of identity in terms of characteristics or content domains become clearer with the differentiation between the different levels of identity: *personal/individual* identity ("who am I?") with a focus of values, goals, beliefs, or life story; *relational* ("who am I in this relationship?") referring to the role one has in a relationship; *collective* ("who are we?") which points to one's identification with social groups or categories such as nationality or religion; and more recently Cheek, Tropp, Underwood, and Cheek (2013) have put forward the idea of a *social* or *public* identity which focuses on public self-monitoring, self-presentation and impression management. In short, identity is a concept with so many different facets and such far-reaching influence that it continues to keep theorists, empiricists, and the general public fascinated.

Until recently, identity researchers traditionally focused on each of these types of identity separately, developed different theories to understand their unique formation, and rarely connected them with one another. Vignoles et al. (2011), however, argue for an integrative approach to identity in order to achieve a comprehensive albeit complex understanding of identity formation. From their point of view, identity - including the personal, relational, collective and public dimensions - "is stable in some ways and fluid in others, and identity is formed and revised throughout the lifespan of individuals and the histories of social groups and categories, through an interplay of processes of self-discovery, personal construction, and social construction" (p. 8).

In this dissertation, it is my aim to take such an integrative approach to (personal) identity by going beyond the investigation of (the formation of) values, goals or beliefs and looking at identity formation as a constructive process that takes place in the body, in relationship, and in context. The journey that has lead me to this approach begins

(like many approaches to identity) with the "father" of identity theory in psychology, Erik Erikson (e.g., Erikson, 1950, 1956, 1968), whose psychosocial development theory laid the foundation for seeing individuals and their processes of development in and in relationship with the social context. For this reason, it seemed only reasonable to begin this chapter with a summary of the content and importance of Erikson's seminal theory as it relates to the present research. The next section focuses on the contextual changes introduced by the postmodern society, the challenges this has posed for Erikson's theory, and suggestions for future research in light of these changes. These ideas are the basis for Keupp and his colleagues' work on identity construction. I then describe the central tenets of Keupp et al.'s theory and explain its importance for the present investigation. In a final section on identity, I stay within Eriksonian and neo-Eriksonian thought and I discuss how identity formation has been measured and assessed in psychological research, focusing specifically on three different approaches: Marcia's (1966) *identity status* paradigm and its recent extensions, Berzonsky's model of *identity styles* (1989), and Adams' and Serafini's (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Serafini & Adams, 2002) focus on the *functions of identity.* The work of Marcia and Berzonsky seem particularly relevant for my own research because of their focus on the categorisation of individuals into identity statuses or identity styles. Furthermore, I see parallels between all three efforts to empirically assess parts of Erikson's theory on identity development and my own effort to empirically capture parts of Keupp et al. (2002) (neo-Eriksonian) theory on identity construction. I later draw on Marcia's, Berzonsky's, and Serafini's approaches again when discussing the value of the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI) and its resulting classification scheme for identity research.

1.1.1 Erikson's theory of psychosocial development

Erik Erikson (1902-1994), a practicing psychoanalyst, established a theory of psychosocial development within the psychoanalytic school of thought that includes the most

influential theory of identity development to date. His theory (Erikson, 1950, 1956) is considered to be an extension of Freud's (1924) classical psychoanalytic theory. In contrast to Freud, however, Erikson focused to a greater extent on the relationship between the individual and his/her cultural environment and to a lesser extent on the inner dynamics of the mind and the unconscious (Marcia, 2007).

Erikson was primarily interested in understanding humans in context (Peck, 2004). In his theory, he proposed that "cultural ideals, mores, and practices must be considered as significant influences on and contributors to individual psychological development... and argues that parents, peers, intimate partners, and other members of a person's social milieu are not only individual participants in developmental processes, but also are carriers of powerful societal and cultural messages" (Sorell & Montgomery, 2001, p. 101). Through social relationships, Erikson believed that cultural rules, structures and institutions are imparted to and internalized by individuals (Côté, 1993). Furthermore, the importance of context for Erikson can be seen in the terminology he used in describing his theory. Peck (2004) summarises: "He used the term 'group identity' to represent the social context, the term 'psychosocial identity' to represent the contextualized person, and the term 'ego identity' to represent the person's capacity to coordinate (or balance) their sense of self within the complex, dynamic interactions among biological, psychological, and environmental forces" (p. 20).

What also set Erikson's (1968) theory apart from identity theories of his contemporaries was the inclusion of the entire life-span (Sorell & Montgomery, 2001). At the center of his theory, Erikson posited an epigenetic eight-stage model of the development of the ego, beginning in early childhood and continuing into late adulthood. Each phase is marked by a developmental crisis between the individual and his/her social milieu (Kroger & Marcia, 2011, p. 32). For Erikson, the term 'crisis', however, did not have a negative connotation. Instead, Erikson saw each crisis as an "opportunity" (Muuss, Velder, & Porton, 1995) and the relationship between the individual and society was not antagonistic (as Freud had seen it) but constructive (Marcia, 2007;

Kroger & Marcia, 2011). The central task of adolescence, identity vs. role confusion, which is the fifth of eight stages, both builds on previous resolved development tasks (trust vs. mistrust, autonomy vs. doubt and shame, initiative vs. guilt, and industry vs. inferiority) and acts as a building block for the crises to be encountered in adult development (intimacy vs. isolation, generativity vs. stagnation, and ego integrity vs. despair). While a sense of identity is the desired resolution of this stage, it is important and necessary for young people to experience some kind of role confusion during the identity-formation process. If not resolved, role confusion leads to a lingering "inability to make moves toward identity-defining commitments" (Kroger, 2007, p. 9).

Sorell and Montgomery (2001) summarise the core of Erikson's theory into two succinct questions: "How does a person compose a life centered in the self - a life recognized by self and others as having a certain uniqueness and distinctiveness? How do people go about defining themselves, unconsciously and consciously, as individuals in a social context?" (p. 101). Although the psychosocial and life-span foci of Erikson's theory were certainly ground-breaking compared to previous theories, it was the questions he was asking that were decidedly modern. For, in these questions, he captured a new modern identity: one which is no longer prescribed but described and no longer ascribed but achieved (Côté & Allahar, 1996). This, as Sorell and Montgomery (2001) note, was an identity that he, himself, had the luxury of both achieving and describing:

> Erikson had opportunities to choose who he might be and become, just as he had opportunities to reflect on how he had become the person he was through his childhood, adolescent, and adult experiences. Unlike lives composed in relative isolation or under dictatorships or in circumstances where survival demands adherence to a limited range of roles, activities, and beliefs, Eriksons life offered an array of possibilities. (p. 101)

In this way, Erikson's theory was to a large extent based on the experiences of a modern man. As I expand on in Section 1.1.2, this begs the question of whether and

to what extent his ideas can be generalised to individuals or groups who do not fit this description.

Over the course of his life, many of Erikson's reflections centered around what he came to call *ego identity* and *psychosocial identity*. The next two sections briefly summarise his reflections on these two aspects of his theory.

Ego Identity

Early in the development of his theory, Erikson (1950) defined ego identity with the following words: "At this point it is enough to say that this sense of identity provides the ability to experience one's self as something that has continuity and sameness, and to act accordingly" (p. 38). A little later, Erikson offered another explanation:

> I can attempt to make the subject matter of identity more explicit only by approaching it from a variety of angles - biographic, pathographic, and theoretical; and by letting the term identity speak for itself in a number of connotations. At one time, then, it will appear to refer to a conscious sense of individual identity; at another to an unconscious striving for a continuity of personal character; at a third, as a criterion for the silent doings of ego synthesis; and, finally, as a maintenance of an inner solidarity with a group's ideals and identity. In some respects the term will appear to be colloquial and naive; in another, vaguely related to existing concepts in psychoanalysis and sociology. (1956, p. 57)

These two statemtents serve as an example of why, over the course of Erikson's writings on identity, a substantial amount of collective confusion grew with respect to the terminology Erikson used in his theory. Erikson was aware of this confusion and took it upon himself to address it, saying: "In the twenty years since the term was first employed...its popular usage has become so varied and its conceptual context so expanded that the time may seem to have come for a better and final delimination of what identity is and what it is not" (1968, p.15). Since he himself had used the term

identity in a number of different ways, a final delimination of identity's meaning proved, however, to be no easy task: "I have tried out the term identity almost deliberately - I like to think - in many different connotations. At one time it seemed to refer to a conscious sense of individual uniqueness, at another to an unconscious striving for a continuity of experience, and at a third, as a solidarity with a group's ideals" (Erikson, 1968, p. 208). In his later work he reconciles these plural meanings by differentiating between *personal* identity and *ego* identity:

> The conscious feeling of having a personal identity is based on two simultaneous observations: the perception of the selfsameness and continuity of one's existence in time and space and the perception of the fact that others recognize one's sameness and continuity...What I have called ego identity, however, concerns more than the mere fact of existence; it is, as it were, the ego quality of this existence. Ego identity then, in its subjective aspect, is the awareness of the fact that there is a selfsameness and continuity to the ego's synthesizing methods, the style of one's individuality, and that this style coincides with the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for significant others in the immediate community. (p. 50)

In other words, the sense of personal identity represents an individual's awareness of the *fact* of his/her existence in which the individual perceives him/herself as having the same content over time (Peck, 2004). In contrast, Erikson's sense of ego identity refers to an individual's awareness of the *quality* of his/her existance which rests on the perception of having a congruent and integrated quality of existance over time. As Peck notes, "This distinction between the fact and quality of one's existence and the use of the terms personal identity and ego identity to differentiate between these two aspects of human experience - distinguishes Eriksons views on identity from the views of his predecessors" (2004, p. 29).

With the inclusion of "ego" in ego identity, Erikson (1956) wanted to highlight the vital role of the ego in "selecting, synthesizing, and organizing self-representations (and

other identity elements)" (Peck, 2004, p. 30). This illustrates how he viewed the ego as a subject, a "central organizing agency" (1956, p. 105), and the ego identity as an object. From Erikson's perspective, an adolescent's sense of ego identity represents the synthesis of three interacting elements: his/her physiological or biological characteristics, his/her own unique psychological make-up (including needs, feelings, and interests); and the sociocultural milieu in which he/she lives (Erikson, 1968). Ego identity is, thus, a composition of self-representations and other identity elements which the ego has actively and succesfully tested, selected, integrated, and organized into a coherent whole. The ego identity is not something that can be achieved nor is it, at any point, a finished product. It is neither static nor unchangeable; rather, the ego identity is a "forever to-be-revised sense of reality of the self within social reality" (1968, p. 211).

Identity formation, therefore, is a lifelong process, although it is most prominent in adolescence (Muuss et al., 1995). Erikson (1968) described the period of adolescence as a time in which the individual must establish a sense of ego identity and in so doing avoid the dangers of role diffusion and identity confusion. Furthermore, according to Erikson, it is important to actively search for the continuity of the self during adolescence. As Muuss et al. (1995) summarize, the goal in this process is to cultivate a self concept in which the past, present, and future are integrated into one whole .

Psychosocial Identity

Unlike earlier identity theorists who were mainly interested in the psychological experience of sameness and continuity over time, the primary impetus for Erikson's work on identity seems to be his interest in the relation between the individual and his/her social environment, something which he felt was neglected in the traditional psychoanalytic perspective. This interest drove Erikson (1956) to develop a concept of what he termed *psychosocial identity*, defined as "a mutual relation in that it connotes both a persistent sameness within oneself (self-sameness) and a persistent sharing of some

kind of essential character with others" (p. 57). Through Erikson's use of the term 'psychosocial', it became clear that he focused on developing a conceptual language that would enable him to more accurately discuss and describe human development *in context* (Peck, 2004).

Erikson (1956) built upon Hartmann's (1939) concept of the "average expectable environment" in which Hartmann suggests that humans are born preadapted to flourish in an environment that is reasonably sensitive to the their needs and that they subsequently rely on "a whole chain of such successive environments" (Erikson, 1956, p. 107) for healthy development. Erikson goes on to argue that "the human environment must permit and safeguard a series of more or less discontinuous and yet culturally and psychologically consistent steps, each extending further along the radius of expanding life tasks" (p. 107). When discussing the average expectable environments, Erikson focuses primarily on ideologies (Peck, 2004). Peck notes how Erikson characterizes the cultural conditions that frame the average expectable environments in terms of social values that are conveyed and maintained through "verbal conventions and formal institutions" (Erikson, 1959, p. 111). These value systems are described by Erikson in terms of ideologies which he defined as "a coherent body of shared images, ideas, and ideals which...provides for the participants a coherent, if systematically simplified, over-all orientation in space and time, in means and ends" (p. 113).

Later, Erikson (1968) describes the necessity of ideological systems during adolescence. He suggests their importance in providing a correspondence betweeen the inner world and the social world, providing a sense of security through which they are guarded from social anxiety or self-consciousness, and establishing a "geographic-historical world image as a framework for the young individual's budding identity" (p. 188). It is, then, the personal *commitment* to an ideology which protects young people from a "confusion of values" and fulfills one of the requirements for successful development.

While the commitment to an ideology, from Erikson's point of view, is a cornerstone

in the formation of identity, finding a fitting occupation (niche) is one of the major goals of adolescence. As he describes,

> [This] period [of adolescence] can be viewed as a *psychosocial moratorium* during which the individual through free role experimentation may find a niche in some section of his society, a niche which is firmly defined and yet seems to be uniquely made for him. In finding it the young adult gains an assured sense of inner continuity and social sameness which will bridge what he *was* as a child and what he is *about to become*, and will reconcile his *conception of himself* and his *community's recognition* of him. (Erikson, 1956, p. 67)

In summary, Erikson's theory of psychosocial development was ground-breaking in its introduction of an instrumental concept of identity into the study of human development with (more or less) clearly-defined parameters (Sorell & Montgomery, 2001). Furthermore, his psychosocial theory on life-span development and ego identity formation has been the foundation for a fascinating field of research whose influence has spread well beyond the borders of psychology. As Keupp et al. (2002) assert, "Erikson's accomplishment is indisputable" (p. 26). It is through his work that the term *identity* has become commonplace both within and outside the academic world. Finally, in line with Keupp and other researchers, I believe Erikson's reflections on the challenges and opportunities in his own experience as a "modern man" provide a foundation on which contemporary researchers and theorists can investigate the challenges and opportunities of identity formation by "postmodern" men and women. In light of this observation, I chose to begin this thesis with Erikson's original ideas and then move closer and closer to the theory (i.e., Keupp et al., 2002) that provided the impetus for the research presented here. The following sections focus on the effect of the postmodern context on identity formation, the critique, revision, and extension of Erikson's theory in light of societal change, the analysis and synthesis of innovative approaches to identity research, and the development of Keupp et al.'s theory of identity construction. In a final section,

I focus on the measurement of identity formation in psychology and present the work of two researchers who, relying on Erikson's theory, have sought to operationalise and measure personal identity and/or its formation process.

1.1.2 Identity formation in a postmodern context

Critique of established theories of identity

Erikson's theory on psychosocial development, while ground-breaking and foundational for the study of identity within psychology, has often been criticized and its universal validity questioned. As Sorell and Montgomery (2001) state,

> Because of its reflection of Erikson's own search for personal and social belonging; its optimistic incorporation of the ideals of American industrial and consumer capitalism inspired by the growth economy of the 1950s and 1960s (Miller, 1993; Roazen, 1976); its emphasis on the experience of White, middle class, European and American men; and its definitions of psychosocial normality, important questions arise regarding the theory's usefulness as a framework for understanding contemporary human development. (p. 99)

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed a "discursive explosion" (Hall, 1996, p. 1) around identity as a concept. The impetus was not only a renewed interest in the topic, but also the result of a growing critique of established theories. Though the critical voices stemmed from a number of disciplines and from a variety of perspectives (such as feminism, cross-cultural psychology, discourse theory), what they all had in common was a questioning of the notion of an "integral, originary and unified identity"(p. 1). These voices, which have continued to grow in number over the last 20 to 30 years, posit that the historical period in which the established theories of identity were developed was crucially different from the current postmodern era. Theorists and researchers enganged in this discourse believe that growing up in a postmodern context has a significant impact on psychological development (Schachter, 2005; Keupp

et al., 2002). Some of the voices in this discourse follow in the footsteps of a school in developmental psychology (e.g., Bronfenbrenner, 1979) that aims to "understand all human development as occurring within context and in interaction with context" (Schachter, 2005, p. 139). In 2005, Schachter presented a clear and concise "rereading" of Erikson's foundational theory against the background of postmodernity. Schachter follows Erikson's own example by asking "whether Erikson's theory itself holds within it the ability to transcend the historical context in which it was written and whether it is open to a constructive transformation intended to meet the challenge of the postmodern" (p. 139). Building on this vein of thought, researchers such as Keupp and Schachter have been interested in understanding what makes the postmodern social context different from previous eras and in what ways these specific characteristics influence identity formation. The following section highlights some of the central ways in which the postmodern era has shaped both our understanding of identity as well as the formation process of identity itself.

Postmodernity as context

The postmodern era has been described by sociologists and psychologists alike as being marked by what Bauman (2000) has called "liquid modernity" in which stability, certainty, and security have been exchanged with constant change in norms, values, and expectations, followed by both great uncertainty and new possibilities. Specifically, postmodernity is characterized by individualisation, pluralisation, a deconstruction of gender roles, shift in values, fragmentation, and globalisation (Keupp, 2008).

According to Schachter (2005), there are two characteristics of the postmodern context that are particularly relevant for understanding its effect on identity development: 1) "continuous and rapid social change" and 2) "the postmodern individual being embedded in multiple contexts with multiple affiliations to different, sometimes contradicting, social groups" (p. 141). Schachter notes that both of these attributes can make it difficult for individuals to form what Erikson believed to be two of the funda-

mental aspects of identity: a "sense of invigorating sameness and continuity" (Erikson, 1968, p. 19) and "the confidence that one's inner sense of sameness and continuity are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning of others" (Schachter, 2005, p. 141). If life is constantly changing and the social context is permanently in flux, then the identity one forms at one point in time may no longer be suitable at another time. Identity formation in such an environment requires choice and, consequently, depends on self-consciousness and self-reflection (Berger, 1980). Futhermore, "if one is embedded in multiple contexts, each with a different set of norms, role models, and modes of interaction, then cultural contradiction may result in inner confusion." (Schachter, 2005, p. 141). As Berger puts it, "[postmodern] societies are characterized by unstable, incohesive, unreliable plausibility structures" (p. 17). Finally, western societies no longer offer individuals models of coherence for their fragmented experiences, thus leaving individuals more than ever with their own capacities to cope with creating a stable and coherent identity (Kraus, 2000; Berger, 1980).

From another perspective, Rattansi and Phoenix (2005, p. 103) suggest two key characteristics that they believe summarise the "rethinking" about the conceptualisation of identity during the last few decades: the *de-centring* and *de-essentializing* of identities. The former refers to the idea that, at the content level, identities are meaningless until they are juxtaposed with what they are not. For instance, 'being female' is significant only because it is different from 'being male'. It is within these relationships (e.g., female-male) that identities develop and operate. In Rattansi and Phoenix's own words, "any individual identity cannot completely occupy the 'centre'— it is always de-centred by having one or more identities against which it has to maintain a certain stability to be acknowledged as such" (p. 103). The de-essentialisation of identity reveals "the degree to which human nature is itself a historical product, and therefore not simply the unfolding of an essence inherent in human beings regardless of specific institutions and cultures" (p. 103). Gergen (1991) takes this thought even further suggesting that just as humans are free from an essential human nature, indi-

viduals are not bound to individual essential characteristics. Gergen emphasizes the move from an essential view of identity to one with a fluid nature: "In the postmodern world there is no individual essence to which one remains true or committed. One's identity is continuously emergent, re-formed, and redirected as one moves through the sea of everchanging relationship. In the case of 'Who am I?' it is a teeming world of provisional possibilities" (p. 139) . As Keupp et al. (2002) note, even the core constituents of identity such as national or ethnic identity, gender identity, and bodily identity have lost their "natural" quality as identity guarantors.

Against this background, a new understanding of identity has emerged that is, as Hall (1996) puts it,

> ...not an essentialist, but a strategic and positional one. That is to say, directly contrary to what appears to be its settled semantic career, this concept of identity does not signal that stable core of the self, unfolding from beginning to end through all the vicissitudes of history without change, the bit of the self which remains always-already 'the same' identical to itself across time ... it accepts that identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured, never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation. (pp. 3-4)

This is a stark contrast to traditional (pre-)modern societies in which an individual's identity was "fixed, solid, and stable" (Kellner, 1992, p. 141). Here, as Kellner notes, "Identity was a function of predefined social roles and a traditional system of myths which provided orientation and religious sanctions to one's place in the world, while rigorously circumscribing the realm of thought and behaviour" (p. 141). Individuals were born into an extended family, "a clan", a fixed system in which one's future was set. This is where one died; there were no detours, no excursions, no outliers.

"Identity was unproblematic and not subject to reflection or discussion. Individuals did not undergo identity crises, or radically modify their identity" (p. 141).

These two views of identity (modern and postmodern) are defined by their contradictory characteristics: fixed vs. fluid, integrated vs. fragmented, stable vs. uncertain, essential vs. decentered. But not all researchers are convinced that such a binary approach is useful. Sveningson and Alvesson (2003), for instance, suggest that it is not necessary to choose between one or the other: "One may avoid an 'essentialistic' position without moving to the other corner, assuming highly fluid and fragmented forms of subjectivity" (p. 1167). In order to reconcile these two sides of the identity coin, Sveningsson and Alvesson, whose work has grown out of the organisational psychology context, propose a "becoming" rather than "being" perspective toward identity, allowing for storylines of both stability and change. Keupp et al. (2002) use the image of a patchwork identity constructed of many different part-identities: some that give shape and color to the patchwork for the entire lifespan and others that are useful or necessary for just a short time and then quietly fade away. For these and other like-minded authors it is a focus on the active role individuals play in the construction of their identity(ies) that sets them apart from previous theorists. Researchers from different schools of thought, such as Keupp and his colleagues and Alevesson and his colleagues, have settled on the term *identity work* ("Identitätsarbeit") to describe this active and on-going process.

Just as the postmodern context presents a myriad of challenges for identity formation itself, identity research including the content of exploration, the timing of inquiry, and the methodologies used for studying identity formation have also needed (and need) to change and adapt in order to accommodate new paradigms of thought. The next section focuses briefly on necessary and helpful strategies for conducting research on identity in a postmodern setting.

Innovative approaches to identity research in a postmodern context

As have been cited, a number of stimulating theoretical analyses on the effect of post-modern societies on individual identity formation have been published over the last few decades. However, as Kraus (2000) notes, "the empirical research seems to be way behind, imprisoned in a paradigm of a unified self"(p. 10). This begs the question: What kind of research would help 'release' us from this paradigm in order understand the effect of postmodernity on identity formation on a practical level?

In the last decade, a number of researchers have risen to this challenge and have conducted empirical research on identity formation in light of the demands presented by postmodernism (e.g., Keupp et al., 2002; Watson, 2009; Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). In my reading of this body of literature, I have observed changes in how researchers approach their study of identity formation as well as the emergence of recommendations relevant to inquiry in postmodern settings. In particular, shifts have occurred in what research questions are posed, what kinds of methodologies are utilised, which lenses are employed to analyse and interpret the data collected, and which age group is chosen for conducting research.

The shift in inquiry is primarily evident in the type of research questions being asked and the assumptions or theoretical paradigms underlying these questions, such as:

- research questions and designs that do not focus on or assume a singular achieved identity, but allow for multiple, dynamic, sometimes contradictory identities;

- research questions that focus on or assume an active process of identity formation - a process that does not end with the transition to adulthood but continues as long as one lives;

- research questions that do not assume essentialist definitions or understandings, e.g., gender and the body or national and ethnic identity, of the self.

The research question often (if not always) has great influence on the research methodology chosen to conduct research. This, I believe is the second important decision in planning research relevant to identity formation in the postmodern era. Many of the aformentioned researchers have turned to qualitative methods to help answer their research questions. As previously discussed, at a theoretical level a number of scholars have found an identity *construction* paradigm more suitable for understanding the demands of postmodern societies on individual life trajectories. This approach has been closely linked with narrative identity as promoted by McAdams (see McAdams (2011) for a summary of narrative identity work over the past 25 years). The narrative identity approach embodies both a theory and a well-developed methodology for researching identity. According to McAdams, "*Narrative identity* is an internalized and evolving story of the self that provides a person's life with some semblance of unity, purpose, and meaning" (2011, p. 100). This approach suggests that, just like in any story, the story one tells of him/herself includes a plot, scenes, characters, and themes. It integrates components of one's reconstructed past as well as the anticipated future in order to present a "subjective historical account of one's development, an instrumental explanation of a person's most important commitments in the realms of work and love, and a moral justification of who a person was, is, and will be" (p. 100).

The narrative method has given identity researchers such as Keupp et al. (2002) the tools with which to understand the answer(s) to the question of *how* individuals form or construct their identity(ies) and what contents shape their identities over time. This and other qualitative methods have been important for collecting detailed and comprehensive data and generating new, more relevant theories on identity both in general and for specific groups.

Even though qualitative methodologies, such as the narrative method, can be implemented with great rigour, it would be a far stretch to expect identity researchers in mainstream psychology to forfeit their need for the scientific precision and 'objectivity' of quantitative methods and dive solely into qualitative methodologies. Fortunately, I

believe that the field of identity research can benefit from the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Since much of the contemporary, theory-generating work on identity formation in postmodern settings has followed qualitative approaches, it may be helpful (as I hope the present research project demonstrates), even necessary, for researchers to turn to quantitative approaches as well in order to further explore and/or confirm these new identity theories. Quantitative measurement enables the investigation of larger, more representative samples and, while it is clear that such investigations alone do not provide the depth of information about processes and individual experiences, they can allow for a better understanding of the relationship between constructs and in some cases the strength of influence from one construct on another.

The third aspect of the identity research process that is important for consideration within the postmodern context is the interpretation of data. In particular, I agree with Schachter (2005) who discusses the need for culturally-specific interpretations of different characteristics of identity formation. As he describes it, an identity theory that accounts for the postmodern era "cannot portray a specific mature structure of identity that is uniform and universal" (p. 153). Rather, Schachter asserts that not only the content but also the structures of identity are culturally specific. Furthermore, he feels that even within cultures individuals may have different preferences for their identity structure. Schachter suggests that it would be better to look at the identity structures as "diverse possible structures" and not position them on a developmental continuum. He argues, "an alternative view to the developmental sequencing of identity structures would be to claim that different structures are preferred by different individuals or by different cultures because of their belief that this structure serves some purpose (p. 154). This thinking is reinforced by Keupp (2008) who states that a postmodern theory on identity development can no longer follow a rule-based and linear course of development. Therefore, research on identity in the postmodern context should not focus on developmental stages through which each individual must go and which

determine the success of one's identity development. Rather, the focus should be on the different types of structures and what purpose they might have for an individual or group. I believe this is an important shift in how the results of current, and even previous, research endeavors on identity can be interpreted. Consequently, I have made a special effort to look at my own data and results through a culturally-sensitive and non-linear lens.

The final shift I have observed in how identity research has adapted to societal change is in the age group of interest in studies on identity formation. Until recently, adolescents (between 12-18 years) were considered to be the population of interest for research on identity formation. Now, university students, who have always provided an easy-access population for conducting psychological research, are also considered to be in a critical phase with respect to identity formation. In light of biographical changes associated with growing up in industrialised (postindustrial or postmodern) countries, Arnett (2000) has argued for a distinct period in the life course between 18 and 25 years: *Emerging Adulthood.* According to Arnett, "[Emerging adulthood] is a period characterized by change and exploration for most people as they examine the life possibilities open to them and gradually arrive at more enduring choices in love, work, and worldviews" (p. 479). Without the financial and social necessity to move more or less directly from the adolescent life at home to adult life with an occupation and/or family of one's own, according to Arnett, individuals in this phase of life 'enjoy' a several year period in which to work on their identity and focus on their self-development. Many individuals spend these years achieving higher education, travelling, or gaining work experience. As well, these years are usually spent living away from one's parents but not yet 'settling down' with a partner of one's own. Some scholars such as Côté and Bynner (2008) suggest that emerging adulthood is an economic phenomenon instead of a developmental one, arguing that such a phase of life is available only to those who can afford to take so much time for education and self-exploration. Nonetheless, emerging adulthood as a term and a concept has become commonplace and widely used in

identity research and developmental psychology. Emerging adulthood has not replaced adolescence in its importance for identity research but it has certainly extended the age-range of interest for identity researchers.

While Arnett was developing his theory about *when* individuals are particularly focused on their identity work in postindustrial America, Keupp and his colleagues were forging their theory about *how* individuals construct their identities in postmodern Germany. In the following section, I take time to explore the seminal work of Keupp and his colleagues in adapting Erikson's theory and generating new and culturally specific ideas on identity formation in late adolescence against the background of postmodern Germany. Additionally, I discuss in detail the aspects of Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory of identity construction that are particularly relevant for the present study.

Keupp's theory of identity construction

In their work on identity construction, Heiner Keupp and his colleagues (2002) strove to meet the challenges of the postmodern era in order to gain greater understanding of the processes involved in current identity formation among young people in Germany. The result was the development of a theory that has largely shaped both the discourse and research on identity currently taking place in the German-speaking world. This identity theory also resonated with the goals of the VROID-MHAP (Values and Religious Orientations in relation to Identity Development and Mental Health: Adolescent Perspectives) research team. Consequently, this theory was incorporated into the VROID-MHAP investigation, in particular, because it was developed within the same cultural context as the VROID-MHAP study which focuses on adolescents growing up in postmodern Germany. The fact that Keupp et al.'s theory not been published in English, to my knowledge, is indicative of its indigenous development and implementation. As a result, many of the terms Keupp et al. (2002) use in their work have required translation.[1] In order to facilitate this language challenge, important terms

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[1]In accordance with the APA style guide, no quotation marks have been used around the translated passages (Lee, 2014).

will be given in English followed by the original German term in parentheses. In most cases, I translated the terms myself. In a few cases (such as *Handlungsfähigkeit* which I translated into Agency), I contacted Heiner Keupp directly in order to receive feedback about and consent for the translation.

Between 1989 and 1999, Keupp headed up the research project, Work Careers, Social Networks and Identity Development in Adolescence, in which 106 young people in Germany were interviewed at three different points in time. This study and its results are presented in Keupp et al. (2002). The primary goal of this longitudinal qualitative interview study was to build on the scholarship of Erikson (1950, 1956, 1968) and explore the identity development of adolescents in Germany under the conditions of postmodern societal transformation, including the loosening of social bonds and the destandardization of individual biographies. Because Keupp and his colleagues viewed identity development under such circumstances as being increasingly unstable, they were interested in finding a timely answer to the classical identity question: In a social world marked by individualisation, pluralisation, and globalisation, resulting in fragmentation and contradictions, how do adolescents create a fitting match between their social outer world and their subjective inner world? How do they answer the question "Who am I?" in a social world whose foundation has dramatically changed? (2008, p. 291). As Keupp et al. (2002) acknowledge, they 'stood on the shoulders of the giant' (p. 26) and wondered whether Erikson's answers to the identity question suffice in the face of a complex and rapidly changing context or whether his groundbreaking theory might need to be revised and/or extended in order to accommodate these new circumstances. These questions guided their work through the 1990s and prompted them to take the foundations of Erikson's contextual theory and incorporate new perspectives on identity in order to account for the opportunities and challenges of a postmodern society.

In the resulting theory (Keupp et al., 2002), identity is understood as as a personal and constructive process in which individuals are on a quest to find a good fit between

the inner and outer world, between their self-image (*Selbstbild*) and their public-image (*Fremdbild*) (Keupp, 2003). The process of finding such a fit is an active process in which individuals are challenged with unifying fragments of their experience into a cohesive whole (Keupp, 2008). Keupp et al. call this process "Identitätsarbeit" which is directly translated into *identity work*. While each individual is responsible for performing his/her identity work, this process of identity construction requires social, psychological, and material resources.

According to Keupp (2010), this understanding of identity work encompasses an internal and an external dimension. The internal dimension refers to the synthesis work (*Synthesearbeit*) in which an individual makes subjective connections between different experiences, the construction of coherence (*Kohärenz*), self-acceptance (*Selbstakzeptanz*), and authenticity (*Authentizität*). The external dimension refers to an individual's agency (*Handlungsfähigkeit*) as well as his/her recognition and acceptance from others (*Anerkennung*).

Other authors studying identity have found the term "identity work" equally helpful (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003; Watson, 2009). The differences between interpretations of the term will not be discussed here. In Keupp et al.'s (2002) understanding of identity work, the focus is on the active and creative role individuals play as they construct a personally-coherent *patchwork* made up of many identity fragments and identity projects. The use of this colorful metaphor illustrates Keupp's understanding of identity development as an open-ended process characterized by complexity as well as the often very creative personal contribution that individuals make to their own identity formation. First and foremost, however, Keupp and his colleagues were interested in understanding and describing the *process* of assembling such a patchwork identity. Specifically, their questions focused on the identity materials (*Identitätsmaterialien*) that were used and which construction skills (*Konstruktionsfähigkeiten*) were at the the subject's disposal in order to create their individual patchwork? (Keupp, 2008). In other words, the process or the question of *how* young people construct their patchwork

Figure 1.1: Keupp et al.'s (2002) model of the construction of identity work

Meta identity level
- Biographical core narrations
- Value orientations
- Dominant aspects of identity
- Sense of identity, Sense of coherence, sense of authenticity

Actions

Aspects of identity level
- Gender
- Occupation
- Body
- Leisure
- Politics

Identity Projects

Situational self-related experiences level

(= many individual situational experiences of self-awareness)

of identities was far more important than the content of the patchwork itself.

As a result of asking these questions, Keupp (2007) came to the following conclusion. The creation of life coherence is simultaneously the requirement for and the goal of identity work. In earlier societal eras the willingness to assume ready-made identity packages (*Identitätspakete*) was the central criterion for life management (*Lebensbewältigung*). Today, life management is dependent on the individual drive to create a good fit and perform identity work, that is, the ability to self-organise, to take action (*Selbsttätigwerden*), or to find one's own niche (*Selbsteinbettung*). Children and young people need the freedom and space in order to shape who they are and to play an active role in their day-to-day lives. The effectiveness of this identity work is measured internally according to one's authenticity and externally through the recognition and acceptance from others.

According to Keupp et al., identity is an "intermediate space" (Bohleber, 1997 as cited by Keupp et al., 2002) that can be filled with ideas about oneself and the world around a person. Identity work, then, describes the processes in which the individual

1) constructs situational self-related experiences (*Selbstthematisierungen*); 2) reflects on these experiences and integrates them into existing or new part-identities (*Teilidentitäten*); 3) constructs a sense of identity through the consolidation and evaluation of biographical experiences combined with increasing generalisations of self-related experiences and part-identities; 4) uses one's sense of identity to create core narratives (*Kernnarrationen*) in one's presentation of him/herself; and finally, through the combination of these processes the individual develops a sense of agency (*Handlungsfähigkeit*)

In the Keupp et al. (2002) model of identity work, we see the highly-networked relationships between the different processes involved in identity work. This model deviates significantly from Erikson's eight-step epigenetic model. As noted by Keupp et al., Erikson's developmental stages require a social environment marked by continuity and predictability into which young people can successfully integrate themselves. Conversly, in a postmodern context marked by change and uncertainty, identity development can no longer be seen as a stage that is fulfilled by the end of adolescence. Identity is much more a 'work in progress' in which the individual elements are constantly being reworked and reevaluated. This process remains in flux as individuals construct new self-related experiences that lead to changes in the importance of part-identities. Which part-identities are included in one's identity patchwork, and how relevant they are, can change several times over the course of a lifetime. In turn, the extent to which one actively works on these part-identities (i.e., how well new self-related experiences are integrated) affects one's sense of identity.

In our reading of Keupp et al.'s theory (2002; 2003, 2008, 2010), my colleagues and I feel that six elements can be extracted that are foundational for identity construction and, in this sense, the central goals of identity work (these six elements are the foundation for the development of the Effective Identity Work Inventory). Three of the elements occur within the individual: 1) a sense of life coherence (*Lebenskohärenz*), 2) authenticity (*Authentizität*), and 3) self-acceptance (*Selbtsankzeptanz*). The other three occur externally: 4) recognition and acceptance from others (*Anerkennung*),

5) the ability to integrate discrepant expectations (*Integrationsleistung*)), and then 6) be able to act with agency (*Handlungsfähigkeit*). These modes of daily identity work are crucial for what Keupp considers to be effective identity work (2003). However, because these components share a dynamic (and often tenuous) relationship with one another, effective identity work is rarely harmonious (Keupp, 2008). It is important for individuals to be able to integrate seemingly contradictory parts of their identity into a synthesized whole and then be able act with agency and authenticity.

Since these elements of effective identity work were the starting point for the empirical investigation presented in this dissertation, they are elaborated on in the following paragraphs.

Life Coherence   As was mentioned earlier, the creation of life coherence is both a requirement for and a goal of identity work (Keupp, 2003). It represents the subjective link between an individual's different part-identities and his/her experiences as well as the development of an individual's very own meaning of life (Keupp, 2007). For Keupp (and other writers, such as Giddens, 1991), the concept of life coherence is closely linked with narrative identity theory in which individuals are driven to tell a story of their lives with meaningful connections and continuity across time and context. Keupp et al. (2002) also draw on Antonovsky's (1987) work on salutogenesis and a 'Sense of Coherence' which Antonovsky defines as "a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring though dynamic feeling of confidence that 1) the stimuli deriving from one's internal and external environments in the course of living are structured, predictable and explicable; 2) the resources are available to one to meet the demands posed by these stimuli; and 3) these demands are challenges, worthy of investment and engagement" (p. 19). Keupp et al. view these three components - comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness - as being central to identity work. That is, it is important for individuals to feel that the world around them moves in an orderly and predictable fashion, that they have the skills and resources to

accomplish their goals, and that it is worth it to invest time and energy into the things they deem important. The effectiveness of this element of identity work is measured on an internal level through authenticity and on an external level through the recognition and the acceptance from others.

Authenticity   In describing authenticity, Keupp et al. (2002) highlight some of Taylor's ideas (2004): "There is a certain way of being human that is *my* way. I am called upon to live my life in this way, and not in imitation of anyone else's life. But this notion gives a new importance to being true to myself. If I am not, I miss the point of my life; I miss what being human is for *me*" (p. 272). In this way, authenticity is understood to be one's sense of being able to 'be' and act in accordance with 'who one is'. In the identity formation process, it is not enough to *understand* or *know* who one is; effective identity work requires that one also feels free to act according to this identity across different settings, rather than feel the need to behave according to others' expectations. Keupp (2007) draws on Giddens' (1991) understanding of authenticity as self-actualisation: "To be able to act authentically is more than just acting in terms of a self-knowledge that is as valid and full as possible; it means also disentangling...the true from the false self" (p. 78). The challenge is finding oneself through the active process of self-construction, an endeavor which "has to be informed by overall goals - those of becoming free from dependencies and achieving fulfillment" (p. 79).

Recognition and (Self) Acceptance   As Keupp (2010) notes, the universal imperative for individual identity construction points to the basic human need for acceptance and a sense of belonging. Identity constructs a self-reflective bridge between the inner and outer world. It is precisely in this way that we see the dual character of identity: it presents that which is both unmistakeably individual and socially acceptable. Identity is the compromise between individual strong-will and conformity or, in other words, between the drive for autonomy and the social expectation for submission. Erik-

son (1956), too, described the importance of individuals (especially adolescents) being recognized in their social circles.

> [When] we speak of the community's response to the young individual's need to be 'recognized' by those around him, we mean something beyond a mere recognition of achievement; for it is of great relevance to the young individual's identity formation that he be responded to, and be given function and status as a person whose gradual growth and transformation make sense to those who begin to make sense to him...such recognition provides an entirely indispensable support to the ego in the specific tasks of adolescing... (p. 67)

From Keupp's point of view (2003), recognition from others and acceptance from others is the basic requirement for identity work. Furthermore, Keupp emphasizes the need for an individual to come to accept him/herself and recognize his/her own gifts and accomplishments.

Integration of discrepant expectations and agency   According to Tesch-Römer (1990), individual identity work is comprised primarily of integrating discrepant identities and expectations (*Integrationsleistung*). Discrepant identities need to be integrated into one unified self-concept that is also recognizable for others. As Keupp et al. (2002) note, it is essential that individuals are able to integrate their experiences from different settings (*Lebenswelten*) into tentative but concrete first drafts of identities or identity projects. As well, this integration contributes to developing overarching identity goals and identity perspectives. An integrated identity that includes a myriad of (possibly contradictory) identity fragments proves to be functional in transformation processes. An individual who defines him/herself through several different aspects of identity is considerably more resilient against problems in one area because he/she does not run the risk of his/her identity being shaken to the core. Keupp (2003) also refers to this type of identity work as synthesis work (*Synthesearbeit*). His idea of synthesis work

encompasses one's effort in 1) creating a subjective connection between different part-identities, 2) constructing and maintaining a sense of coherence and self-acceptance, 3) generating a sense of authenticity and purpose so that one develops a sense of identity (*Identitätsgefühl*). Through this synthesis an individual is able to make decisions, take action, influence his/her environment, and plan his/her own future - a capacity that Keupp refers to as *Handlungsfähigkeit* and which I have chosen to translate with *agency*.

In asserting the importance of agency in identity formation, Keupp and his colleagues continue in Erikson's footsteps, who foresaw over 60 years ago that an agentic orientation would be vital for individuals forming identities in Western societies (Côté, 1993). In particular, Erikson believed that agency would be characterised by self-direction, openness, and flexibility - traits he felt would help an individual create an identity that is strong and synthesized but also flexible enough to respond to the rapid and often unexpected changes in Western societies. Identity formation requires individuals to "transact" with their social environment. In other words, individuals must act purposefully within the limits and constraints of their cultural and social setting (Schwartz, Donnellan, Ravert, Luyckx, & Zamboanga, 2012). Agency, it seems, provides a bridge between *knowing* who one is and *being* in the world. In 'worlds' that have changed dramatically in the face of postindustrialism and postmodernism, the concept of personal agency has taken on a central role in the psychological discourse surrounding identity formation, in particular, during adolescence and emerging adulthood.

The extensive empirical work by Keupp and his colleagues with late adolescents on their process of identity construction over a ten-year period has been ground-breaking for identity researchers in developmental and social psychology, sociology, and education in German-speaking academia. With a firm grounding in Erikson's theory, they have been able to tackle their own and others' critique of the prior theory in light of the dramatic societal changes that have accompanied the postmodern era. The result is a

theory on identity construction that is substantiated by the narrative voices of a large sample of young people living in Germany. Although Keupp et al.'s theory is often reduced to the idea of identity as a pretty patchwork of multiple identities, its complexity and depth reaches much further into the processes, struggles, risks, and resources involved in the creation of a patchwork and much less into the content of the patchwork itself. The present research highlights selected pieces of Keupp et al.'s complex 'patchwork' of ideas. Specifically, the focus here is on an empirical operationalisation of the criteria Keupp et al. consider crucial for effective identity work. Like many psychological constructs, the measurement of identity or part of the identity formation (or construction) process is not an easy task. The following section summarises two approaches to the investigation of identity formation that have found a large audience and whose influence has been far-reaching within, and beyond, the field of psychology.

1.1.3 Measuring identity formation

Just as theories about identity and its formation have differed widely both within and between academic disciplines, the problem of how to measure this construct and its formation process has been tackled in a myriad of ways. Some researchers and/or disciplines have taken qualitative approaches such as the narrative method (McAdams, 2011) or discourse analysis (e.g., Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). In mainstream psychology, however, the central aim has been to operationalise identity and/or its process of formation so that it can be reduced to quantifiable results. These results have been used to predict related behavior and outcomes, to better understand distinct aspects of the construct, and to generalise findings beyond the sample. Qualitative methods, such as the narrative approach used by Keupp et al. (2002), provide rich data that can act as a window into individual lives and can be very fruitful for generating theories about a concept or process. Often quantitative instruments are subsequently developed in order to focus on one part of a theory and/or to examine the relationship between several operationalised constructs. As will become more clear in Section 2.2, I chose to

follow the latter of these approaches, examining just a few specific elements of Keupp et al.'s comprehensive theory. In this way, my aim is not unlike that of other researchers who relied on Erikson's ideas in order to empirically investigate identity formation. With reference to the theoretical and empirical exploration of identity as a complex and multifaceted developmental process, it seems necessary to note that I am aware of the wealth of theory and research that has been developed and conducted parallel to Eriksonian and neo-Eriksonian work, including, for instance, the breadth of work on collective identity (such as Social Identity Theory pioneered by Tajfel (1981)) as well as cultural and ethnic identity (Phinney, 1990; Phinney & Ong, 2007). However, since Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory is largely based on Erikson's ideas, I have chosen to stay within Eriksonian and neo-Eriksonian thought and to focus here on some of the other efforts that have been made to extend and operationalise parts of Erikson's theory. To date, James Marcia's (1966) adaptation of Erikson's theory on Ego Identity in his Identity Status paradigm is the most widely used approach to personal identity formation in psychology (Côté & Levine, 1988). Therefore, it seems only reasonable to include a brief description of his approach and recent extensions of it in this section. Following this, I discuss Michael Berzonsky's (1989) work on Identity Styles, a concept that extends Erikson's and Marcia's ideas using a social-cognitive processing approach to identity construction. Finally, I have chosen to incorporate a more recent approach to measuring identity which focuses on the functional aspects of identity construction. Based on some of the ideas captured in Adams and Marshall's (1996) essay on a person-centered approach to identity formation, Serafini and Adams (2002) developed the Functions of Identity Scale. I see parallels between Keupp et al.'s work and Adams and Marshall's writings as well as between the Functions of Identity Scale and the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI) that I present in this dissertation. I will return all three of these approaches in the discussion when I assess the added value and unique contribution of of the EIWI and the resulting classification scheme to identity research.

Marcia's Identity Status paradigm Within the academic world, Erikson's followers strove to find a way to empirically measure the inner structure of ego identity. Specifically, researchers were interested in identifying observable signs of the existance, absence, or quality of the hypothesized structure. Within the field of psychology, Marcia's research on ego identity, first published in 1966, has probably had the most wide-spread influence on identity research over the last 40 years (Berzonsky, 2011). Following Erikson's ideas, Marcia constructed two instruments with which to measure the personal identity of individuals. The first of these instruments, Ego Identity Incomplete Sentences Blank (EI-ISB, 1966), is a semi-projective measure which generates an overall score for ego identity, either high or low (Marcia, 2007). The second instrument, a semistructured interview called the Identity Status Interview (ISI), focuses on how individuals came to have their present identity. Unlike the E-ISB, the ISI aims to capture the process of identity development and not the content; however, the analysis focuses mostly on the present outcome of this process. In particular, here, Marcia is interested in the assessment of two criteria that he (in light of Erikson's theory) deems central to identity formation: *exploration* and *commitment* (Marcia, 1966). Exploration refers to a time in which an individual deliberates about, sorts through, and experiments with different roles and ideas he/she could follow (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). The term commitment describes the degree to which an individual adheres to or invests in a specific role or idea. Following Erikson's theory, Marcia chose to focus on the development and decision-making in two specific areas of identity formation: careers and ideologies.

Using the ISI, individuals can be classified into one of four *identity statuses*: identity achievement, identity foreclosure, identity moratorium, and identity diffusion. *Identity achievement* describes individuals who, after working through an exploration phase, are committed to specific roles and ideals; *identity foreclosure* represents individuals who have committed to roles and ideals without having explored other alternatives; individuals who fall into the *identity moratorium* category are in an exploration phase

and have not yet committed to any of the alternatives; finally, the *identity diffusion* category encompasses individuals who show neither signs of exploration nor commitment (Marcia, 2007). As helpful as these categories are, Marcia makes it clear that the identity statuses should be viewed as constructs and not as reality. He notes,

> The identity statuses are ways we social scientists have of labeling our experience of others' experience of themselves. They are revisable and discardable when more useful ways of labeling these experiences are invented. The identity statuses are essentially research constructs that have become habits of speech. And it is worth remembering that even within the paradigm, any individual is an admixture of these statuses, not solely one. (p. 7)

These categories have been used widely in social science research on identity, in particular, since Grotevant and Adams (1984) developed the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (OM-EIS) which is considerably less time-consuming than the ISI.

As of late, however, researchers have been increasingly interested in understanding the *process* through which identity is formed (or constructed) and not just the *outcome* of this process (Keupp et al., 2002; Berzonsky, 1989, 2011). As I discuss shortly, Berzonsky's development of a measurement instrument based on his social-cognitive model presents one such process-oriented approach to identity formation. Other recent advances in identity status research have delved more deeply into the *processes* of exploration and commitment (Luyckx, Goossens, Soenens, & Beyers, 2006). These advances were presented as a response to critique that Marcia's approach generated a "static" view of identity focused on classifying individuals into categories that seemed final by the end of adolescence rather than "examining the dynamic tension between synthesis and confusion" that Erikson proposed (Schwartz et al., 2012, p. 342). Luyckx et al. (2006), for instance, theorised and found empirical evidence for a subdivision of exploration and commitment into two different processes each. They separated exploration into *exploration in breadth* which describes Marcia's original dimension and *exploration in depth* which depicts the thorough (re)consideration of commitments

one has already made. Commitment was divided into *commitment making* which mirrors Marcia's original dimension and *identification with commitments* which focuses on the synthesis of commitments into one's sense of self after a time of exploration in depth. Two years after Luyckx et al. published their original paper, he joined with some other colleagues to introduce an additional process of exploration: *ruminative exploration* (Luyckx et al., 2008). Ruminative exploration indicates an obsessive desire to make the 'right' choice that has a paralysing effect on the individual's ability to make any choice at all. By adding this third process of exploration, Luyckx and his colleagues have identified a five-dimensional model of identity formation and in so doing have been able to understand more about the seemingly paradoxical connection between exploration and both openness and distress. They conclude that openness is associated with exploration in breadth and depth while distress is connected with ruminative exploration.

At an empirical level, focusing on processes instead of the categories themselves has had a positive impact on the construct validity of Marcia's identity status approach. Using the more refined method of cluster analyses (compared with the original median-split method used by Marcia) on the component processes, several teams of identity researchers were able to find evidence for Marcia's four original statuses (Luyckx et al., 2008; Crocetti, Rubini, Luyckx, & Meeus, 2008). Furthermore, based on their findings it was possible to identify new identity statuses, including an *undifferentiated* status for individuals who could not be categorised with reasonable certainty into any one status; both a *diffused-diffused* and a *carefree-diffused* status which correspond with Erikson's description of identity confusion in which individuals either feel "mixed up" or are uninterested in their own identity formation; and a *searching moratorium* that fits individuals who can explore something new without necessarily giving up old commitments (Schwartz et al., 2012). In delving more deeply into the processes behind and differentiation within the identity status approach identity researchers seem to be finding more reasons to return to Erikson's original ideas surrounding identity synthesis

and confusion. The simplicataion of the identity question into "knowing who one is and where one is headed, versus feeling lost and 'mixed up'" (p. 345) has proved to be useful in predicting both psychological and behavioral outcomes.

Berzonsky's Identity Styles   Although Berzonsky's (1989) work clearly follows in the footsteps of Marcia's application and extension of Erikson's theory, Berzonksy's social-cognitive model of identity formation relies to a greater extent on ideas of social-construction than does Marcia's work (Sorell & Montgomery, 2001). Drawing on Kelly's (1955) person-as-scientist approach, Berzonsky proposes a model of identity formation that focuses on "differences in the social-cognitive processes and strategies individuals use to engage in or avoid the tasks of constructing, maintaining, and/or reconstructing a sense of identity" (2011, p. 295). In particular, he looks at how Marcia's paradigm may be related to differences in how individuals negotiate identity issues, make decisions, and solve problems. He postulates that there are three different social-cognitive identity processing styles: informational, normative, and diffuse-avoidant.

First, Berzonsky (1989) outlines how individuals with achieved and moratorium identity statuses are likely to use an *informational* processing style in which they "actively seek out, process and evaluate relevant information" (p. 269) before resolving identity conflicts and making commitments. Berzonsky (2011) later notes that informational oriented individuals "are self-reflective, skeptical about their self-views, interested in learning new things about themselves, and willing to evaluate and modify their identity structure in light of dissonant feedback" (pp. 295-296). This social-cognitive processing style has been associated with a personal sense of identity that is both committed and well-integrated (Berzonsky, Macek, & Nurmi, 2003). Furthermore, it correlates with a number of positive character traits such as open-mindedness, emotional autonomy, empathy, cognitive complexity, and problem-focused coping strategies (Berzonsky, 2011). Individuals who demonstrate an informational orientation have been found to define themselves through personal attributes or their own ideas, values

and goals (Berzonsky & Adams, 1999).

Second, Berzonsky (1989) suggests that individuals who indicate a foreclosed identity status follow a more *normative* social-cognitive processing style marked by a concern for conforming to the standards and ideals embraced by significant others such as one's parents. A normative style is correlated with "high commitment levels, self-control, and a sense of purpose but also a need for structure and cognitive closure, authoritariansim, inflexibility, a foreclosed identity status and low tolerance for ambiguity" (Berzonsky, 2011, p. 296). Individuals who demonstrate this social cognitive orientation tend to define themselves through group membership or collective attributes such as religion or patriotism (Berzonsky & Adams, 1999).

Lastly, the individuals who demonstrate a more diffuse identity tend to avoid dealing with problems and put off identity conflicts and decisions for as long as possible. This *diffuse-avoidant* social-cognitive processing style is characterized by "the tendency to delay and procrastinate until situational consequences and rewards dictate a course of action" (Berzonsky, 1989, p. 269). Their behavior tends to cater to immediate social expectations, and the social attributes with which they define themselves refer mainly to external social concerns, such as their reputation or popularity. This is a practice that, as Berzonsky notes, "may produce a fragmented sense of self, lacking stability across situations" (1999, p. 580).

Berzonsky first developed the Identity Style Inventory (ISI) in 1989 in an attempt to operationalize his process-oriented social cognitive theory of identity formation. Over the past 20 years, the ISI has been revised several times, the most recent revision process resulted in the ISI-5 (Berzonsky et al., 2013). The measure consists of nine-item sub-tests for each of the three identity styles. The accomplishment of this latest instrument, in comparison with earlier versions, is the use of items that are content-neutral, for example, "When making important decisions, I like to spend time thinking about my options," "I automatically adopt and follow the values I was brought up with," and "I am not really thinking about my future now, it is still a long way

off" (p. 5). These questions allow participants to think about content areas (such as religious beliefs, roles, career decisions) that are relevant to them without forcing them to focus on domains specified by the authors. The neutrality of the items also makes the test more suitable for cross-cultural research.

Berzonsky's (1989) approach has made a significant contribution to identity research by shifting the focus from the outcome to the process. His three styles of social-cognitive identity processing have uncovered three clearly distinct strategies for dealing with identity crises which, as the literature has shown, differ from each other both at the process and the content level. The successful operationalisation (especially with the most recent improvements to the ISI) has enabled researchers to understand more about individual differences in the process of identity formation. Nonetheless, it is also important to understand that Berzonsky's social-cognitive approach is limited to addressing only one part of the identity formation process, namely, how individuals deal with identity crises or decision-making tasks at the social-cognitive level.

Although both Marcia's and Berzonsky's conceptualizations of identity formation differ somewhat from Erikson's ideas, as Sorell and Montgomery (2001) put it, "they do not contradict or invalidate Erikson's theory. They suggest refinements and elaborations that have shown themselves to be particularly useful in empirical investigations of the identity development process" (p. 109).

Both the identity status and identity style models, and their related measurement instruments, are considered by many psychologists to be 'tried and true'. Furthermore, recent advances to the identity status approach by such researchers as Luyckx (2008), Schwartz (2005; 2012), and Crocetti (2008) have helped clarify some of the confusion about the individual statuses, have connected the model with other parts of Erikson's theory, and with newer instruments of measurement have shown its usefulness for contemporary psychological research. Any new operationalisation of an identity theory in psychology will be set against and examined for its uniqueness and/or its added value to both the identity status and the identity style models and their related measures of

identity formation. This is the reason I have briefly presented Marcia's and Berzonsky's and related works here and I will return to them again in the discussion. While these two empirical approaches to identity have arguably been the most influential (neo-)Eriksonian approaches to identity research in psychology, I feel it is important to note that there is a plethora of work in (Eriksonian and neo-Eriksonian) identity theory and research beyond the identity status and styles approaches. I now turn to one such approach and discuss its contribution to identity research.

Adams' person-centered approach and its functions of identity   Although it has not (yet) found the breadth of acceptance or use in identity research as have Marcia's and Berzonsky's approaches, Adams (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Serafini & Adams, 2002) presents an important contribution to neo-Eriksonian identity theory and research. In their essay "A developmental social psychology of identity: Understanding the person-in-context", Adams and Marshall (1996) put forward a theory of identity formation outlined in 15 propositions that were drawn either out of the psychological or sociological literature or the authors' own cultural observations or clinical experience. With a view of identity formation as an ongoing, active construction process that takes place in a relational context, their theory shows significant parallels to Keupp et al. (2002). At the base of both Adams and Marshall's and Keupp et al.'s work is Erikson's theory of identity as a psychosocial and lifelong formation process. While Adams and Marshall were reading and reflecting on identity formation in their North American context, Keupp et al. (2002) were conducting and analysing interviews with young adults in Germany. That they have come to many similar conclusions about the constructive process of identity formation I feel speaks for both theories. In particular, each of these theories discusses the signs that the identity construction process is going well.

Adams and Marshall followed Erikson's insistence that the achievement of an "optimal identity" (Erikson, 1968, p. 165) has a functional purpose and then laid out what

they believe to be the five functions or funtional outcomes of this process: a) "providing the structure for *understanding* who one is"; (b) "providing *meaning and direction* through commitments, values, and goals"; (c) "providing a sense of *personal control* and free will"; (d) "striving for *consistency, coherence, and harmony* between values, beliefs, and commitments"; (e) "providing the ability to *recognize potential* in the form of future possibilities, and alternative choices" (p. 433, italics in original). Although the terminology differs in some respects, these functions of (optimal) identity share many similarities with what (Keupp et al., 2002) describe as both the requirements and goals of *gelingende* identity work and that I have labeled the six aspects of effective identity work and described in Section 1.1.2.

Six years after (Adams & Marshall, 1996) presented their essay, Serafini and Adams (2002) operationalised these five constructs in the Functions of Identity Scale (FIS). They approached the operationalisation of the functions of identity by following Loevinger's (1957) method of test construction, originally carrying out two studies in order to test the substantive, structural, and external validity of the scale. The results of this initial effort were not entirely straight forward (there was some support for a 4-factor model and some for a five-factor model). Since constructing the FIS in 2002, Serafini has continued to revise, re-evaluate and re-validate the scale such that it now has a psychometrically sound base and only 15 items (Serafini & Maitland, 2013). In the report of this most recent validation study, Serafini and Maitland show strong empirical support for a five-factor solution and give the following summary of these five operationalised and validated functions:

> The first identity function, Structure, provides the ability to process and internalize self-relevant information in ways that are pertinent and necessary for understanding the self and one's personal identity. The second, Goals, offers the ability to actively establish one's own goals and to move toward their achievement in a self-driven and self-regulated fashion....Personal Control is derived from Erikson's notion of free will whereby this iden-

tity function provides the agency and self-regulatory abilities necessary for movement towards one's goals and future possibilities....The fourth identity function, Harmony, provides a sense of consistency and congruency among one's chosen values or beliefs and actions (commitments)....Finally, identity functions to orient and drive one's choices, goals, and actions towards a tangible future. This future orientation is based on Erikson's (1968) description of identity as a continually unfolding self, and one that is built upon a continuity of self across past, present, and future. (p. 161)

The functions of identity approach to identity research, although also based on Eriksonian thought, differs significantly from Marcia's and Berzosky's approaches. Instead of focusing on *how* individuals form their identities (focusing on exploration and commitment processes), Serafini's measure focuses on the "outer workings" of identity construction and *what* "a well-established, healthy sense of identity provides to an individual" (Crocetti, Sica, Schwartz, Serafini, & Meeus, 2013, p. 3). In their recent study, Crocetti et al. sought to connect contemporary advances in the identity status model postulated by Crocetti et al. (2008) and Berzonsky's (1989) identity styles with Adams' and Serafini's functions of identity. In correlating Crocetti et al.'s three-dimensional extension of Marcia's model (including commitment, in-depth exploration, and reconsideration of commitment) with the functions of identity, they found that identity functions were positively correlated with commitment and in-depth exploration and negatively correlated with reconsideration of commitment (Crocetti et al., 2013). With reference to Berzonksy's approach, results showed a positive correlation between both informational and normative styles and the functions of identity (one exception between normative style and personal control) and a negative association between the diffuse-avoidant style and all five functions of identity. As one of the first studies to empirically link these three approaches to identity research, Crocetti et al. conclude that while all three of these conceptualisations are rooted in Erikson's (1950, 1968) theory, each one "captures a specific facet of identity" (p. 11) and thus

contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of identity formation.

Just as Marcia, Berzonsky, and Serafini and Adams all sought to capture the essence of parts of Erikson's theory at an empirical level in order to better understand and generalise about development patterns and identity formation processes, I seek to adapt parts of Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory in order to empirically examine specific aspects of identity work of adolescents in Germany. As was mentioned earlier, Keupp et. al focused their efforts on understanding the "how" of identity work processes. They did this by laboriously analysing extensive transcript material from interviews conducted with individual young people at three different points in time. It is my aim in this study to build on the work of Keupp et al. by 1) creating a quantitative operationalisation of the main components of effective identity work; 2) exploring individual differences in how young people perform identity work; 3) investigating how these different aspects of and the individual differences in identity work are related to (even predictive of) other areas of adolescent development, including body experience and mental health; and 4) examining the role that gender plays in adolescents' identity work, body experience, and mental health.

With reference to the third and fourth aims of this study, the following sections of the theoretical framework focus on theories and research pertinent to the relationship between identity and gender, identity and the body, and finally identity, gender, the body, and mental health. While I understand that each of these relationships individually could fill entire dissertations, I hope that an investigation into the empirical connections between Keupp et al.'s theory of identity construction and gender, body experience, and mental health will offer insights valuable both to identity researchers and scholars from each of these other fields.

1.2   Identity, gender, and the body

> Gender functions as a social label that is applied to people instantly and generally automatically, without deliberation. And much of the power of gender emerges from the universality of this categorization. Although scholars have pointed to the wisdom of considering that humanity comprises more than two sexes and is in fact a continuum of people between dimorphic ideals of men and women, dividing the world into men and women is fundamental to all cultures. For all but a small proportion of individuals who are born intersexed, sex-typed bodies place individuals in the social category of female or male. Although there are multiple ways to construe gender personally, being born into one of these categories and not the other has a profound impact on how individuals are treated, what they expect of themselves, and how they lead their lives. (Beall, Eagly, & Sternberg, 2005, p.1)

As is clear from this quote, it is difficult to discuss identity and gender without incorporating the body into the discourse; and it is equally as difficult to look at identity and the body without integrating gender. For this reason, it seems wise to combine these two subjects into one section rather than trying to artificially separate them. There are, however, subsections in which gender or the body take center stage and others in which the relationship between the two is the focus. The first aim of this section is to establish, both for myself and for the reader, a gendered lens through which to read the rest of this thesis. I aim to uncover a few of the trials and acknowledge the triumphs related to how gender has been defined, (mis)used, and (mis)understood in the field of psychology and, specifically, with respect to identity research. I begin by reviewing how the psychology as a discipline has historically dealt with gender in theory and research and how new theoretical approaches such as social constructionism and recent advances in integrating theoretical standpoints

and empirical findings are offering new frameworks for designing, conducting, and interpreting psychological research in a gender-sensitive way. Then I look specifically at how gender has been treated in identity research and summarize findings in the literature on identity development and gender. In a subsequent section, I aim to give the body and individual body experience their rightful place as integral components in both theory and research on identity formation in the field of psychology. In order to do this, I turn toward previous and current theories and research on identity and body experience and, more specifically, on processes of identity and body (trans)formation during adolescence. Through this exploration of gender and the body, I hope to set the stage for a gender-sensitive and body-integrative empirical study of identity formation among male and female adolescents. Finally, in the last part of this section, I focus on how the body is experienced by males and females and how this has been treated in research in psychology.

Before continuing, I deem it both necessary and useful to clarify the terms 'sex' and 'gender' and explain how they will be used here. In the literature, the term 'sex' is used primarily when discussing biological differences between men and women. In contrast, the term 'gender' is used when referring to traits, behaviors, and/or experiences that are believed to be socially constructed. The literature has produced few indicators for the strict separation of biological and sociocultural influences. Instead, it seems to make much more sense to assume that many of the similarities and differences between men and women and boys and girls are influenced by both biological and social factors and the interplay of the two (Bussey, 2011). In this dissertation, I will use the term 'gender' whenever I am discussing issues related to maleness and femaleness and the traits, behaviors, or experiences resulting from this distinction, regardless of whether the differences or similarities between the two seem to be biologically based or socially constructed. When citing other sources, however, I will stay true to the terminology used in the cited text.

1.2.1 Gender and psychology

Psychology as a discipline has a peculiar and not yet longstanding relationship with the subject of gender. As Berscheid notes in the foreword to *The Psychology of Gender* (Beall, 1993; Eagly, Beall, & Sternberg, 2005), "most research on gender is of relatively recent vintage within psychology ... [and] much of this research has been a by-product of wider, and more traditional, issues of concern to psychologists, not the central focus" (p. vii). Nonetheless, in line with the various theoretical movements in psychology, a number of theories of gender development and gender differentiation have been proposed over the years. Each of these theories presents a view of how gender identity develops and how differences between males and females can be explained. The following section presents a brief overview of the main theories that have been used to explain gender development and gender differentiation in psychology, and focuses on the unique contribution that each of these approaches has made to the study of gender.

Theories of gender development and differentiation in psychology

Psychodynamic theories   Freud's (1930) psychoanalytic approach to development was one of the earliest theories to describe a process of gender identity development and to give an explanation for the differences in behavior and experience between girls and boys and men and women. Freud's theory accounts for two separate developmental trajectories for boys and girls. Initially, he argues, both trajectories begin with an identification with the mother (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Between three and five years of age, however, children begin to identify solely with the same-sex parent. Around this same time, boys realise that girls do not have a penis and develop castration anxiety while girls react to this realisation with a feeling of loss and envy (Fast, 1993). The so-called oedipal period, in which girls become attached to their father and boys have erotic feelings toward their mother and thus a sense of rivalry toward the father, is resolved through an even stronger identification with the same-sex parent. Here, "children undertake wholesale adoption of the characteristics and qualities of the same-

sex parent" (Bussey & Bandura, 1999, p. 3) and thus become sex-typed. Due to the critique of Freud's phallocentric and male-biased theory and its lack of empirical support, many theorists and researchers have sought to revise Freud's original ideas. Fast (1984, 1993), for example, developed a differentiation framework linking Freud's three major stages of early gender development with Piaget's ideas on egocentrism and growth. Her model addresses both the similarities and differences in boys' and girls' development and accounts for the unique roles mothers and fathers play at each stage of development. Due to a lack of empirical evidence for the original psychoanalytic theory and subsequent revisions or reformulations, much of the work on gender from a psychodynamic perspective remains, however, at a theoretical level.

Cognitive approaches The central tenet of cognitive approaches to gender is the belief that gender is a "basic category used to understand and engage [in] one's social environment" (Cross & Markus, 1993, p. 56). Most cognitive perspectives draw on both biological and social influences for explaining difference, suggesting that gender is a "social creation built on a foundation of physical difference" whereby even minor biological differences between men and women are manifested and amplified over and over by cultures "creating a sense of a pervasive difference between men and women" (p. 56).

The cognitive developmental theory, as described by Kohlberg (1966), posits that children establish stereotypic ideas about gender based on what they see, hear, and experience around them. These impressions help them achieve 'gender constancy' - the sense that one's own gender is "fixed and irreversible" (Bussey & Bandura, 1999, p. 3). After gender constancy has been established, individuals view their own gender identity positively and attempt to shape their behavior so that it fits with this conception. As Bussey and Bandura note, however, there is no empirical evidence for a "relationship between children's understanding of gender constancy and their preference for gender-linked activities, preference for same-gender peers, or emulation of same-gender models,

regardless of how gender constancy is assessed" (p. 4).

Another cognitive approach used to explain gender development and gender differences is the gender schema theory (or theories) put forward by Bem (1981) and Martin and Halverson (1981). Like cognitive developmental theory, gender schema theories view sex stereotyping as a normal cognitive process. However, here it is believed that children begin developing a gender schema once they are able to label themselves and others as either male or female (Martin & Halverson, 1981), not only after achieving gender constancy. According to Bem (1981), a gender schema is "a cognitive structure, a network of associations that organizes and guides an individual's perception. [It] functions as an anticipatory structure, a readiness to search for and to assimilate incoming information in schema-relevant terms" (p. 355). In this way, as children interaction with their environment, they develop a gender schema that encompasses information about gender-specific "activities and interests, personality and social attributes, and scripts" that then help them process new information and behave in ways that are congruous with the gender roles around them (Bussey & Bandura, 1999, p. 5). Empirical research has not been conclusive with respect to the determinitive nature of gender schema, and no links have been found between the knowledge of gender stereotypes and one's own prescription to gender-related behavior.

Evolutionary and biological perspectives Evolutionary psychologists posit that gender differences have been inherited from our ancestors (Kenrick & Trost, 1993), with analyses focusing on "mate preferences, reproductive strategies, parental investment in offspring, and the aggressive nature of males" (Bussey & Bandura, 1999, p. 6). Evolutionary psychology does not, however, see differences between men and women in these areas as being necessarily stable; rather, this view of gender differentiation assumes an interaction between genetic heritage and culture/environment. More specifically, the evolutionary perspective proposes that differences between men and women can be traced back to evolutionary pressures that affected males and females in different ways

(Kenrick & Trost, 1993). Evolutionary psychologists believe that great variation exists in the range of social behavior and feel that much of this variation is due to the social environment. Nonetheless, they argue that "underneath all the variation, it is possible to discern some regularities in human behavior" (p. 149).

Over the last 20 years, the field of psychology has seen a notable increase in research in "behavior genetics, endocrinology, neurotransmitter systems, brain imaging, and evolutionary psychology" (Campbell, 2012, p. 137). Contributions of this kind to the discourse on sex and gender differences have been markedly controversial. As Campbell puts it, the foundation of such research efforts rests on the assumption that sex is a binary category. Following this line of thinking, the main question of interest focuses on whether and to what extent sex chromosomes, hormones, or sex-related genes affect the brain and, therefore, human behavior. In another line of biological research, scientists are investigating how brain imaging techniques can localise differences in the functional connectivity of men's and women's brains during specific activities. Furthermore, some researchers have been successful in finding structural differences in the "volume of various brain structures, number of nerve cells, patterns of synaptic connections, and the distribution of the various neurotransmitters" (p. 137).

The social constructionist view For social constructionists, there is no 'real' or 'true' male or female nature to be uncovered through scientific inquiry. Instead, social constructionism focuses on the respresentations of gender and how these influence male and female traits, behavior, and experience. As a result, social constructionism shines a light directly on the 'play of differences' in an attempt to draw a more adequate picture of gender (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1994). As Beall (1993) notes, in contrast to the biological and evolutionary approaches, social constructionism asserts that "gender differences can reflect other processes that have little to do with biological sex" (p. 142). It is precisely these processes that constructionists are interested in understanding. In particular, according to Hare-Mustin and Marecek, constructionist

inquiry is interested in understanding how gender is produced and sustained through individual and institutional agents and their interaction in society; the "institutional structures, social practices, cultural representations, linguistic codes and patterns of social interchange" (p. 533) through which gender becomes a social fact; and how the differences between male and female are made to seem natural. Just as in Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory on identity construction, the social construction of gender shares the virtues that individuals' own adaptation to gender norms is a lifelong process in which they play an active and creative role instead of simply being "acted upon" (Pleck, 1995, p. 24).

Recent advances in the psychology of gender

Historically, psychologists have viewed differences between males and females as being both essential and universal. As Bohan (1997) notes, "Essentialist views construe gender as resident within the individual, a quality or trait describing one's personality, cognitive process, moral judgment, etc." (p. 32). This type of research follows the assumption that there is such a thing as Woman and Man that are characterized in terms of inherent qualities (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1994). Furthermore, in an assertion of their universality, gendered traits have been considered to apply to women and men in general, without accounting for the great diversity within the categories of male and female. As evidenced by the publication of such works as Hare-Mustin and Marecek's *Making a difference: Psychology and the construction of gender* (1990) and Gergen and Davis' edited book (1997), *Toward a new psychology of gender*, the mid-1980s through the early-1990s was a time in which a number psychologists began to question "what has heretofore been accepted as scientific truth about women and men" (Davis & Gergen, 1997, p. 1).

It seems that this questioning was influenced by two modern theoretical/social movements. First, at an academic level, the growing doubt about the extent and meaningfulness of biologically-founded traits and behavioral differences between men

and women was backed by the more recently-established social constructionist theory which was slowly making its way from sociology to psychology. The social constructionist view encouraged theorists and empiricists alike to ask whether or not "gender differences can reflect other processes that have little to do with biological sex" (Beall, 1993, p. 142). As Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1988) put it, "from a constructivist standpoint, the 'real' nature of male and female cannot be determined. Constructivism focuses our attention on representations of gender, rather than on gender itself" (p. 456).

Second, at a more mainstream societal level, the feminist movement powered questions about the inequality of men and women and began challenging the male bias and oppression of women in general as well as in and through academia. Through female researchers such as Carol Gilligan (1982), women's "different" voices were slowly being heard and longstanding theories challenged for being biased and one-sided. As Beall (1993) posits, the field of psychology has played its own role in constructing gender: through the type of research questions being asked, the kind of research that actually gets published, the particular research designs that are used, and the gender of the participants included in the studies. For Beall, "all of these influences can lead to biased experimental results that are more congruent with cultural ideas about gender than with actual reality" (p. 143). She suggests that these biases can be divided into two categories: The alpha bias exaggerates differences between males and females while the beta bias minimizes the differences without taking their "differential power, status, or economic opportunities" (p. 141) into account.

As a result of the feminist influence in the early psychology of gender movement and the biases that were uncovered in the literature, many psychologists were wary of focusing on the question of similarity or difference between genders (Beall et al., 2005). Since Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1994) concluded that "assertions about male-female differences and similarities do not have a single, fixed meaning; instead, they serve as raw material for constructing a variety of contested interpretations, cultral meanings

and political agendas" (p. 532), the psychologists in this new school of thought feared an interpretation of findings that would result in female disadvantage. Beall et al. posit, however, that in the decade or two since these first works were published there has been an "upward shift in the status of women" (p. 4). While I argue that this is only true in some parts of the Western world and perhaps only for some groups of women, this "upward shift" has freed many gender psychologists from this fear and allowed them "to take a close look at the causes and consequences of similarity and difference" (p. 4). As a result, research psychologists focusing on gender have begun to think of the similarities and differences between girls and boys and men and women in terms of a continuum rather than a dichotomy of either similar or different. With respect to quantitative research, the focus has moved from significance tests to the more meaningful metric of effect size and the central research question has changed from *whether* or not men and women differ on a particular construct to the *extent* that their traits, behaviors or experiences overlap. In a very helpful contribution from Horst (1995), she suggests that identity researchers, in particular, should examine gender differences dialectically, "constantly balancing the tendency to overemphasize differences with the tendency to underemphasize differences" for, as she puts it, "women's experience is both different from and the same as men's" (p. 276) and vice versa.

As Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1994) note, although research on sex difference generally yields descriptive findings, the result of the research is often proscriptive; "By claiming to know what men and women are, sex difference researchers seem to proclaim what they ought to be" (p. 534). Traditionally, research on gender differences has not attempted to uncover the processes underlying the results. Beall et al. (2005) believe, however, that this is changing. They argue that some of the greatest advances in the psychology of gender in the past 10-15 years have been in the interest in and investigation of the origins of gender differences or the contexts in which they are embedded. It is no longer enough to simply report the differences or similarities in behavior, experience, or traits found in males and females. Instead, most authors

(if only in their interpretation of results) attempt to understand how such differences or similarities came to be. Moreover, researchers are now going beyond the search for proximal causes (e.g., social expectations) and are turning toward other areas of psychology and even other disciplines in order to understand the more distal causes (e.g., the reasons for certain social expectations) of gender differences and similarities in which the proximal causes are embedded.

Due in part to a lack of empirical support for each of the aforementioned theories of gender development and differentiation, many researchers have turned their focus to integrative approaches that give a more comprehensive understanding of gender development and difference. In particular, some researchers feel a psychobiosocial approach is both necessary and useful (Hausmann, Schoofs, Rosenthal, & Jordan, 2009). As Kenrick, Trost, and Sundie (2005) put it, "It is neither necessary nor appropriate to choose between models emphasizing evolution *or* culture *or* learning *or* cognition. The human brain ... is designed to think, to learn, and to construct cultures. To isolate or ignore any of these facets limits our understanding of human behavior" (p. 66).

Although it is not my aim in this study to determine how similarities and differences between female and male adolescents develop, I deem it important to note that I, too, follow an integrative approach. In line with my constructionist stance on identity formation, I feel that an individual actively 'works' on his/her understanding of gender and his/her own expression of gender as part of the identity work process. As part of this highly-networked and reciprocal process, I feel that biological, cognitive and sociocultural influences all play a role in how individuals work out gender for themselves. How gender has been treated in identity research within psychology is the focus of the following section.

1.2.2   Identity and gender

Identity research offers a perfect example of the peculiar relationship between psychology as a discipline and gender as a focus of investigation and deliberation. Despite the

acknowledged relevance and importance of gender in identity formation, at the genesis of this major field of study, gender was neglected almost entirely. In the construction of his theory, Erikson (1950), like the majority of his contemporaries, focused on male development and the factors which played a role in the identity formation of boys and men (Marcia, 1980; Muuss et al., 1995). Since one of the major tenets of Erikson's theory was its epigenetic and universal character, it was as if he assumed his eight stages of development (including the identity and intimacy stage) were as fitting for girls and women as for the boys and men with whom they were developed. Nearly 20 years after his first book on identity, Erikson (1968) put forward the suggestion that women may follow different patterns in their identity development than men. But this appeared to be more of an afterthought than an honest consideration since, despite his relatively long career, he did not give the gender issue much of his time nor did he deem it necessary to re-evaluate or in any way integrate women's experiences into his theory on psychosocial development (Horst, 1995). Later, some of Erikson's younger followers attempted to take women's experience into account by incorporating sexuality, gender roles, and other gender-related matters into their research. Nonetheless, as Marcia (1980) notes, "both Erikson's theory and the identity status approach work only more or less when applied to women" (p. 178). Since researchers have rarely found evidence for gender differences on personal identity, the literature has, for the most part, continued to follow a "gender-free approach" (Cramer, 2000, p. 43).

A brief look at gender identity in theory and research

In his psychosocial view of development, Erikson (1950) shows a normative understanding of gender and considers gender identity to be synonomous with sexual identity (Langner, 2009). The adoption of the stereotype gender role is, according to Erikson, a sign of achieved identity and is seen as a prerequisite for building relationships. As Langner critisizes, Keupp et al. (2002) do not go much beyond this conception of gender. They view gender as being a central part-identity in one's patchwork of multiple

identities but, other than a brief mention of gender differences regarding the relation between body experience and self-esteem, do not pay special attention to the role of gender in the constructive process of identity formation.

Two publications were especially helpful for looking at Erikson's theory through a gendered lens. Horst (1995) examined Erikson's model and the (feminist) critique surrounding it while considering the context in which the text was originally written. Her aim was to avoid focusing on (gender-biased) superficialities that might cloud a gender-neutral core in Erikson's theory. The consensus among Erikson's critics (whether feminist or not) is that "Erikson's model does not address the experience of women accurately" (p. 272) and that, as a result, it would be necessary to change his epigenetic model in order to reflect the given gender differences. Horst herself believes "one can legitimately argue on the basis of sheer volume of [male-focused] material that Erikson contributed to the obscuring of women's experience...Experiences and traits that are not treated as important, that do not count in constituting the norm, too easily become perceived as 'abnormal' in the pejorative sense" (p. 272). But unlike other critics, Horst does not share the view that Erikson ignores the importance of interpersonal relationships (which have generally been understood to be more significant for women than men). Rather, she concludes that Erikson does indeed acknowledge the importance of interpersonal relationships by integrating them into every stage of his model. Nonetheless, Horst feels Erikson does not go far enough in order to show to what extent his development scheme applies to women's maturation as well.

Sorell and Montgomery (2001) published a well-received article discussing Erikson's theory from a feminist standpoint. The authors do not focus on what Erikson did or did not do to include women or gender into his theory; instead, they compare the implicit core of his theory on psychosocial development with a feminist standpoint view of identity development and conclude: "The aspects of Erikson's theory that have been mentioned thus far - the socioculturally and historically situated, life-span focus on identity development - are very much in keeping with feminist standpoint concerns

regarding contextualized subjectivity" (p. 102). They argue that in comparison with the other theoretical approaches of Erikson's time, such as Behavorism in which nature and nurture are organised hierarchically, "Eriksons theory adopts a contextualist, dynamic interactionist, and biopsychosocial resolution in which both nature and nurture are seen as 100% contributors to development" (p. 102).

Brinkman, Rabenstein, Rosén, and Zimmerman (2014, p. 849), who conducted a focus-group study with 10 to 13 year-olds, argue that "children are active decision makers in a process of expressing their gender identity in which they weigh the benefits of authenticity against potential consequences of nonconformity." Specifically, they conclude,

> As children experience [or witness] gender prejudice as a result of nonconformity ... they make decisions about whether and how to adjust their gender identity and may attempt to integrate the feedback into their sense of identity, hide aspects of their selves from others, or challenge (or consider challenging) the prejudice and resist changing who they are as an individual. (p. 849)

In a similar vein, I like to read Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory in a way that views gender as a creatively and actively-constructed part of identity. Just as with the construction of their identities in general, individuals are challenged with 1) integrating discrepant norms and expectations about gender into a coherent whole and act accordingly across different settings and situations; 2) finding a sense of one's own gender that is meaningful, makes sense, and is manageable in one's daily life; 3) accepting oneself and experiencing acceptance from others for who one is regardless of how well one's gender identity or gender role meets social expectations; and 4) staying true to oneself by behaving authentically with regard to one's own individual constructed sense of gender.

A brief look at gender differences in identity theory and research

As Archer (1989) notes, when looking at gender differences in identity formation, it is important to differentiate between the process of identity formation, the domains of self-definition, and the timing of identity activity during the life cycle. Following Schachter (2005), the structure of identity is another angle from which to view individual differences and differences between groups.

Marcia (1980), against the background of his identity status theory, expected that males and females would go through the process of identity formation in a similar fashion but that they would differ on the domains with which they defined themselves. He also felt that the timing of identity formation may be different for males and females. Since a girl tends to be "encouraged always to look outside of herself for evidence of her development as an acceptable person" and "expected to become proficient in interpersonal relationships", Marcia believed that "the identity formation process takes longer for women than for men" (p.179). Social scientists using Marcia's identity status paradigm have applied it to both males and female, though there is a great deal of disagreement about whether the developmental structure, process, and timing of identity formation are truly the same for both genders (Cramer, 2000). Researchers such as Kroger (1997), who have reviewed the literature on identity over the last few decades, conclude that the identity development of males and females in terms of both structure and process is very similar.

Archer (1989) published the results from three studies in which she compared male and female identity formation within the Erikson-Marcia framework at three points between adolescence and young adulthood with respect to the process, domains, and timing of their identity formation. Her results suggest that male and female adolescents use identity processes in a comparable fashion. With regard to the domains, she found that while males and females did differ on the salience of family roles and political ideologies, the domains of vocational choice, religious beliefs, and sex-role orientations were equally important for both genders. Even in terms of the timing of

identity activity, Archer found only minimal differences between males and females. She concludes,

> The traditional expectation has been that males are agentic, task-oriented and individuated, hence likely to become identity achieved. Females are expected to be connected, concerned with their relationships with others, and defined in such contexts, and therefore, likely to be foreclosed or personally diffuse. However, in those few instances of significant gender difference found in this and other studies to date, the opposite finding more typically revealed. (p. 136)

Moberly (1986), for instance, who looked at differences between males and females in ego identity based on the extent of their reports of exploration and commitment, found that females reported higher levels of overall exploration and commitment than males. Finally, within Berzonsky's identity styles framework no differences have been found between college-aged males and females (Berzonsky, 1993) that would suggest that females are more likely to use an informational, normative, or diffuse/avoidant identity style any more than males and vice versa.

In the present study, one of my main interests is looking at the extent of overlap between female and male adolescents in their experience of each of the aspects of effective identity work described by Keupp et al. (2002), including life coherence, authenticity, (self-)acceptance, integration of discrepant identities/expectations, and agency.

1.2.3   Identity and the body

In social theory, the body has long been an "absent presence" (Shilling, 1993, p. 179). In a book about the relationship between the body and social theory, Shilling posits that researchers and writers have struggled to liberate themselves from Descarte's still, ever-present *Cogito ergo sum* ("I think, therefore I am.") with which all the bodily senses were dismissed and the body was made simply an object submissive to the

mind. In his view, the pattern of the invisible body continued with writings that viewed the human body exclusively as a "location on which structures, cultures or relationships 'imprint' themselves, 'inscribe' their effects, or 'hail' subjects" (p. 182). He suggests that the problem of the absent presence of the body in social thought can be overcome by conceptualizing the body as a "simultaneously biological and social phenomenon that is both shaped by but irreducible to contemporary social relations and structures" (p. 182). For, "to rob the body of its own history and characteristics...is to neglect how our embodied being enables us to remake ourselves by remaking the world around us" (p. 182).

It would be particularly unreasonable to neglect the body in a discussion of or research on identity formation during the both physically and emotionally transformative years of adolescence. For this reason, the following sections focus on how the body has been treated in identity research and how adolescents experience theiry bodies during this time.

Identity and the body during adolescence

"[The adolescent] is his[/her] body, and his[/her] body is [s]he"

(McCandless, 1970, p. 127)

Adolescence and puberty present developmental phases characterized to a great extent by physical and psychological change. Here, individuals experience their bodies in completely different ways compared to childhood. As their bodies change the reactions of others toward them change as well (Haberlandt, Höfer, Keupp, Seitz, & Straus, 1995). Adolescents become conscious of their uniqueness, their independence, but also of their vulnerability both on an emotional and physical level. In this way, as Haberlandt et al. suggest, adolescence presents a phase of development in which a myriad of pleasurable as well as startling bodily sensations are experienced that need to be integrated into a coherent body concept.

Erikson (1968) placed great importance on the role of the adolescent's physical

attributes as a source of identity and self-concept. As mentioned in Section 1.1.1, he views the ego identity as being shaped by three interacting factors: physiological traits, psychological characteristics (such as needs, interests, feelings), and the cultural mileu in which an individual lives. He describes how an individual's physiological characteristics such as gender, physical ability (as well as disability), and appearance give the individual a sense of "bodily self". This bodily self changes as a result of transformations in the physical body across the lifespan.

From Erikson's point of view, "adolescents whose bodies are physically mature and whose social status permits them to be viewed as sexual objects define themselves from a qualitatively different psychosocial position than do children with prepubescent bodies who are generally viewed as sexually off-limits" (Sorell & Montgomery, 2001, p. 109). In this way, Erikson's theory acknowledges the role that the physiological changes from infancy through adolescence have on psychosocial development. According to Erikson (1968), a healthy sense of identity adapts in accordance with the physical characteristics and changes thereof. However, Sorell and Montgomery (2001), who are great advocates of Erikson's theory, note that, although Erikson's understanding of the relationship between embodiment - "the contextually bound experiences that derive from bodily characteristics" - and development is one of the major strengths of his theory (p. 110), his explanation of the interplay between gender and the body in gender-role identity and behavior is indeed due for revision. In his book, *Identity, Youth and Crisis*, Erikson (1968) affirms his belief that differences in male and female identities are a result of differences in reproductive anatomy. It is here that both his psychoanalytic background and the male-dominated context in which he was writing shines through, as he posits that the inward-oriented uterus and the outward protrusion of the penis determine women's focus on the private, caregiving and relationship-oriented sphere and men's drive to affect change in the public sphere. In his own words, Erikson concludes:

Am I saying, then, that anatomy is destiny? Yes, it is destiny, insofar as it

determines not only the range and configuration of physiological functioning and its limitation but also, to an extent, personality configurations. The basic modalities of womans commitment and involvement naturally also reflect the ground plan of her body. (p. 285)

This assertion, alone, has turned many feminists and psychologists of gender away from Erikson's otherwise useful theory. In order to reconcile this (in the 21st century context) clearly sexist view, Sorell and Montgomery (2001) suggest that "it is both right and reasonable to see embodiment as an integral component of psychosocial developmental processes. Clearly, the significance of embodiment changes as bodies grow and attain maturity." They argue (and believe Erikson would agree) "that biology is not a deterministic component of psychosocial process, but a developmental co-contributor" (p. 111).

The body in the process of identity work

Although Keupp et al. (2002) do not give a great deal of space to the body in the description of their theory of identity construction, at a few points in their book they are explicit about its importance. Their ideas about the body in identity work are in line with Giddens (1991) who said, "The reflexivity of the self *extends to the body*, where the body is part of an action system rather than merely a passive object" (p. 77). This statement demonstrates a change in how the body is viewed in Western societies. As Siebert (1996, as cited by Keupp et al.) notes, the body is no longer a fixed and stable entity we inherit from our parents nor is it simply a material shell for our identity; rather the body has become a malleable shape, "a work in progress" (p. 40). According to this understanding of the body as an adjustable and moldable signifier of identity, the body can be styled, decorated, trained, etc., as an expression of a unique identity (Shilling, 1993). Furthermore, Keupp (2003) views the body as a point of reference for each individual's need for authenticity. Specifically, he notes that the less a culture is able to impart individuals with a strong sense of 'what is good', the more individuals

look to their own bodies for a sense of what is good and right.

According to Keupp et al. (2002), the body could constitute its own part-identity (*Teilidentität*) for an individual who spends a considerable amount of time reflecting upon his/her body experience or actively working on his/her bodily identity. For others, however, the body might simply be one aspect integrated into other parts of one's identity without being consolidated into a separate part-identity itself.

Identity and body experience

"Experiencing the body is a way of cohering the self as an integrated whole, whereby the individual says, 'this is where I live'." (Giddens, 1991, p. 78)

Dittmar (2009) describes the relationship between identity and body image as follows: "Identity can be defined as the subjective concept (or representation) that a person holds of him- or herself. Although, traditionally, body image has not been conceptualized in this way, it can be defined as an integral part of identity, given that it constitutes the subjective concept a person holds of their body as part of their self-representation" (p. 5). For (Krueger, 2002) this subjective concept includes "the cumulative set of images, fantasies, and meanings about the body and its parts and functions" (p. 31) The interest in and quantity of psychological research on the body have grown substantially over the last few decades. This is partly due to the prevalent view of body experience as fundamental for understanding human functioning (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). Fisher (1990), who witnessed the evolution of psychological concepts about the body over four decades, came to the following conclusion: "The inexhaustible list of behaviors that has turned out to be linked with measures in the body experience domain documents the ubiquitous influence of body attitudes. Human identity cannot be separated from its somatic headquarters in the world" (p. 18).

However, contrary to Fisher's acknowledgment of the inseparable connection between identity and the body, as in much of social theory, the majority of psychological research on the body is, as Blood (2005) purports,"based on the Cartesian system of

binaries that structures language and underpins Western thought" (p. 24). Blood goes on to argue that "the mind is separated from the body in a hierarchical way...The mind separate from the body is the source of meaning and knowledge about the body" (p. 24). Mainstream psychology has "negotiated this dualism" (p. 23) by creating a connection between mind and body via perception. In this way, the body is reduced to being an object perceived by the mind, thus omitting the concepts of subjectivity or identity (Grosz, 1987). As the object of perception, the body is assumed to be a real object - not a constructed object - with properties that can be accurately or inaccurately perceived by the mind (Blood, 2005). Consequently, as (Slade, 1994) notes, the majority of psychological research on the body focuses on a body image defined as "the picture we have in our minds of the size, shape and form of our bodies" (p. 497). Individuals who are unable to "accurately" perceive their bodies are seen as deviating from the norm (Blood, 2005).

Research based on this idea has given rise to the constructs: "body image disturbance" and "body image dissatisfaction". As a result, the majority of psychological research on body image follows what Cash and Pruzinsky (2002) name the "single-problem perspective" (p. 8) in which the focus of research lies on the extent to which individuals, in particular women, exhibit (or report) a negative or pathological view of their bodies. As a response to the "single-problem perspective", in the past ten years a small number of researchers in psychology have begun to explore body experience from a more positive and less appearance-oriented perspective and have found the following qualities to be important: "favorable opinions of the body" (regardless of physical appearance), "acceptance of the body in spite of weight, body shape, and imperfections" and "respect of the body by attending to its needs and engaging in healthy behaviors" (Avalos, Tylka, & Wood-Barcalow, 2005, p. 286).

Other researchers have focused on understanding the body experience from a sociocultural perspective instead of an objective perspective. Here, the way individuals view, feel about, and deal with their bodies is argued to be directly related to the

societal norms and body ideals purported by the environment in which individuals live. This perspective focuses on how human behavior is influenced by cultural values and posits that these values are important for understanding how individuals are perceived by others and how they perceive themselves (Jackson, 2002). As Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) note, "bodies exist within social and cultural contexts, and hence are also constructed through socio-cultural practices and discourses" (p. 174).

It is against this background that I found both Dittmar's (2009) and Krueger's (2002) writings on body image helpful starting points for reconciling the narrow, cartesian, and visual or aesthetic focus in mainstream definitions of body image with a more holistic and constructionist perspective. Body image, as I define and use it here represents:

> The subjective concept a person actively constructs of their body based on the interplay between day-to-day situational experiences 'inside' one's body and the perceived socio-cultural expectations for one's body. This concept goes beyond the visual mental image(s) a person has of his/her body; it also includes thoughts and meanings about and feelings toward one's body, its parts, and functions. In this way, body image is dynamic and multifaceted and it is both an integral part of identity and the basis for self-representation.

With this definition and my selection of a measurement instrument of positive body image for the present study, I feel I respond to Tiggemann's (2004) call to researchers to "broaden the focus from dissatisfaction to include importance of appearance and behavioral investment, and to consider aspects of appearance other than just body weight and shape...recognition needs to be given to other aspects of body experience than simply physical appearance" (p. 37). Though many important advances have been made toward the understanding of body experience and, in particular, body image among females, with the inclusion of male adolescents and the focus on positive body image, I feel the present study makes a unique contribution to the study of the

body and identity.

As the socio-cultural perspective suggests, not only individuals themselves play an active role in shaping their body experiences; rather, the environment around them also plays a role in this constructive process. The importance of the outside world in this process of construction becomes more clear with a spotlight on gender. For this reason, the following section focuses specifically on the relationship between body experience and gender.

1.2.4 Gender and body experience

The extent of influence of the socio-cultural context on how individuals experience their bodies is probably most evident when looking at gender. As Keupp et al. (2002) note, the discussion of male and female gender identity as cultural constructs, which originally corresponded most with the social aspects of gender roles, now also challenges the 'natural', biological gender identity (i.e., sex) and shows that male as well as female embodiment and is culturally constructed right down to its most basic patterns.

For many years girls and women were the (nearly) exclusive focus of the literature on body experience and, in particular, body image. This was significantly due to the increasing number of girls and women being diagnosed with and treated for an eating disorder and the belief that the experience of body dissatisfaction and negative body image plays an important role in this trend (See Sepúlveda, Botella, and León (2002) for a meta-analytic review of findings between 1970 and 1998). Furthermore, the majority of studies on body dissatisfaction including both females and males report greater body dissatisfaction among females than males (Buddeberg-Fischer & Klaghofer, 2002). Many theorists and researchers have turned to social constructionism to explain this gendered phenomenon.

One theory, in particular, has earned a great deal of respect in the field. *Objectification Theory* is a framework developed by Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) in an attempt to illuminate the "experiential consequences of being female in a culture that sexually

objectifies the female body" (p. 173). Fredrickson and Roberts argue that the cultural environment of sexual objectification socialises girls and women to see themselves as aesthetic objects. As a result, some females internalise the cultural standards of female beauty which, in the Western world, represent a white, tall, thin, large-breasted body, a shape that diverges greatly from that of the average woman. Though achieving such standards is unrealistic for most people, the images and messages are so pervasive in the media that girls and women learn that it is reasonable to measure themselves against and strive for such standards (Rodin, Silberstein, & Striegel-Moore, 1985). In 1985, Rodin et al. reported that body dissatisfaction among women was so extensive and independent of age, ethnicity, or body weight that they coined the term "normative discontent" to describe the relationship women have with their bodies. Keupp et al. (2002) also note that the connection between body experience and self-esteem among girls is not only stronger but more often negative than among boys.

Objectification theory offers an explanation for the magnitude of research suggesting that females experience more body-image concerns than males. However, as more and more attention is paid to the body experience of boys and men, it is clear that body concerns are not limited to girls and women. As Cash, Morrow, Hrabosky, and Perry (2004) contend, "there is little doubt that societal messages promote an unrealistically mesomorphic male ideal and that many boys and men experience body-image difficulties" (p. 1086). As result, the gap between men and womens satisfaction with their bodies appears to be getting smaller. As will be shown in Section 1.3.5, when focusing on positive body image, gender differences range from small to non-existant.

In the 1980s Mishkind, Rodin, Silberstein, and Striegel-Moore (1986) described a cultural transformation in the frequency and way in which the male body is presented in the media - a trend which seems to have continued if not gotten stronger to the present day: "Advertisements celebrate the young, lean, muscular male body, and men's fashions have undergone significant changes in style both to accommodate and to accentuate changes in men's physiques toward a more muscular and trim body"

(p. 545). As a result, more recent research findings show that male adolescents and men feel pressure to change their body in order to achieve the predominent male body ideal. For a long time, it was assumed that young men derived a sense of self-worth from the strength and functionality of their body (Keupp et al., 2002). Grogan and Richards (2002) conclude, however, from their fascinating focus-group study with boys and men between eight and twenty-five years that

> Although the lean, muscular look was associated in men's discourse with health and fitness, their given reasons for wanting to attain this look were primarily cosmetic (relating to social acceptance). Men and boys in all groups resisted representing men's bodies (including their own) as objects of aesthetic interest by discussing how bodies looked in relation to function (athletic, fit) and by stressing the trivial nature of concerns to look slender and muscular for its own sake, although they were clearly concerned that their bodies looked socially acceptably slender and muscular and reported that a positive body image would make them more confident/happy. (p. 230)

These findings clearly contradict previous research that suggests that male body image is dictated by concerns about functionality and not aesthetics. In this way, the social changes in cultural expectations of male bodies, as disseminated through popular media, seem to have affected young male's body image.

Up to this point, I have presented the theotical foundations for the core elements of investigation in the present study: identity formation, gender, and body experience. In a last step, I turn to the outcome variable, mental health and discuss its relationship with each of these core topics. I begin by presenting a suitable definition of mental health and focus subsequently on the theories and research linking identity, gender, and body experience with mental health during the transformative phase of adolescence.

1.3 Identity, gender, body experience, and mental health

1.3.1 Definition of mental health

As the World Health Organisation's (WHO) World Health Report 2001 illustrates, defining mental health is not an easy or straightforward task. With "concepts of mental health [that] include subjective well-being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, intergenerational dependence, and self-actualization of one's intellectual and emotional potential" (2001, p. 5), it is clear that mental health goes beyond a mere lack of mental disorders. Furthermore, according to the WHO, mental health plays an integral role in health, in general, and an integration of psychological, physical, and social factors in our examination and understanding of mental health is paramount.

This view of mental health is, from my perspective, particularly fitting for this study. It is my belief that the components of effective identity work described by Keupp et al. (2002), coupled with positive body experience, incorporate psychological, social, and physical factors that might all play a role in mental health.

Though the current definition of mental health is broader than just a lack of mental disorders, it is important to understand in what ways the elements of mental and behavioural disorders (the term used by the WHO) deviate from the aforementioned concepts of mental health. Here again, I look to the WHO for a comprehensive definition:

> Mental and behavioral disorders are understood as clinically significant conditions characterized by alterations in thinking, mood (emotions) or behaviour associated with personal distress and/or impaired functioning. Mental and behavioural disorders are not just variations within the range of "normal", but are clearly abnormal or pathological phenomena...In order to be categorized as disorders, such abnormalities must be sustained

or recurring and they must result in some personal distress or impaired functioning in one or more areas of life. Mental and behavioural disorders are also characterized by specific symptoms and signs, and usually follow a more or less predictable natural course, unless interventions are made. Not all human distress is mental disorder. Individuals may be distressed because of personal or social circumstances; unless all the essential criteria for a particular disorder are satisfied, such distress is not a mental disorder. (World Health Organization, 2001, p. 21)

This definition suggests that mental and behavioural disorders are marked by a change in one's mental functioning, experience, or behavior and that each of these lies on a continuum between normal and abnormal (or healthy and unhealthy). Considering that understandings of what is normal and abnormal are both culturally and historically specific, this continuum makes implementing diagnostic criteria for mental and behavioral disorders a particularly difficult task (to the point of being controversial).

The two most established systems of diagnostic criteria for mental and behavioral disorders are the ICD-10 (International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10, Chapter V(F)) (1992) produced by the WHO and the DSM-V (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) (*Diagnostic and Statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM-5*, 2013) published by the American Psychiatric Association. To describe the symptoms of individual disorders or the criteria for diagnosis would go beyond the scope of this dissertation. My aim was to simply give a brief introduction to the subject matter and lay out a comprehensive definition for mental health that resonates with the thoughts on identity formation and body experience as they have been presented here. With this achieved, I now turn to the research and theories regarding mental and behavioral disorders and mental health during adolescence, the ways in which mental health is affected by or involved in identity formation processes in a postmodern society, and later to the role that gender and body experience play in adolescents' mental health.

1.3.2 Identity and mental health in adolescence

The twentieth century witnessed a change in medical symptoms and disorders in children and youth. This phenomenon, which the American Academy of Pediatrics named the "new morbidity" (Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health, 1993), refers to a shift in the prevalence of physical disorders to psychological disorders evidenced by emotional, behavioral, and social problems among American children and youth. This new morbidity, however, was not only affecting young people in America. Drawing on epidemiological data from the early 1990s, Haberlandt et al. (1995) posited that there is ample cause for concern about the physical, emotional, and social well-being of adolescents in Germany, as well. At that time, they pointed out that, although the material and social living conditions in which the majority of young people are being raised are opportune (when compared with many other countries), social, physical, and emotional well-being is not guaranteed for a large group of these young people.

Fifteen years after Haberlandt et al. (1995) made these observations, descriptive results from the representative KiGGS Study (2003-2006) on the health of children and youth in Germany affirmed this concern for Germany's youth today. With reference to mental health problems, the KiGGS study found that 21.9% of the young people between seven and 17 years of age show signs of mental health problems, including anxiety (10.0%), conduct disorders (7.6%) and depression (5.4%) (Ravens-Sieberer, Wille, Bettge, & Erhart, 2007). Furthermore, in the group of 11 to 17 year-olds, results show that one in every five adolescents suffers from an eating disorder (Hölling et al., 2012). Results from studies in Switzerland also report that upwards of 20% of children and adolescents suffer from mental health issues (Steinhausen & Winkler Metzke, 2003).

In response to such findings, experts and politicians alike have asserted the need for both more research and effective intervention. Specifically, an action plan for the advancement of psychological well-being and health was adopted at the Helsinki conference of the European health ministers in 2005 (WHO, EU, Council of Europe). They

agreed that little is known both at a local and international level about the reasons for the growing rate of psychological distress and disorders.

These new morbidities are considered by some to be the risks of growing up in a postmodern society. As was discussed in more detail in section 1.1.2, postmodern societies are characterized by rapid change, a loss of unifying goals and values, and the pluralisation of lifestyles (to name just a few). These developments are associated with both losses (risks) and gains (opportunities). However, Haberlandt et al. (1995) argue that the adolescents in such societies, in particular, are burdened with the losses. Schachter (2005) asks: "Can individuals adapt well to a state of constant change and multiple social contexts? Is 'sameness and continuity' a necessary and universal ingredient for psychological health?" (p. 144). As Hablerlandt et al. note, on the one hand young people are not faced with ready-made identities and life trajectories but are free to be who they want to be. On the other hand, the opportunities connected with individualisation are accompanied by a liberalisation of cultural and social values and commitments that has paved the way to social and cultural uncertainty and moral contractions. Furthermore, Haberlandt et al. go on to argue that the liberalisation process inherent in the postmodern era is marked not only by an increase in free choice but also a greater need to choose, creating a greater individual risk of experienced failure. Accordingly, Haberlandt et al. ask: Could it be that the observed increase in health problems, especially during adolescence, can be explained by the relevant (and possibly growing) number of young people who feel overwhelmed by the tasks they need to accomplish during adolescence? Based on their own assessment, Haberlandt et al. conclude that these young people do not have the skills to negotiate the changes in and expectations of their physical and emotional selves.

I have shown the ways the postmodern era has brought forth new challenges and hurdles for identity formation, making it more difficult for individuals to achieve the sameness and continuity in their identity that Erikson posited was essential for mental health. However, not all researchers and theorists believe that the challenges of

the postmodern era are necessarily negative for identity formation and mental health (Lifton, 1993; K. J. Gergen, 1991; Tesch-Römer, 1990). A new perspective on the debate has been introduced by those "who claim that the postmodern context is not necessarily 'hazardous' to mental health because sameness and continuity in identity are not as necessary [for] psychological health as Erikson seems to have claimed" (Schachter, 2005, p. 144). Lifton suggests that in an "age of fragmentation", although identity is constantly being recreated and thus, "is by no means without confusion and danger, it allows for an opening out of individual life, for a self of many possibilities" (pp. 4-5). Additionally, Tesch-Römer argues that individuals whose identities are composed of different fragments are considerably more resilient against problems in one area because they do not run the risk of their identity being shaken to the core. Moreover, as Schachter states, "individuals can and are adapting to the multiplicity and fluidity of the postmodern context by creating a different structure of identity". He continues, "stable identities can be depicted not as a psychological asset within such a context, but rather as a barrier to freedom, self-actualization, and personal well-being. Psychological resilience is attributed precisely to a self lacking in 'sameness and continuity'" (p.144). If this is the case, then it seems necessary to explore alternative forms of 'successful' identity formation without focusing on the 'achievement' of a stable and commited identity as has been done in so much of the research on identity and mental health.

1.3.3 Gender and mental health in adolescence

Many researchers have been interested in knowing whether girls and boys are affected by mental and behavioral problems to the same extent and whether one gender is more prone to show certain symptoms than another. According to the WHO (2002), in general, the prevalence of mental and behavioral disorders is not higher for one gender. When looking at specific disorders, however, women tend to show higher rates of depression and anxiety disorders while men are more inclined to show symptoms

of substance use disorders and anti-personality disorders (World Health Organization, 2001). As the WHO suggests, "During adolescence, girls have a much higher prevalence of depression and eating disorders, and engage more in suicidal ideation and suicide attempts than boys. Boys experience more problems with anger, engage in high- risk behaviours and commit suicide more frequently than girls" (2002, p. 1).

According to the WHO, there are no gender differences in mental and behavioral disorders among children. As Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus (1994) note, differences between girls and boys in depression, for instance, begin after the age of 15. In line with this finding, results presented by (Steinhausen & Winkler Metzke, 2003) from their study in Zurich, Switzerland, show that female adolescents between 15 and 19 years of age are about nine times more likely to be affected by symptoms of depression than are male adolescents.

In the more recent KiGGS Study in Germany which surveyed young people between seven and 17 years of age, boys show a slightly higher prevalence for mental and behavioral health problems than girls, a pattern that seems to be independent of age group. When looking at the KiGGS findings on specific mental health problems, no gender differences can be seen in anxiety and depression disorders; however, the boys do show slightly higher values on ADHD and conduct problems (Ravens-Sieberer et al., 2007).

In sum, when it comes to adolescents, the results on differences in the incidence of mental and behavioural disorders between males and females are inconsistant. There are reasons to believe that adolescent girls have a greater tendencies toward affective disorders while boys are more likely to show symptoms of behavioral disorders such as conduct disorders and/or ADHD.

1.3.4   Body experience and mental health

Against the background of the literature on body experience reviewed up to this point, it seems reasonable to ask what effects negative body experience, negative body im-

age, or a lack of acceptance for one's body might have on adolescents' mental and behavioural health. As the literature shows, negative body image can have adverse effects for both males and females on their mental and behavioral health, including disordered eating, depression, social anxiety, and poor self-esteem (Cash et al., 2004). In response to the aforementioned "single problem perspective" (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002), it is also worth asking what effects positive body experience, positive body image, or body appreciation have on adolescents' mental and behavioral health. Such a question is in line with movements such as Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi's positive psychology (2000) and Antonovsky's (1990) salutogenetic view of health as well as authors who argue for a psychology that is "not just the study of pathology, weakness, and damage, but [is] the study of positive personality traits [and experiences] that contribute to and maintain overall psychological health" (Avalos et al., 2005, p. 286).

In order to further this cause, Avalos et al. (2005) developed and validated a measure for positive body image (Body Appreciation Scale, BAS) which focuses on "(a) favorable opinions of the body (regardless of actual physical appearance), (b) acceptance of the body in spite of weight, body shape, and imperfections, (c) respect for the body by attending to its needs and engaging in healthy behaviors, and (d) protection of the body by rejecting unrealistic body images portrayed in the media" (p. 286). Studies using the BAS have shown that positive body image is positively correlated with psychological well-being, including positive self-esteem, optimism, positive affect, and proactive coping (Avalos et al., 2005) and negatively correlated with psychological distress, including negative affect, neuroticism, thin-ideal internalisation, drive for thinness, and eating disorder symptomology (Avalos et al., 2005; Swami, Begum, & Petrides, 2010).

Furthermore, results from studies using the BAS with both males and females suggest that, when looking at body image from a positive perspective, the gap between men's and women's body image is not very big. Swami, Stieger, Haubner, and Voracek (2008) reported gender differences among Austrian adults with men scoring marginally

(d=.26) higher than women. In a study with Spanish adolescents, a similar result was found (d=.29). While Tylka (2013) most recently found mean differences between male and female college students in the United States with an effect size of d=.44, a study with British adults found no significant gender difference at all (Swami et al., 2010). Taken together, these results suggest that gender differences on positive body image may be a function both of age and culture and that it can no longer be simply assumed that males have a more positive relationship with their bodies than females.

1.3.5 Gender, body experience, identity and mental health in adolescence

In this final section of the literature review, I bring together some ideas and research linking the four pillars of this investigation (identity work, gender, body experience, and mental health) before moving on to a detailed description of the present study.

The transformation process from childhood to adulthood is projected onto the body of young men and women and is evident in physical changes and individual styles (Haberlandt et al., 1995). Adolescents, collectively as well as individually, use clothing, make-up, physical training, hairstyling, etc., to send messages to those around them and to say "This is who I am". According to Haberlandt, the very public discourse on the body and sexuality through the media leads one to believe that young people are aware about their bodily changes and budding sexuality and are confident in dealing with both. However, as Haberlandt et al. suggest, even in a modern society, taboos, insecurities, desires, shame and anxiety accompany this "bodily adventure" (p. 7). In this way, adolescence does not only entail bodily changes but is also marked by psychological vulnerablilty. For some, dealing with the emotional rollercoaster of adolescence is an even more daunting task than dealing with the physical changes, though it is clear that the physical and emotional levels are inextricably intertwined. As I have already noted, some scholars feel that adolescents experience more 'losses' than anyone as a result of postmodernism. The emotional stress of needing to take more responsibility,

becoming independent from one's parents, dealing with discrepant expectations, experiencing disappointment, rejection, and failure, and coming into one's own are often acted out on and externalised through the body. Bodily self harm through cutting or eating disorders, extreme forms of physical exercise, teenage pregnancy, (mis)use of alcohol and drugs, and risky free time activities (e.g., extreme sports) can be considered bodily expressions of an adolescent's mental state (Haberlandt et al., 1995). For Du Bois (1990), the goal of these sensual experiments could be to reconcile conscious conceptions of one's ego-identity with one's bodily sensations.

Haberlandt et al. (1995) illustrate how young people in postmodern societies are burdened with uncertainty on two levels when approaching developmental tasks. On the one hand, these new tasks require coping strategies that are only partly transferable from the knowledge and experience individuals gained in childhood. On the other hand, young people can no longer rely on specific traditions and collective bonds to deal with these new situations. From Haberlandt et al.'s perspective, it has become increasingly difficult for young people to orient themselves based on what is 'normal' or right. As they argue, the discourses surrounding what is "normal", especially in terms of the body, are at best confusing. As a result, many young people do not possess the psychological and emotional prerequisites for a positive experience of identity formation or of their bodies during adolescence.

Although there are theorists and researchers who suggest that the postmodern era has imparted young people with more freedom and, in this way, more gains than losses, the literature still claims that one in five young people suffers from mental health issues. For this reason alone, it is vital that more research efforts focus on possible risks and resilience factors influencing psychological health during childhood and adolescence. With the present investigation, linking a new approach to identity formation and positive body experience with mental health among both male and female adolescents, I hope to contribute to this effort. The next chapter describes in detail how I, together with the VROID-MHAP research team, planned and conducted the research that aims

to make a contribution, not only in terms of risk and protective factors for mental health, but also with respect to the measurement of identity formation against the background of postmodernism, the integration of the body in studies on identity formation, and the promotion of research that follows a more positive and comprehensive view of body image.

Chapter 2

The Present Study

The research presented in this dissertation was carried out as part of a larger project: Values and Religious Orientations in Relation to Identity Development and Mental Health: Adolescent Perspectives, in short, the VROID-MHAP Study. In order to give a better understanding of the larger framework in which the present research is embedded, this chapter begins with a brief description of the VROID-MHAP Study including the research team's goals, the project's heuristic model, and the study design. This is followed by a section detailing the objectives and research questions specific to the present study. For a more detailed report on the VROID-MHAP Study, see Käppler and Morgenthaler (2012).

2.1 The VROID-MHAP Study

The VROID-MHAP Study was funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) as part of a National Research Program (NRP 58) on Religions, the State and Society. It was one of 28 projects focusing on the subject of religion in Switzerland. The first part of the VROID-MHAP Study was conducted in Switzerland between 2007 and 2010. The funding was then extended by the NSRP within the D-A-CH (Germany-Austria-Switzerland) Agreement in order to carry out a parallel study in Germany between 2009 and 2011. The original impetus for the research project was an

interest in the religiosity of young people against the background of changing religious landscapes in both Switzerland and Germany as well as a lack of in-depth studies on adolescent development with a focus on religiosity. With an interdisciplinary team of psychologists and theologians and after several consultation sessions with experts from a variety of related research fields, a mixed-methods study was designed. The original scope of the project was extended to include value orientations, identity formation, mental health, personality development, and (later) body experience, all of which were incorporated into a questionnaire that was administered at two different points in time along with a semi-structured interview manual that was administered with individuals selected from the larger sample. Using a combination of mixed-methods and a broad scope of relevant aspects of adolescent development, the research team strove to obtain a comprehensive understanding of adolescent religiosity, value orientations, and identity and their roles in adolescent development and well-being. Due to the size and scope of the project, it has been possible to explore each individual aspect of adolescent development in its own right and to investigate the relationships between them. In total, four dissertations are being written using data from the VROID-MHAP Study. Sabine Zehnder's work focuses on adolescents' religiosity and mental health; Aristide Peng examines value orientations in light of adolescents' national, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds; and Kathrin Brodbeck joins quantitative data on religiosity, value orientations, and identity formation with adolescents' argument strategies regarding religious dilemmas and the make-up of their social networks that were collected in the semi-structured interviews. A short analysis of each of these topics can be found in Käppler and Morgenthaler (2012).

2.1.1 Study design

In 2005, Schwartz published an essay on what he believed to be current limitations of and important recommendations for identity research. Methodologically speaking, he pointed out two main shortcomings: 1) most studies on identity have been based on

Figure 2.1: Heuristic model of the VROID-MHAP Study
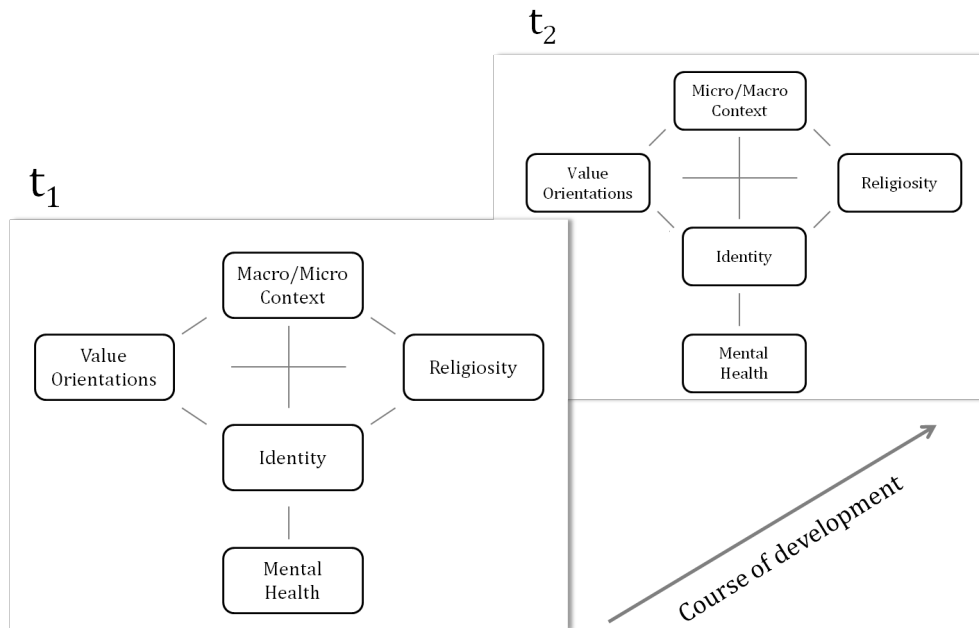
samples of White, emerging-adult university students and 2) the vast majority of studies capture only cross-sectional data that "cannot speak directly to the developmental functions of identity" (p. 296). With respect to the first limitation, he strongly suggests that researchers include more non-Whites, more poor and less educated individuals, and more middle and highschool adolescents in their studies. With reference to the second limitation, Schwartz argues that it is time to move beyond data collection at only one point in time. Specifically, he feels that longitudinal studies are crucial for mapping the course of identity development and in order to understand the antecedents and consequences of identity formation. The design of the VROID-MHAP project and, in turn, the study presented in this dissertation fulfill both of Schwartz's recommendations. As I present in more detail in the following sections, the data were collected from a greatly diverse and substantial adolescent sample and the study includes two points of data collection.

Heuristic model

The heuristic model shown in Figure 2.1 represents the conceptual framework used to guide the VROID-MHAP study (Käppler, Zehnder, Peng, Christl, & Morgenthaler, 2011). As was previously mentioned, the study aimed primarily to explore adolescents' religiosity, value orientations, identity formation, and their mental health and well-being. These concepts, and their relationships with one another, are understood as being contexually embedded. Against the background of diverse social contexts, religiosity and value orientations could also be investigated in terms of their relationship with or effect on the identity formation and mental health of adolescents. In order to uncover any changes and influences in development during this pivotal and transformational period of adolescence, a second phase of data collection (one year later) was included. In this way, the VROID-MHAP Study went beyond being able to present purely cross-sectional description and analysis. This expansion of the study was, in particular, important for understanding more about how contextual factors, religiosity, values and identity formation influence mental health at a later point in time.

Planning the sample

The VROID-MHAP Study followed a cohort-sequential design in which three cohorts (pupils in school Grades 7, 8, and 9) were surveyed twice using a repeated measures survey with an approximate 12-month interval between administrations. The plan was to survey 250 young people from each cohort: yielding a sample of 750 individuals in Switzerland and 750 individuals in Germany for a total sample of 1500 adolescents. Furthermore, the research team planned to collect data in two major cities in each of the countries. For both practical and theoretical reasons, the research team decided to collect data in Zurich and Bern, Switzerland and Frankfurt and Stuttgart, Germany, as well as in the surrounding rural areas of these cities. Another goal of the VROID-MHAP team was to include pupils from each of the main school types in Switzerland (i.e., *Sekundarschule*, *Realschule*, & *Gymnasium*) and Germany (i.e.,

Hauptschule, Realschule, & Gymnasium).

What distinguishes the VROID-MHAP Study from other studies on religiosity, value orientations or identity formation among adolescents is the specific aim to include young people with diverse backgrounds. At the broadest level, we are able to look at the differences on each of the constructs between young people living in Switzerland and in Germany. At the next level, we can compare adolescents growing up in urban areas with those in rural areas. Furthermore, it is also possible to differentiate between type of school, socioeconomic status, age, and gender. Finally, the research team made a special effort to recruit adolescents with a variety of religious (including different Christian denominations, Muslim, Hindu, and Jewish and individuals without formal membership to a religious group) and cultural backgrounds. The inclusion of religious and cultural diversity has been particularly fruitful and fascinating for the members of the research team looking at religiosity and value orientations.

Development of the questionnaire

It was a challenging task to create a questionnaire that 1) incorporated the broad spectrum of constructs of interest for the VROID-MHAP research team, 2) was age-appropriate for 12 to 16-year-olds, and 3) could be completed in one to one and a half hours during class time in schools. It was important to the team to use as many standardized or validated instruments of measurement as possible. However, many questions or areas of interest required new items or scales that were developed by the research team. After several consulting sessions with experts from the various fields of interest, numerous revisions by the research team, and the administration of a pilot test, the questionnaire used in Switzerland during the first wave of data collection included a total of 274 items (76 items on religiosity, 32 items on value orientations, 34 items on mental health, 59 items on identity and personality, 30 items on family, 32 items on sociodemographic background, seven items on leisure activities and media consumption, and four miscellaneous items). Seven items on body experience were

Figure 2.2: Extension of Keupp et al.'s model for the present study
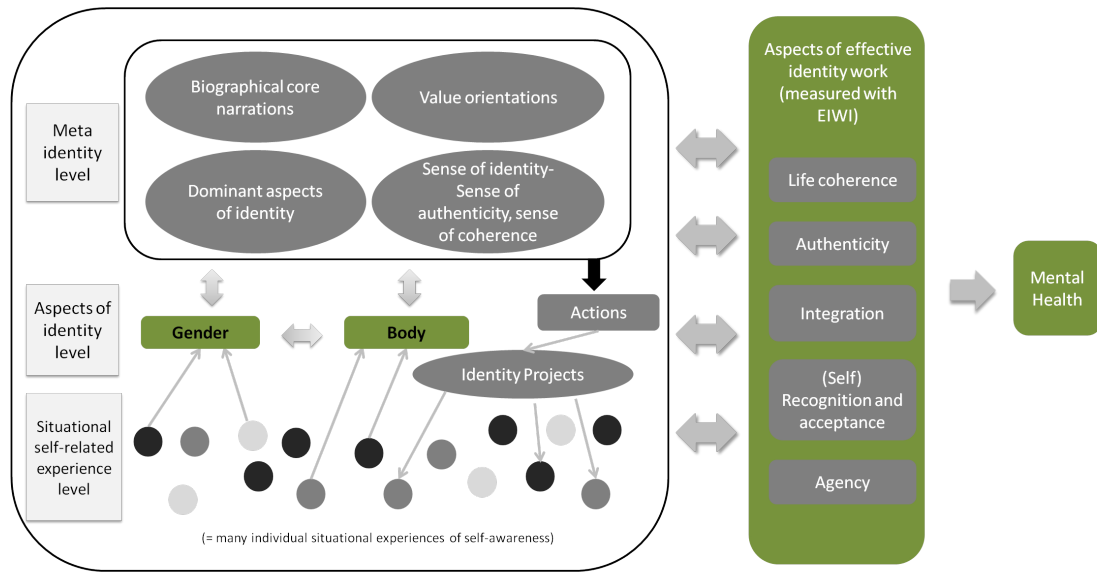
integrated into the questionnaire at t_1 in Germany and an additional 27 items at t_2. Detailed information about the individual measurement instruments used for the research presented in this dissertation is provided in Section 3.1.

2.2 Focus of the present study

In the research presented in this dissertation, I focus on the subject of identity formation, in particular, the process of identity construction as it has been theorized by Keupp et al. (2002). I take a snapshot of this process and explore it against the background of contextual factors, and examine its relationship with gender and body experience. Finally, I ask how this snapshot of identity construction, gender, body experience affects adolescents' mental health at a later point in time.

Figure 2.2 illustrates the heuristic model used to guide this research. Founded on Keupp et al.'s (2002) model of identity construction (See Figure 1.1.2), the present study focuses on the six components that are considered to be key aspects of effective identity work. Although these components could also be located at the meta-identity level describing the content-free strategies an individual uses in order to manage the

myriad of aspects of identity at the content level (as Keupp confirms, private communication, 2014), they can also be seen as both the goals of and prerequisites for effective identity work. For this reason, I chose to place them conceptually outside of, though inextricably linked to, this process. The development and implementation of an instrument of measurement for these six elements (i.e., life coherence, authenticity, acceptance from others, self-acceptance, discrepancy/integration, and agency) presents the core of this study.

In the present research I focus only on two aspects of identity at the content level, namely, gender and the body. As the figure shows, I understand gender and the body to have a reciprocal relationship with one another. As Keupp et al. (2002) theorize, one's understanding of and identification with individual aspects of identity stem from individual and situational experiences in daily life. How one processes, accommodates, and/or incorporates the information perceived at the situational and experiential level into his/her own conception about the body and gender both influences and is influenced by the six prerequisites/goals of identity work. Furthermore, this model suggests that how well one is able to reach a strong sense of life coherence, authenticity, (self-)acceptance, integrative achievement, and agency in the identity work process is connected to one's mental health and well-being.

2.2.1 Objectives, research questions, and hypotheses

The starting point of the present study was the development, implementation, and evaluation of a quantitative operationalisation of Keupp et al.'s (2002) ideas regarding effective identity work (*gelingende Identitätsarbeit*). As has been noted elsewhere, Keupp et al.'s narrative approach to identity construction generated extremely valuable and detailed information about the process of identity formation during late adolescence in a postmodern German context. The present research uses a quantitative approach in order to produce more generalisable findings about specific elements in the identity construction process and their connection with other areas of development

during adolescence. I focus more on the exploration and generation of new hypotheses rather than the confirmation or falsification of a priori-determined hypotheses. The questionnaire items that were developed aim to assess the aforementioned dimensions of effective identity work. The goal of the scale is not to extract an overall score for identity construction since this, I feel, would go against Keupp et al.'s belief that individuals establish their own individual identity needs that they then strive to fulfill. It is for this reason that I chose to translate the term *gelingende Identitätsarbeit* not with 'successful' but 'effective' identity work, suggesting that each individual works on or constructs his/her identity such that it provides a good fit between his/her inner and outer worlds and and without assuming that there is one 'right' or better way to construct one's identity.

Consequently, the second objective of this study is to examine individual differences in how young people construct their identities. More specifically, I am interested in whether different patterns can be identified in the extent to which individuals report experiencing life coherence, authenticity, (self)acceptance, discrepancy/integration, and agency in their lives. If distinct patterns can be identified, then I will look at how the individuals with these different patterns differ on a number of contextual variables including country of residence, national background, age, level of education, and socioeconomic status.

The third objective of this study accommodates my interest in the links between identity construction, gender, and body experience. Here, each of the relationships in this triad will be examined individually: What are the similarities and differences in how male and female adolescents report experiencing the aspects of effective identity work? How is effective identity work linked to positive body experience? Do boys and girls report having positive body experience to the same extent? It is with respect to this last question that I assert one of the only hypotheses in this primarily exploratory study. Though recent research on positive body image has yielded some contradictory results (Swami et al., 2010), I hypothesize that the male adolescents will show greater

body appreciation than the girls but that this effect will not be large.

The final objective of this study is to examine how adolescents' mental health is impacted by or related to gender, body experience, and effective identity work. Here, I am interested in the similarities and differences in male and female adolescents' mental and behavioral health with respect to emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, peer relationship problems, and prosocial behavior. In line with previous research, it is hypothesised that girls will have higher scores on emotional problems than boys and that boys will have higher scores on conduct problems and hyperactivity than girls. Furthermore, I investigate in what ways body experience is related to mental health and whether or not gender interacts with this relationship. I am also interested in understanding whether and which facets of effective identity work can be viewed as predictors for mental health and whether or not different patterns of effective identity work are related to differences in adolescents' mental health. Finally, in a very last step, I examine how much the factors at hand (gender, body experience, and aspects of effective identity work) contribute (both individually and combined) to the prediction of mental health among adolescents.

Overview of objectives and research questions

Part One: Development, evaluation, and implementation of the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI)

1. What underlying structure of factors is assessed with the EIWI?

2. Do the individual items and the subscales of the EIWI meet the general standards for psychometric measurement?

   - Normality

   - Reliability

   - Stability

---

3. Can statistically unique patterns of effective identity work be identified among adolescents?

4. How do the patterns of identity work differ from one another descriptively and statistically?

5. Which factors in the EIWI are statistically most important for distinquishing between patterns of identity work?

6. How do the groups of adolescents with distinct identity work patterns differ based on individual and contextual factors (e.g., country of residence, national background, age, level of education, socioeconomic status)?

Part Two: Connections between gender, body experience, and effective identity work

1. What similarities and differences can be seen between boys and girls on the subscales of the EIWI?

2. What role does gender play in patterns of effective identity work?

3. How and to what extent do adolescent boys and girls differ in their body experience?

4. How and to what extent can effective identity work be seen as a predictor for body experience one year later? What role does gender play in this relationship?

5. Is there a relationship between the different patterns of identity work and body experience? What role does gender play in this relationship?

Part Three: The impact of effective identity work, gender, and body experience on mental health

1. What gender differences and similarities can be found with respect to mental health?

2. Is there an association between body experience and mental health? Does gender affect this relationship?

3. Can aspects of effective identity work be seen as a predictors for mental health one year later?

4. Is there a relationship between the different patterns of identity work and mental health?

5. How much variance in mental health can be explained by gender, body experience, and aspects of effective identity work both individually and combined?

Chapter 3

Method

3.1 Measures

3.1.1 Identity

Operationalisation of Keupp et al.'s aspects of effective identity work

After receiving Heiner Keupp's consent, the VROID-MHAP research team construct-
ed a quantitative self-report measure including fifteen items that correspond with the
aspects of effective identity work (*Aspekte einer gelingenden Identitätsarbeit*) drawn
from Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory of identity construction. I am very grateful to my
colleague, Sabine Zehnder, in particular, who invested a lot of time and energy into
reading Keupp et al.'s work and who spearheaded the development of the items. Her
aim was to develop items that, when taken together, could assess an individual's sense
of identity (*Identitätsgefühl*) at a meta level. In my own reading of Keupp, it seemed to
me that the six components went beyond Keupps' description of sense of identity and
instead focused more on what he describes as the important aspects for a *gelingende*
or as I translated it, effective identity work. I was not yet part of the VROID-MHAP
research team at the time of the item construction. After reviewing the items my-
self, I felt that, for the most part, they captured these important concepts described

by Keupp et al and provided a good foundation for exploring the usefulness of such a scale of measurement.[1] Specifically, six components were operationalised with one to four items each. Due to the scope of the VROID-MHAP project and the already very lengthy questionnaire that had been put together to assess all of the topics of interest, the number of identity items was limited to 15. A translation of the German items is presented in Table 3.1.[2] Keupp et al.'s discussion of *Life Coherence* (*Lebenskohärenz*) is based to a large extent on Antonovsky's (1987) 'Sense of Coherence' in which he describes three important elements: comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness. The VROID-MHAP team created one item to assess each of these three elements. The items devised to measure *Authenticity* ask participants to report the degree to which they feel they can be who they are in three differents social settings (i.e., family, school, friends). *Acceptance*, here, looks at the extent to which participants feel they act according to the expectations of their surroundings (i.e., family, school, friends). The one item measuring *Self-Acceptance* focuses on individuals' own acceptance of who they are. Two *Discrepancy* items give participants the opportunity to rate the extent to which they feel they are confronted with different and sometimes contradictory expectations. Another two items were created to assess the difficulty individuals experience in the *Integration* of discrepant expectations into a coherent self so that he/she is able to move between settings and plan for the future. One final item was created to incorporate individuals' sense of being able to influence and make decisions about their lives and their future, for which I have chosen to use the term *Agency*. Participants were asked to respond to these items using a 5-point Likert scale (1=disagree completely; 5=agree completely) since many of other scales included in the VROID-MHAP questionnaire also had five points. The team felt that this was one way to limit the complexity of the already lengthy and demanding questionnaire for

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[1]At the time of item construction, Sabine Zehnder also suggested including a series of questions that would assess identity at a content level by focusing on the centrality of the different part identities. However, the team felt that there just was not enough space left in the questionnaire to include the content items.

[2]The original German items can be found in Appendix 1.

the participants.

3.1.2 Body experience

In order to assess the body experience of the young people in the study, the German version of the *Body Appreciation Scale* (BAS, Avalos et al. 2005; German version: Swami et al. 2008) was implemented.[3] I chose to use this scale due to the positive wording of the items. In this way, the BAS focuses on positive body image and body satisfaction, in contrast with the majority of body-related scales that focus on negative body image and body dissatisfaction. Furthermore, I feel that the BAS goes beyond the narrow (appearance-based) concept of body image used in most of the research on body image in psychology and thus fits better with the definition of body image I posited in Section 1.2.3 by incorporating items about one's relationship with his/her body as well as how one deals with his/her body. Fortunately, a validated version of the original survey was already available in German and research has affirmed its equivalence for males and females (Tylka, 2013). The BAS encompasses 13 items that assess four different aspects of positive body experience, including a) favorable opinions of one's own body, b) acceptance of the body in spite of imperfections, c) respect for the body, especially in relation to its needs, and d) protection of the body (Swami et al., 2008). One item in the original scale was omitted from the questionnaire for the purposes of this study.[4] The authors felt that answering this item would require a cognitive capacity that could not be expected of the younger participants in the present sample. In keeping with the requirements for multivariate data analysis, 20 multivariate outliers were excluded from further analysis with the BAS. The 12 remaining items were incorporated into an explorative factor analysis in order to test the factor structure of the scale. In line with Avalos et al. (2005) and Swami et al. (2008), only one underlying factor could

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[3]The BAS was only incorporated into the questionnaire at t_2 in Germany. Accordingly, the results on body experience are analysed using only the German sub-sample.

[4]The 13th item of the Body Appreciation Scale: females - "I do not allow unrealistically thin images of women presented in the media to affect my attitudes toward my body" and males - "I do not allow unrealistically muscular images of men presented in the media to affect my attitudes toward my body".

Component	Items
Life Coherence	a) I comprehend how my surrounding (e.g., school, family, group of friends) 'works' and know to some extent what will happen next. b) I can deal well with changes in my life and can usually solve problems either by myself or with the help of others. c)I commit myself to my goals and plans because I am convinced that my commitment will pay off.
Authenticity	d) In my family I can be myself and show my feelings. e) In school I can be myself and show my feelings. f) In my group of friends I can be myself and show my feelings.
Acceptance	g) In most situations I behave in the way that my parents think I should behave. h) In most situations I behave in the way that my school/teachers think I should behave. i) In most situations I behave in the way that my friends think I should behave.
Self-Acceptance	j) I am the way I want to be.
Discrepancy	k) I find that the expectations and rules for how I should behave in different surroundings (e.g., in school, in my family, with my friends, etc.) are very different. l) The people I spend most of my time with (e.g. my parents, my teachers, my friends) have different expectations about what I should do with my life.
Integration	m) I find it difficult to manage the differences when switching from one surrounding to another. n) The different expectations make it hard for me to choose what I want to do with my life.
Agency	o) In the future, I think I will be able to live my life the way that I would like to.

Table 3.1: Item construction for the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI) in accordance with Keupp et al. (2002) and translated from the original German version

be identified. Due to a very low factor loading and an incongruous Cronbach's alpha score for the whole scale, the item "I do not focus a lot of energy being concerned with my body shape or weight"("Ich verschwende nicht viel Zeit damit, mir Gedanken über meine Figur oder mein Gewicht zu machen") was removed from further analysis. It is my belief that the double negative in the German translation of this item was difficult for many participants to understand. Once this item had been removed, the scale achieved an utmost satisfactory estimate of reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of .90.

3.1.3   Mental health

The VROID-MHAP team chose to rely on a well-established instrument of measurement called the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Goodman, 1997) The specific instrument used here, SDQ - self-rated version for 11-17 year olds, is widely-used for clinical, epidemeological, screening, and research purposes. The questionnaire encompasses four subscales each with five items that assess mental health issues, including *emotional symptoms* (i.e., internalised problems evident in depression and anxiety symptoms and sometimes in physical symptoms such as frequent headaches or stomach aches); *conduct problems* (i.e., externalised behavioral problems such as frequent temper tantrums, persistent disobedience, acting out physically, recurrent lying, stealing, etc.); *hyperactivity/inattention* (i.e., externalised problems through fidgetiness, agitation, distractibility, concentration problems, impulsive behavior); *peer relationship problems* (internalised problems that are evidenced by difficulty making or keeping friendships with peers, being an outsider, being unliked or continually teased). Taken together, these four subscales generate a total difficulties score based on 20 items. In addition, the SDQ incorporates a resource subscale called *prosocial behavior* in which one's willingness to share, kindness to others, and helpfulness is assessed. The subscales each encompass five items which are to be answered on a three-point scale. The standardisation of the questionnaire defines critical values for placing individuals based on

their scores into one of the three categories "normal", "borderline", and "abnormal". The critical values are set such that in the reference sample 80% of the young people were categorised as being "normal", 10% as "borderline", and 10% as "abnormal". A German version was validated and standardised and found that, in line with other populations, 80-85% of the German-speaking population fall in the *normal* category, while 5%-8% fall into the *borderline* category and 7%-10% into the *abnormal* category (Klasen et al., 2000; Klasen, Woerner, & Rothenberger, 2003) . In the present study, reliability values (Cronbach's alpha) for each of the SDQ-scales are as follows: 'total difficulties scale' .74 (t_1), .72 (t_2); 'emotional problems' .68 (t_1), .66 (t_2); 'conduct problems' .48 (t_1), .53 (t_2); 'hyperactivity' .62 (t_1), .67 (t_2); 'peer relationship problems' .54 (t_1), .56 (t_2); and 'prosocial behavior' .62 (t_1), .61 (t_2).

3.2 Procedures

Data collection

As has alreay been noted, data for the VROID-MHAP Study were collected using a self-report questionnaire. In addition to the paper and pencil version of the questionnaire, in the Swiss study an electronic version was also created and was saved on individual USB sticks or could be downloaded from the Internet. The benefit of the electronic version of the questionnaire was that the data were automatically entered into SPSS.[5] The teachers of participating schools in Switzerland could decide if they preferred the use of the paper and pencil or electronic version of the questionnaire.

First phase of data collection Participating schools were recruited through an informational letter sent to each of the schools which was followed up with a phone call with the school principal. In the Stuttgart and Frankfurt areas, 55 schools were selected and contacted based on school location (to include both urban and rural areas) and type of school. Of the schools that were contacted, 13 schools in total finally

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[5]The electronic version of the questionnaire was developed and administered by Aristide Peng.

participated in both phases of data collection. Since participants from some of the minority religious groups were underrepresented in the sample after school recruitment, 13 religious organizations (including 4 Jewish, 4 Hindu, 2 free churches, 1 Christian Orthodox, 2 Muslim) were contacted in order to recruit more participants from the specific religious groups. Of the organizations that were contacted, eight finally participated in the study. Once a school or organization agreed to participate, further informational materials were provided (See 5.3), including a letter to the teachers and a letter for the parents which was to be distributed to the students one to two weeks prior to the date of data collection. There was a slip at the end of the letter which parents could fill out and give back to the teacher should they not want their son or daughter to take part in the study.

The questionnaire was, in most cases, administered to each class of students separately. In some rare cases, several classes gathered together in a large room to complete the survey. The questionnaire was administered by one of the researchers or research assistants who gave standardised instructions to each of the groups. In particular, the pupils were informed about the anonymity/confidentiality of the questionnaire. The researcher or research assistant was present until all the questionnaires had been filled out and collected. The time needed to fill out the questionnaire ranged from 45-90 minutes.

On the first page of the questionnaire seven questions were listed which, when answered, created an individual identification code including letters and numbers for each participant. The questions for this code were chosen based on their stability over time, such as "what is the second letter of your last name?" or "on what day of the month does your mother celebrate her birthday (e.g., if she is born on April 12th, then write 12)". Each school or organization received a list with the names and identification codes of the students who took part in the study. This permitted the teachers to identify those students who had taken part in the first phase of the study (t_1) so that these individuals could be informed and included in the second phase of data

collection (t_2). Furthermore, this facilitated the later selection of interview partners. The school and organizations did not have any access to the surveys themselves. The research team solely had lists with the identification codes. This method protected the anonymity of the participants since the researchers had no way to link the surveys back to any particular individual.

Second phase of data collection Approximately one year after the questionnaire had been administered the first time, the principals, teachers, or leaders of the religious youth groups were contacted by email or telephone to arrange a day for administering the follow-up questionnaire. Once again, members of the research team or research assistants administered the follow-up questionnaire using standardised instructions. In two cases in the German study, a package with questionnaires and detailed instructions for administering the survey was sent directly to the teacher responsible for the class. The teacher administered the survey and collected the questionnaires which were immediately sealed in a reply-paid envelope and sent back to the research team. In the case of two other classes and a few individuals from religious organizations who had participated in t_1 in Germany, questionnaires from t_2 were given to the students with a reply-paid envelope and instructions for filling out the questionnaire. These students filled out the questionnaire themselves and sent it back directly to the research team. In Switzerland, if pupils had changed schools since the first stage of data collection, teachers were asked for the pupils' addresses and a questionnaire was sent directly to them. As an incentive for participating in the study a second time, all participants who took part at t_2 received a 10Euro/20CHF gift certificate.

Challenges during data collection The greatest challenge we faced during data collection was the length of time needed for the students to fill out the questionnaire. In the German study, in particular, pupils in the *Hauptschulen* often were not able to finish the entire questionnaire in the time alotted and they often verbalised that they had difficulty understanding all of the questions. Furthermore, both in Germany and

in Switzerland, in some schools the pupils leave the school after Grade 9 which made it very difficult to include those young people in the second phase of data collection.

It also proved to be more difficult than expected, and very time-consuming, to recruit non-Christian religious organisations for the study. In particular in Switzerland, the research team had a very difficult time finding Jewish organisations that would participate in the study.

Despite there being some difficulties during the two phases of data collection, in general the response from and cooperation with both the participating schools and the young people themselves was most positive. Many of the principals and teachers showed great interest in the study and were glad to help. This was also the case with the religious organizations that participated.

Data Cleaning

The data from the (paper and pencil) questionnaires was entered manually into SPSS either by the researchers themselves or by research assistants. Questionnaires that for some reason stood out (e.g., many missings, questionnable open-ended answers) were marked and revised by members of the research team. When appropriate, a rule was created with which to filter the usable questionnaires from the unusable ones. Questionnaires with more than 30% missing values were, in most cases, removed from the sample. Questionnaires were included in cases where a participant was not able to finish the questionnaire due to a lack of time, but had otherwise filled the questionnaire out diligently. Furthermore, in cases where one of the two questionnaires was not filled out completely, but the other corresponding questionnaire was, and as long as the average of missing values for both questionnaires was less than 30%, both questionnaires were included.

Once all the data had been entered, a random check was performed in which I randomly chose two questionnaires from each group of 30 or less. Four questionnaires were chosen if the groups were larger than 30 participants. I went through each these

questionnaires in order to make sure that the data had been entered correctly and that the data had not accidentally shifted at any point during the input phase. All problems that were found during this check were rectified. In some cases, data was re-entered in order to ensure its correctness.

Missing Values A Missing Values Analysis (MVA) was conducted according to Tabachnick and Fidells' (2007) protocol on the items at t_1 and t_2 (including only those individuals who participated in the study at both points of measurement). Since the percentage of missing values per item ranged from 3.4% to 4.9% at t_1 and 1.8% to 2.9% at t_2 and thus did not meet the 5% cutoff suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell, no t-tests were performed to see if missingness was related to any of the other variables. Furthermore, the non-significant results of Little's MCAR tests show that both at t_1 and t_2 the missing data can be assumed to be completely at random (MCAR) (t_1: chi-square=289.160, df = 264, Sig.=.138; t_2: chi-square=212.611, df=220, Sig.=.627).

Outliers Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007) directions for searching for multivariate outliers were followed. All 1179 cases that participated both in t_1 and t_2 were screened for multivariate outliers on the identity items prior to factor analysis. For the total sample, the criterion for outliers used was Mahalanobis distance at $p<.001$. Thirty-eight cases met the criterion for being a multivariate outlier. Each individual case was looked at for its abnormality. These cases were then removed from subsequent analyses on identity. The same procedure was used for removing outliers on the Body Appreciation Scale (BAS) and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ).

3.3 Data analysis

The analyses presented in this dissertation are primarily exploratory in nature and are based on quantitative data. In correspondence with the objectives and research questions of the present study, the following methods of analysis were used: 1) exploratory

factor analysis (EFA) was performed in order to identify the underlying structure of the 15 items of the EIWI; 2) descriptive statistical analyses, tests of reliability, and correlational analyses were carried out to examine the test quality of the EIWI as well as the Body Appreciation Scale (BAS) and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ); 3) in order to address the question of whether meaningful groups of participants could be identified based on data patterns on the EIWI, hierarchical cluster analysis (CA) was implemented - a data-driven method of classification that has recently found popularity among identity researchers trying to group individuals based on their responses from identity measures, (See, for instance, Luyckx, Goossens, Soenens, Beyers, and Vansteenkiste (2005); 4) discriminant analyisis (DA) was performed with the goal of identifying which of the factors play the greatest role in distinguishing between the groups or clusters and validating the clusters through split-sample cross-tabulation; 5) Finally, in order to address the objectives and research questions captured in part II and II in which effective identity work is investigated for its connection to body experience, gender, and mental health, both univariate and multivariate techniques were used for comparing groups and testing correlational and directional relationships between variables. In carrying out the analyses, I generally relied on Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007) instructions and advice on the specific techniques.[6] Analyses were carried out exclusively with SPSS. Due to the large size of the sample, the level of significance was set to $p < .01$ for the majority of analyses. When possible, I also relied on a measure of effect size in order to evaluate the statistical relevance of a result.

3.4   Participants

Descriptive statistics for the Swiss and German sub-samples are presented in Tables 3.2 through 3.5.

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[6]In cases where I still was not sure about the correctness of a procedure or a result, I contacted the statistical consulting service (Statische Beratungs und Analyse Zentrum - SBAZ) of the statistics department at the Technical University of Dortmund for advice.

3.4.1 Age, gender, and school

Swiss sub-sample The first phase of data collection (t_1) in German-speaking Switzerland included 750 adolescents (after data-cleaning) between 13 and 18 years of age and with a mean age of 14.94 years. Of the 750 participants at t_1, 517 (69%) participated again in the second phase of data collection one year later.[7] At t_2 the sub-sample had a mean age of 15.71 years. The sample was well-balanced with regard to gender, including 375 (50.1%) girls and 374 (49.9%) boys at t_1 and 258 (49.9%) girls and 259 (50.1%) boys at t_2. The distribution of participants across the three cohorts was also relatively well-balanced with 26.8% in cohort 1 (Grade 7), 37.5% in cohort 2 (Grade 8), and 35.7% in cohort 3 (Grade 9). The majority (n=462) of the participants attended a *Sekundarschule*, followed by students at *Gymnasien* (n=166), and *Realschulen* (n=71).

	Germany		Switzerland	
	t_1	t_2	t_1	t_2
n	896	662	750	517
Age	13.98	14.83	14.94	15.71
	(SD=1.1)	(SD=1.1)	(SD=1.02)	(SD=.95)
Girls				
n	444	331	375	258
%	49.6	50	50.1	49.9
Boys				
n	452	331	374	259
%	50.4	50	49.9	50.1

Table 3.2: German and Swiss sub-samples at t_1 and t_2 according to age and gender

German sub-sample The sample of young people recruited for participation at t_1 in southern Germany included 896 individuals (after data-cleaning). In the second phase of data collection (t_2), 662 of the participants took part in the study again, achieving a very good response rate of 73.8%. For the most part, participants were recruited in schools and religious organisations in and around Stuttgart (n=709; 79.1%) and

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[7]A dropout analysis showed that there were no systematic differences between the participants who took part in t_2 and those who did not.

Frankfurt (n=162; 18.1%). The age range of participants at t_1 in Germany was 11 to 17 years with a mean age of 13.98 years (t_2: 12-18 years; M=14.82). This implies that the average age of participants in Germany was nearly one year younger than in Switzerland. This is due to the fact that there were a number of 11-year old Grade 7 students in the German sample and that the oldest cohort in the Swiss sample was 8.9% larger than the youngest cohort. The ratio of female to male adolescents in the German sub-sample was well-balanced with 49.6% girls and 50.4% boys at t_1 (t_2: 50% girls, 50% boys). The three cohorts were equally well-balanced at t_1 with 33.3% in Grade 7, 30.9% in Grade 8, and 34.4% in Grade 9. Just as in the Swiss sample, the distribution of the German sample across different the types of schools was not quite as balanced. In Germany, however, it was the students from *Gymnasien*, that made up the largest group of participants in the sample. Due to the schedule of classes and shorter class time at *Hauptschulen* and the time needed to fill out the questionnaire, fewer *Hauptschulen* were willing to participate in the study. In contrast, the principals of *Gymnasien* were, in most cases, happy to include their school in the study. Furthermore, the third cohort of students at *Hauptschulen* were no longer at the school during the second phase of data collection since, in Germany, pupils at *Hauptschulen* either begin an apprenticeship or move to a vocational school after finishing Grade 9, making it very difficult to recruit them again .

3.4.2   Social context

Swiss sub-sample   The majority of participants were recruited in Zurich (n=483; 64.4%) and Bern (n=105; 14%). The rest of the sample (n=162; 21.6%) was gathered across a number of smaller Cantons. In both phases of data collection, over half of the participants were from native Swiss families (t_1: 56.4%; t_2: 54.2%). A little more than a quarter of the participants (t_1: 26.8%; t_2: 27.8%) were from families in which both parents were born outside of Switzerland. Finally, at t_1 16.8% and at t_2 18.0% of the young people were from families where one parent was born in Switzerland and

	Germany				Switzerland			
	t_1		t_2		t_1		t_2	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Cohort 1 (Grade 7 at t_1)	298	33.3	236	35.6	201	26.8	193	37.3
Cohort 2 (Grade 8 at t_1)	277	30.9	228	34.4	280	37.4	212	41.0
Cohort 3 (Grade 9 at t_1)	308	34.4	185	27.9	268	35.7	110	20.1
Other	13	1.3	13	2.0	0	0	0	0
Missing	0	0	0	0	1	.1	2	1.6
Total	896	100	662	100	750	100	517	100
Haupt-/Sekundarschule	157	17.5	48	7.3	462	62.7	268	52.3
Realschule	167	18.7	142	21.7	71	9.6	26	5.1
Gymnasium	474	53.0	383	58.6	166	22.5	126	24.6
Vocational School	1	0.1	0	0	3	0.4	72	13.9
Other schools	96	10.7	81	12.2	35	4.7	20	3.9
Missing	1	0.1	8	1.2	13	1.7	5	0.1
Total	896	100	662	100	750	100	517	100

Table 3.3: German and Swiss sub-samples at t_1 and t_2 based on cohort and type of school

the other was born elsewhere. Table 3.4 shows a summary of the regions in which the participants' parents were born. As shown, the largest group of immigrants came from south east Europe (i.e., former Yugoslavia), followed by those from southern Europe and central Europe. The diversity of religious affiliations among participants can be seen in Table 3.5. As expected, the vast majority of the young people were affiliated with a Christian denomination, in particular, the Protestant church with 32.1% of the sub-sample at t_1 and 36.9% at t_2 and the Catholic church with 25.5% and 25.3%, respectively. The third largest group represents those without a religious affiliation who make up 9.4% of the sample at t_1 and 13.2% at t_2. While the Muslim sub-sample kept its percentage level of 8.1% in both phases of data collection, the relative size of the other minority religious groups dropped slightly at t_2.

German sub-sample The majority of the participants in the German sub-sample were recruited in and around Stuttgart (79.1%). Another 18.1% were recruited at schools in Frankfurt and the final 2.8% of the German sub-sample were recruited at a few religious organizations in Baden-Württemberg. In terms of the cultural or national

background of the participants, in 60.1% of the t_1 sample both parents were born in Germany, in 24.4% both parents were born outside of Germany, and in 15.5% one parent was born in Germany and one elsewhere. At t_2 these groups were represented by 62.1%, 22.7% and 15.2% of the sample, respectively. As shown in Table 3.4, the ratio of young people with a Turkish background (either from the mother, father, or both) is the largest immigrant group, followed by those with a southern European or eastern European background. The distribution of religious affiliations in the German sub-sample (with the exception of the free churches) is much like the distribution in the Swiss sub-sample (See Table 3.5 for details) with the majority of participants belonging to either the Protestant or Catholic church. The next largest group represents those without an affiliation to a religious organization, which is then closely followed by the young people with a Muslim background.

I conclude that the samples from German-speaking Switzerland and southern Germany are parallel enough to be combined; however, as a precaution, the country is routinely analysed as a control variable before proceeding with further analyses.

	Germany		Switzerland	
	Mother	Father	Mother	Father
	%	%	%	%
German/Swiss	66.7	68.6	65.1	65
South East Europe	2.6	2.3	9.6	8.9
Southern Europe	4.7	4.5	6.7	9.1
Turkey	6.9	6.7	2.1	1.9
Central & Northern Europe	1.9	1.2	5.9	6.1
South Asia	2.8	2.8	4.1	4.0
Eastern Europe	3.6	3.5	0.7	0.5
Russia	2.7	2.2	0.3	0.1
East & Southeast Asia	1.7	1.1	1.0	0.9
East, West, Central & South Africa	1.5	1.5	0.5	1.2
Middle East	1.3	1.6	0.4	0.4
Middle & South America	1.1	0.7	1.6	0.4
Central Asia	0.9	0.8	0	0.1
North America	0.6	0.9	0.7	0.5
North Africa	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.8
Australia	0	0	0.1	0
Missing	0.6	0.9	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Table 3.4: Summary of birth places of participants' parents at t_1 in the German and Swiss sub-samples

	Germany				Switzerland			
	t_1		t_2		t_1		t_2	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Catholic	220	24.6	172	26.0	191	25.5	131	25.3
Protestant	335	37.4	265	40.0	241	32.1	191	36.9
Christian Orthodox	26	2.9	22	3.3	22	2.9	18	3.5
Free churches	16	1.8	12	1.8	21	2.8	24	4.6
Christian, unspecified	33	3.7	11	1.7	74	9.9	10	1.9
Muslim	86	9.5	53	8.0	61	8.1	42	8.1
Hindu	19	2.1	19	2.9	25	3.3	14	2.7
Jewish	23	2.6	15	2.3	17	2.3	9	1.7
Sects	10	1.1	3	0.5	5	0.7	3	0.6
Other affiliations	6	0.6	11	1.6	8	1.1	5	1.0
No affiliation	84	9.4	62	9.4	69	9.2	68	13.2
Unclear	16	1.8	8	1.2	9	1.2	1	0.2
Missing	22	2.5	9	1.3	7	0.9	1	0.2

Table 3.5: German and Swiss sub-samples at t_1 and t_2 according to religious affiliation

Chapter 4

Results

In this chapter, results are presented from analyses undertaken to 1) test a quantitative operationalisation of the key aspects of effective identity work according to its normality, reliability, and stability; 2) investigate the usefulness (or validity) of this operationalisation by examining the data for unique patterns of identity work in an adolescent sample; 3) better understand the effect that gender (including differences and similarities) has with respect to adolescents' effective identity work; 4) examine the connections that may exist between patterns of effective identity work, gender, and young people's positive body experience; and 5) explore the impact gender, effective identity work, and body experience have on adolescents' mental health.

A general note on differences between the Swiss and German sub-samples

One of the first steps of analysis on each construct was to investigate whether there were meaningful differences between the young people in Switzerland and Germany. In general, with regard to the assessment of both identity work and mental health (since the Body Appreciation Scale was only administered in Germany), the few significant differences found between the results from the two countries were very small and thus deemed negligible. Any results that seemed to suggest a meaningful difference between the two sub-samples are presented in the respective sections.

4.1 Part One: Development, evaluation, and implementation of the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI)

4.1.1 Factor analysis

Since the items used to measure the six aspects of effective identity work were developed as part of the present study, the first major task in analysing the data on identity was to examine the empirical structure underlying the 15 items. Accordingly, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted in order to investigate the empirically-based structure of the constructs measured by the items of the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI) (See Section 3.1 for an overview of the items). Principle components analysis (PCA) was used to extract the factors. After considering both the eigenvalues and the scree plots (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2), four factors were retained at both t_1 and t_2, explaining 59.9% and 59.8% of the variance, respectively.[1] Since the factors were expected to correlate with one another, an oblique rotation (direct oblimin; delta=0) was used to structure the extracted factors. This decision is in line with what many authors suggest: "In the social sciences we generally expect some correlation among factors, since behavior is rarely partitioned into neatly packaged units that function independently of one another. Therefore using orthogonal rotation results in a loss of valuable information if the factors are correlated, and oblique rotation should theoretically render a more accurate, and perhaps more reproducible, solution" (Costello & Osborne, 2005, p. 3). Table 4.1 displays the pattern matrices of the PCA which reveal partial correlations between the individual variables and the factors. These values are referred to as factor loadings. Three items (j, k, and o) were removed from the analysis due to "crossloading" which occurs when an item loads at .32 or higher on two

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[1] Since very similar results were achieved when the sample was split by country (the Swiss sub-sample and the German sub-sample), further analyses using the factor scores were performed using the combined sample.
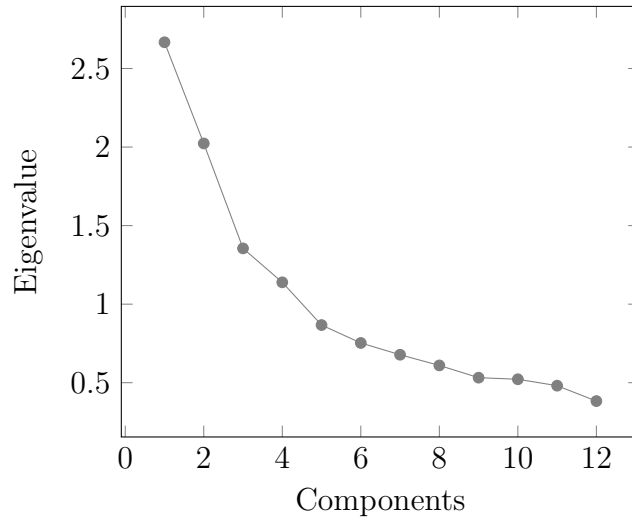
Figure 4.1: Screeplot of Eigenvalues at t_1
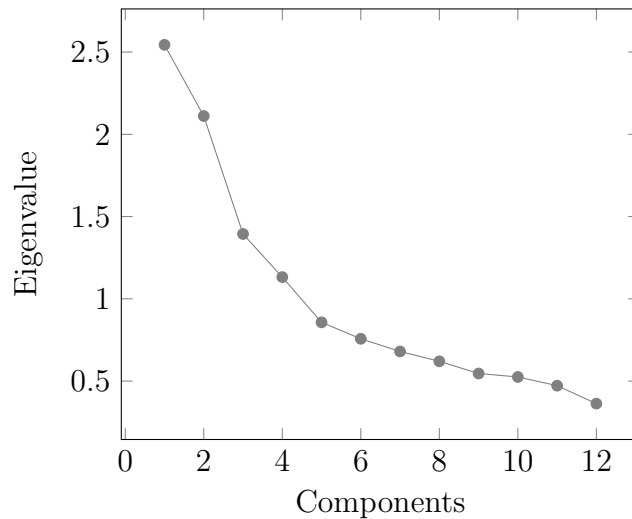
Figure 4.2: Screeplot of Eigenvalues at t_2

or more factors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), indicating that the item does not clearly 'belong' to any one of the factors. As can be seen in the table, factor loadings ranged from .529 to .849, which according to Tabachnick and Fidell ranged from good (30% overlapping variance) to excellent (>50% overlapping variance). The extracted factors were in line with the theory that guided the development of the items and were named accordingly: Life Coherence (F1), Authenticity (F2), Acceptance (F3), and Integration of Discrepancies (F4).

	Factors							
	t$_1$ (N=1115)				t$_2$ (N=1140)			
Item	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
a)Life Coherence	.652				.805			
b)Life Coherence	.778				.755			
c)Life Coherence	.720				.647			
d)Authenticity		.529				.553		
e)Authenticity		.800				.781		
f)Authenticity		.849				.827		
g)Acceptance			.826				.850	
h)Acceptance			.822				.865	
i)Acceptance			.738				.695	
l)Integration				.630				.695
m)Integration				.800				.798
n)Integration				.778				.794

Note: Factor loadings under .30 are not displayed.

Table 4.1: Pattern matrices of the Principle Components Analyses at t$_1$ and t$_2$, using an oblimin rotation and Kaiser normalisation

4.1.2 Descriptive statistics, correlations and test quality of the EIWI

Once the final items of a scale have been identified and subscales (in the form of factors) determined through factor analysis, the next steps of analyses include assessing the items and subscales for their test quality. In the following, the individual indices for test quality are presented, followed by an initial description of participants responses on the subscales of the EIWI. Table 4.2 summarises the most important descriptive statistics for each of the four factors of effective identity work at both t$_1$ and t$_2$.

Assumption of Normality All four factors satisfied the criteria for the assumption of normality in that skewness and kurtosis fell between the limits of -1 and +1. More specifically (as can be seen in Table 4.2), the values of skewness and kurtosis on all four factor scores fell within a range of -0.5 and +0.5. Although statistical tests (i.e., ShapiroWilk Test) comparing the given distributions to the normal distribution were significant at the level of p<.001 (suggesting a deviation from the normal distribution),

these tests are known to be very sensitive to large samples. Histograms with superimposed curves provided no reason to believe that the sample distributions on these factor scores violated the assumption of normality. No transformations were undertaken.

Reliability   In order to assess the reliability of the four dimensions of effective identity work, Cronbach's alpha (α) was used, a coefficient of internal consistency that shows the likelihood that the items of each factor measure the same underlying construct. As can be seen in Table 4.2, internal consistency coefficients on the dimensions of identity work ranged from $\alpha=.59$ to $\alpha=.74$. Although these values are not necessarily strong, they can be considered acceptable for the first version of a test.

Stability   The design of the VROID-MHAP Study allowed for an assessment of the stability of scores on individual items and subscales of the Effective Identity Work Inventory one year after the first phase of data collection. On the individual items, the correlations were all significant at the $p<.001$ level but, with a range between $r=.231$ to .467, the values can only be considered to be moderately stable. Dependent two-tailed t-tests between the scores on the identity work items at t_1 and t_2 show that the scores on four of the fifteen items were significantly different: Items a), e), f), and g). The largest score difference, however, was -.174, with an effect size of $d=0.11$, suggesting that the differences found are negligible and most likely effects of the large sample size. The four subscales of effective identity work also proved to be moderately stable between the two phases of data collection. All four pairs of values show significant correlations ranging from $r=.311$ to .452, $p<.001$. A paired t-test showed a significant difference on Life Coherence and Authenticity; however, with an effect size of $d=.08$ and .09, respectively, these differences are also considered to be negligible. In sum, both the individual items and the four factors of effective identity work proved to be moderately stable after one year.

The participants reported experiencing Authenticity to the greatest extent, followed by Life Coherence and Integration of discrepancies. The Acceptance dimension received

Dimension	N	M	SD
Life Coherence	1138 (1157)	3.62 (3.68)	.74 (.71)
Authenticity	1133 (1152)	3.73 (3.81)	.83 (.77)
Acceptance	1132 (1152)	2.94 (2.92)	.92 (.91)
Integration	1133 (1157)	3.38 (3.41)	.88 (.87)
Dimension	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Life Coherence	-.467 (-.295)	.460 (.305)	.59 (.62)
Authenticity	-.470 (-.403)	-.151 (-.175)	.64 (.60)
Acceptance	-.108 (-.115)	-.217 (-.211)	.74 (.74)
Integration	.222 (-.184)	.085 (-.217)	.59 (.59)

Table 4.2: Descriptive statistics for the four factors of effective identity work (values in parentheses are from t_2)

t_1	Life Coherence	Authenticity	Acceptance	Integration
Life Coherence	1	.345***	.175***	.027
Authenticity		1	.230***	.103***
Acceptance			1	-.168***
Integration				1
t_2	Life Coherence	Authenticity	Acceptance	Integration
Life Coherence	1	.332***	.104***	.109***
Authenticity		1	.140***	.167***
Acceptance			1	-.122***
Integration				1

Note: *** $p<.001$

Table 4.3: Correlations between the four factors of effective identity work at t_1 and t_2

the least amount of agreement from participants. As can be seen in Table 4.3, with only one exception at t_1, all four factors correlated with one another to some extent. The strongest correlations were seen between Life Coherence and Authenticity, both at t_1 and t_2. The only negative correlation was between Acceptance and Integration, suggesting the more one reported acting in a way that goes along with others' (parents, school/teachers, friends) expectations, the more one also reported experiencing discrepancy between his/her own or others' expectations of oneself and having difficulty integrating these into a coherent whole.

Factor scores   One of the advantages of EFA is the possibility of calculating factor scores for subsequent analysis. Factor scores created in EFA represent each participant's placement on the factors determined from the EFA (DiStefano, 2009). Here, factor scores were calculated using the refined method of least squares regression. In this approach, regression factor scores predict the location of each individual on the factor. In terms of the regression equation, the standardized observed values of the items in estimated factors are the independent variables which are weighted by regression coefficients obtained through the factor correlation matrix. In keeping with regression terminology, the factor scores are the dependent variables in the equation. This analysis computes standardized scores with a mean of zero and, since the principle components analysis was used here, the standard deviation of the distribution is 1 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The factor scores were calculated and saved as variables using the regression approach provided by SPSS.

Each of the factor scores were screened for univariate outliers based on scores +- 3 standard deviations from the sample mean. At t_1 six outliers were identified on the Authenticity factor and five on the Life Coherence factor. At t_2 six outliers were identified on the Life Coherence factor, four on the Authenticity factor, and one on the Integration factor. These outliers were deleted from further analyses on identity. In a subsequent step, a multivariate outlier analysis based on the mahalanobis distance

squared was performed. Here, two cases at t_1 and one case at t_2 had values above the chi-square cutoff of 18.467 with 4 degrees of freedom and $p=0.01$. Thus, these were identified as multivariate outliers and filtered out from further analyses with the factor scores. After the removal of outliers, the sample size at t_1, which includes only those who also participated at t_2, was $N=1102$ (67% of the original sample at t_1).

4.1.3 Cluster analysis

In order to investigate whether unique patterns of effective identity work could be identified among the adolescents in this study, the rendered factor scores from the 1102 remaining cases were entered into a cluster analysis (CA). Cluster analysis is a descriptive method in multivariate statistics in which the data are structured into groups that show as much in-group homogeneity as possible and as much between-group heterogenity as possible. Using the scores on the four factors or dimensions of identity work, the goal here was to see if different groups of young people could be identified who have a similar pattern of scores on the dimensions of effective identity work, while having a different pattern of scores from the other groups. Specifically, a hierarchical cluster analysis was performed using Ward's method. This analysis began with an initial exploratory step in which the number of clusters was not specified. Based on an assessment of the dendrogram and the changes in coefficients between the cluster solutions (See Table 4.4), a three-cluster model was chosen.

In a second step, the analysis was performed again; however, this time the number of clusters was set a priori to three. Univariate ANOVAS confirmed that the three cluster model produced clusters between which the scores on the variables were significantly different in the main. In order to confirm that the three cluster model was the best fit for the data, cluster analyses were performed with two-, four-, and five-cluster solutionss as well. In all of these cases, the subsequent ANOVA did not produce results as satisfactory as in the three-cluster model.

Table 4.5 shows the number of participants allocated to each of the clusters and

No. of clusters	Agglomeration last step	Coefficients this step	Change
2	4223,319	3565,674	657,645
3	3565,674	3052,929	512,745
4	3052,929	2766,507	286,422
5	2766,507	2518,813	247,694
6	2518,813	2293,16	225,653
7	2293,16	2078,009	215,151

Table 4.4: Coefficient change in agglomeration at t_1

	t_1		t_2	
Cluster	N	$\%$	N	$\%$
1	488	44.3	414	36.7
2	326	29.6	494	43.8
3	288	26.1	220	19.5
Total	1102	100	1128	100

Table 4.5: Cluster membership at t_1 and t_2

Figure 4.3 illustrates how the three groups differed from one another on each of the dimensions of effective identity work. Results showed that the three groups differ significantly on all four dimensions (with one exception on Acceptance). This suggests that the clusters did, indeed, represent three unique patterns of identity work. In order to identify the average score of a cluster on one of the dimensions as being low, moderate, or high, the scores on each dimension were divided into thirds. Table 4.6 shows the thresholds for low, moderate, and high scores on each of the dimensions. Cluster 1 was the largest cluster (n=488) at t_1 and was marked by low to moderate scores on all four dimensions of effective identity work. Cluster 2 (n=326 at t_1) showed moderate values on Life Coherence and Acceptance, a high average score on Authenticity, and the lowest score on Integration. The third and smallest cluster (n=288 at t_1) was characterized by moderate to high scores on all four dimensions, with the highest average score of the three clusters on Life Coherence, Authenticity, and Integration.

The same procedure was followed using the factor scores rendered at t_2. The best solution also produced three clusters with very similar patterns of effective identity work. The size of the clusters diverged slightly from t_1. At t_2, the largest cluster

Note: n.s. = non-significant, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
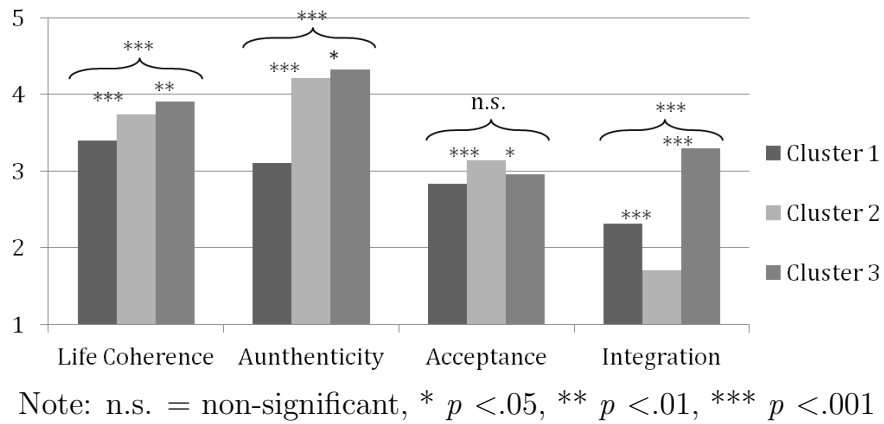
Figure 4.3: Average scores of each cluster on the dimensions of identity work at t_1

	low	moderate	high
Life coherence	<3.33	3.33-4.0	>4.0
Authenticity	<3.33	3.33-4.0	>4.0
Acceptance	<2.67	2.67-3.33	>3.33
Integration	<3.00	3.00-3.67	>3.67

Table 4.6: Threshold values on the dimensions of effective identity work

	Life Coherence	Authenticity	Acceptance	Integration
Cluster 1	3.40 (3.45)	3.10 (3.15)	2.83 (2.56)	3.31 (3.40)
Cluster 2	3.74 (3,75)	4.21 (4.12)	3.14 (3.50)	2.70 (3.07)
Cluster 3	3.91 (4.05)	4.32 (4.46)	2.96 (2.29)	4.30 (4.20)

Table 4.7: Average scores on the dimensions of effective identity work according to cluster (values in parentheses are from t_2)

(n=494) was Cluster 2, followed by Cluster 1 (n=414). As with t_1, the smallest cluster was Cluster 3 (n=220). Table 4.7 shows the average scores on each of the identity dimensions of the three clusters at both t_1 and t_2. As is clear from the table, the mean values on each of the dimensions for each of the clusters are very similar at t_1 and t_2 (with the exceptions on Acceptance). Based on these results, it was assumed that the clusters discovered at t_2 could be considered equivalent to those found at t_1.

4.1.4 Discriminant analysis

After extracting three unique groups through cluster analysis, a discriminant analysis (DA) was performed in line with Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) and (Burns. & Burns., 2008) using SPSS DISCRIMINANT in order to 1) investigate which identity dimensions contribute most to group separation, 2) predict group membership on each of the three identity clusters, and 3) test whether cases are classified as predicted. In a first step, a baseline direct discriminant analysis was carried out using the factor scores on identity work at t_1 as predictors of membership for the three identity clusters. Thus, predictors were the factor scores on Life Coherence, Authenticity, Acceptance, and Integration. For the evaluation of assumptions and outliers on the four factor scores, see Section 4.1.2. A significant Box's M test of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices was observed (p<.001), suggesting a heterogeneity of covariance matrices. In order to deal with this failed assumption, further analyses were performed using separate covariance matrices during classification, thus limiting the risk of overclassification due to heterogeneity of variance-covariance matrices. At t_1, two discriminant outliers were identified. The DA was performed again after filtering out these outliers. Since the removal of outliers had no effect on the classification results, the two cases were included in further analyses. Two discriminant functions were calculated, achieving a combined result of chi-square=1576.04, df=8, p<.001. Even after the first function was removed, the second function still showed a strong association between groups and predictors with a chi-square result of 701.483, df=3, p<.001. Squared canononical correlations

Function	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cummulative %	Canonical correlation
1	1.219	57.7	57.7	.741
2	.895	42.3	100.0	.687

Table 4.8: Summary of the canonical discriminant functions

Test of functions	Wilks' λ	χ^2	df	Sig.
1 through 2	.238	1576.039	8	.000
2	.528	701.483	3	.000

Table 4.9: Wilks' lambda table

suggested that functions 1 and 2 accounted for 55% and 47%, respectively, of the total relationship between predictors and groups and 57.7% and 42.3%, respectively, of the between group variability. As is clear from the Wilks' lambda table (Table 4.9), the discriminant functions were significant and together left only 23.8% of the variance unexplained. As can be seen in Figure 4.4, the first function separated all three groups, while the second discriminant function discriminated Cluster 2 from Clusters 1 and 3.

As shown in Table 4.10, the structure matrix demonstrates that the best predictors for discriminating between all three clusters were Authenticity and Integration. Referring to the scatterplot in Figure 4.4 it is clear that Cluster 1 had the highest centroid value on the first function, followed by Cluster 2 and Cluster 3 which showed the lowest centroid value on the first function. Moreover, the structure matrix suggests that the best predictor for discriminating Cluster 2 from 1 and 3 was the Integration factor. The scatterplot illustrates that Cluster 2 had a lower centroid value on the second function, indicating that members of cluster two had lower scores on the Integration dimension. In line with Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), loadings less than .50 are not interpreted.

Predictor	Function 1	Function 2
Authenticity	**.890**	.417
Life Coherence	.261	.027
Integration	-.460	**.866**
Acceptance	-.064	-.115

Table 4.10: Structure matrix showing correlations between predictors and discriminant functions

Figure 4.4: Canonical discriminant functions at t_1
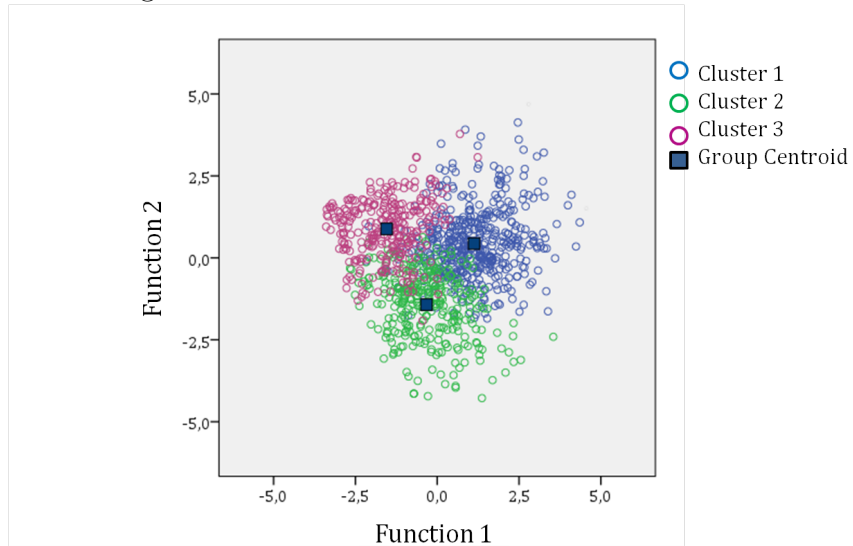
		Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Total
	Cluster 1	441	27	20	488
Number	Cluster 2	40	261	25	326
	Cluster 3	18	25	245	288
	Cluster 1	90.4	5.5	4.1	100
%	Cluster 2	12.3	80.1	7.7	100
	Cluster 3	6.3	8.7	85.1	100

Table 4.11: Predicted cluster membership at t_1

One of the advantages of DA is that one can predict membership to groups based on the developed discriminant functions. In the present case, as is displayed in Table 4.11, of the 1102 cases included in the discriminant analysis, 947 (85.9%) were correctly classified into one of the three clusters. Considering that 35.2% of the sample would be classified correctly by chance, the determined discriminant functions achieved a very accurate rate of classification into the three clusters.

Following the finding that only the Authenticity and Integration dimensions of effective identity work were significant predictors in distinguishing the three clusters from one another and in order to tell the groups better apart, the clusters were given the following names: *Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration* (Cluster 1), *High Authenticity-Low Integration* (Cluster 2), and *High Authenticity-High Integration* (Cluster 3). Table 4.12 provides an overview of these three clusters.

Cluster	Authenticity	Integration	Cluster name	Description
Cluster 1	Low	Moderate	*Low Authenticity—Moderate Integration*	This cluster includes individuals who, on the one hand, reported not acting very authentically among family members, friends, or in school. On the other hand, they reported experiencing discrepant norms and expectations in their social environment but also being able to deal with these to a moderate extent when changing situations or making future plans.
Cluster 2	High	Low	*High Authenticity—Low Integration*	This cluster of individuals reported acting highly authentically in their social environment but also reported to the greatest extent experiencing the norms and expectations around them as discrepant and having the hardest time moving from one situation to another and making plans for the future.
Cluster 3	High	High	*High Authenticity—High Integration*	This cluster describes individuals who reported acting authentically whether they are with family, friends or in school. They did not report experiencing discrepant norms and expectations for their lives nor did they report having difficulty moving from one social situation to the next or making future plans for their own lives.

Table 4.12: Cluster description

Validity of the clusters

The three-cluster solution was cross-validated by spliting the sample. In cross-validation, one sub-sample is considered the estimation or learning sample used to build the discriminant model and the other sub-sample a holdout sample to validate the model. I chose to split the sample according to gender. The sample of girls was used to estimate or 'train' the discriminant model and the sample of boys to cross-validate. During 'training' 84% of the cases the girls were correctly classified and in 86.7% of the cases the boys were correctly classified. These results show, in general, a satisfactory accuracy rate based on the discriminant model and, in particular, that the clusters and discriminant functions created were appropriate for both boys and girls.

Following the cross-validation of the clusters using discriminant function analysis, the validity of the three identified clusters was appraised on a content level. It was important that the clusters also show significant differences on other related variables and not only on the measures used to create and discriminate between the clusters. In a first step, the clusters were examined according to the two other aspects of effective identity work that were not included in the cluster or disciminant analyses, namely, Self-Acceptance and Agency. As was previously mentioned, these were measured with only one item each (Self-Acceptance: "I am the way I want to be"; Agency: "In the future, I think I will be able to live my life the way that I would like to."). Figure 4.5 displays the mean differences of the clusters on these two items. Here, there were also significant differences among all but one of the cluster comparisons. On both items, Cluster 3 (High Authenticity-High Integration) showed the highest values, followed by Cluster 2 (High Authenticity-Low Integration) and then Cluster 1 (Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration).

Stability of the Clusters

Since the cluster analyses used factor scores based on two different factor analyses (t_1 and t_2), the clusters were identified based on different weights and coefficients resulting
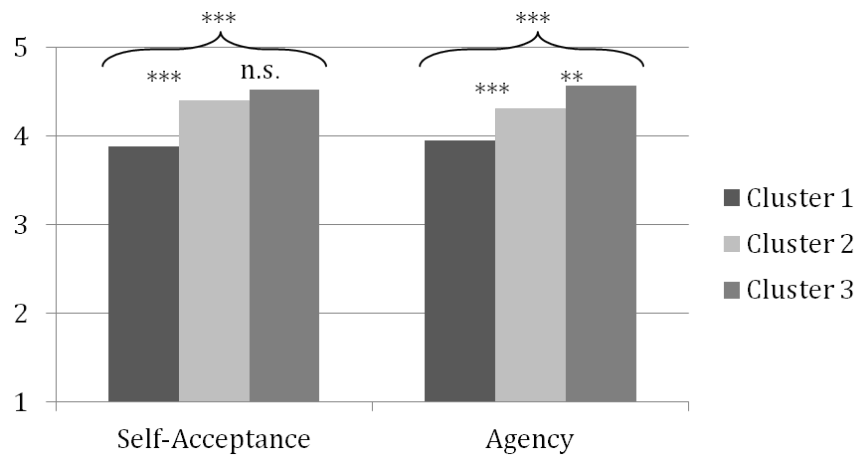
Note: n.s.=non-significant, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$

Figure 4.5: Mean differences of the three clusters on Self-Acceptance and Agency

in two unique sets of clustering rules. However, since the patterns of identity work of the three clusters identified at t_2 showed such similarity with those of the three clusters identified at t_1, it was decided that would be reasonable to treat the three clusters as representing the same pattern of identity work across the two phases of data collection. Accordingly, the next step was to examine the stability of cluster membership between t_1 and t_2.

Table 4.13 shows the stability and change of individual membership between t_1 and t_2. In total, 46.6% of the participants had the same cluster membership at both t_1 and t_2. Statistically, 35.3% of the sample would have been classified into the same cluster by chance. Thus, 46.6% is slightly more than 25% above the rate of chance. As noted in Table 4.13, however, the McNemar-Bowker test for internal symmetry produced a significant chi-square value suggesting that there was significant change in cluster membership between t_1 and t_2.

The majority of the 'changers' moved either from Cluster 1 (Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration) or Cluster 3 (High Authenticity-High Integration) to Cluster 2 (High Authenticity-Low Integration) and the fewest moved to Cluster 3 (High Authentiticity-High Integration). In total, 27.8% of the entire sample moved to Cluster 2 (High Authenticity-Low Integration), 14.9% to Cluster 1 (Low Authenticity-Moderate

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Clusters at t_1	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Total N
Cluster 1	224 (48.4%)	183 (39.5%)	56 (12.1%)	463
Cluster 2	90 (28.6%)	168 (53.3%)	57 (18.1%)	315
Cluster 3	68 (24.2%)	111 (39.5%)	102 (36.3%)	281
Total N	382	462	215	1059

Bowker Test of internal symmetry: $\chi^2(1059,3)=50.200$, $p<.001$

Table 4.13: Stability of cluster membership between t_1 and t_2

Integration), and 10.7% moved to Cluster 3 (High Authenticity-High Integration).

4.1.5 Identity work patterns in context

Once the three different patterns of effective identity work had been identified, analyses were performed in order to evaluate how the patterns might be related to context variables. Since all of the context variables were either assessed as dichotomous, nominal or ordinal scales or had been recoded into such scales, crosstabular analyses with the chi-square test of association was the test of choice. The following context variables were tested: country of participation (Switzerland/Germany), rural vs. urban areas, age, national background, type of school, and socioeconomic status. Due to the relatively large size of the sample, the level of significance was set to $p<0.01$. Therefore, only those results with a p value lower than 0.01 were considered to be significant. In cases where a significant result was reached, the effect size (Cramer's V) will also be noted in order to better capture the meaningfulness of the result.

Country Crosstabular results between identity work patterns and country at t_1 did not produce a significant association at the $p<.01$ level. At t_2, however, a chi-square test showed a significant association between identity work pattern and country, $\chi^2(2)=14.918$, $p<.01$. With an effect size of Cramer's $V=.12$, this effect is considered to be relatively small. In order to better understand this result, a MANOVA was conducted on all four identity variables at t_1 and t_2 with country as the factor and controlling for gender. Only Authenticity produced a significant difference between the German

and Swiss sub-samples, however, with an effect size of $\eta^2=.009$ and .021, respectively, this difference is not considered relevant. Based on these results, it was concluded that the differences were small enough that the two samples could be combined for further analyses with the identity work patterns and identity variables. As a precaution, however, the remaining context factor analyses were always performed separately for Germany and Switzerland.

Rural vs. Urban Results from the chi-square test of association between identity work patterns and rural vs. urban area produced non-significant results in both Switzerland and Germany.

Age Similarly, the crosstabular results on identity work patterns according to age also produced non-significant results in both countries at both points in time.

School type Chi-square results from the German sample did not show a significant difference on the identity work patterns between the *Hauptschule*, *Realschule*, or *Gymnasium*. In Switzerland, a small but significant difference was found at t_2 ($\chi^2(4)=13.578$, $p<.01$; Cramer's $V=.12$), showing that individuals attending a *Gymnasium* were overrepresented in the High Authenticity-High Integration cluster and individuals attending a *Sekundarschule* were overrepresented in the Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration and High Authenticity-Low Integration clusters.

National background Crosstabular results on effective identity work and national background based on the birth place of participants' mother and father (i.e., both parents native to Switzerland or Germany, one parent born outside of Switzerland or Germany, both parents born outside of Switzerland or Germany) for Germany showed no effects at either t_1 or t_2. In Switzerland, however, at t_1 a chi-square test of independence showed a significant albeit small difference in the ratio of cluster membership between individuals with a Swiss background, those with a mixed background, and

	Swiss	Mixed	Non-Swiss	Total
Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration	91 (109)	43 (34)	63 (54)	197
High Authenticity-Low Integration	91 (89)	21 (28)	49 (44)	161
High Authenticity-High Integration	94 (78)	22(24)	25 (39)	141
Total	276	86	137	499

$\chi^2(499,4)=17.407$, $p<.01$, Cramer's $V=.13$, $p<.01$

Table 4.14: Crosstabulation of national background and identity work patterns in the Swiss sub-sample at t_1 (statistically expected number of participants per group is shown in parentheses)

those whose parents were both born outside of Switzerland. As can be seen in Table 4.14, the difference in ratios are most clear between the group of individuals with a Swiss background (both parents born in Switzerland) and those with a migration background (both parents born outside Switzerland). While the individuals with a Swiss background were underrepresented in the Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration cluster and overrepresented in the High Authenticity-High Integration cluster, those with a non-Swiss background were overrepresented in the Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration and High Authenticity-Low Integration clusters and underrepresented in the High Authenticity-High Integration cluster. The same pattern held true to a lesser extent for the group of individuals with a mixed national background.

Socioeconomic status   A chi-square test of association between identity work pattern and socioeconomic status revealed no significant results.

Summary of the results in Part-One

Exploratory factor analysis on the fifteen items included in the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI) resulted in a four-factor solution with the following factors: Life Coherence, Authenticity, Acceptance, and Integration. Tests for normality, reliability, and stability of the items and the factors produced results acceptable for the first version of a quantitative measurement instrument. Taking together the results from cluster analysis, discriminant analysis, and the significant mean differences between clusters, three different patterns of identity work could be identified using the operationalisation of Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory. The dimensions Authenticity and Integration proved to be the most statistically important factors in distinguishing the groups from one another. For this reason, the three patterns were named: *Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration*, *High Authenticity-Low Integration*, and *High Authenticity-High Integration*. Split-sample cross-validation results showed a classification accuracy rate of about 85%. Not only did the three patterns show significant differences on Life Coherence, Authenticity, Acceptance, and Integration, the patterns could be futher validated by the significant differences between the respective mean values on the Self-Acceptance and Agency items included in the EIWI as well. An evaluation of context variables and the three patterns of effective identity work showed no effect of age or rural vs. urban settings. In Switzerland, however, results from at least one of the phases of data collection showed differences in type of school and national background.

4.2 Part Two: Connections between gender, body experience, and effective identity work

4.2.1 Identity work and gender

This section is dedicated to looking at whether and how the girls and boys in the sample differed in their identity work. In a first step, two-tailed t-tests were carried out with the four dimensions of effective identity work (Life Coherence, Authenticity, Acceptance, Integration). Table 4.15 shows that boys and girls differede significantly only on Authenticity. With an effect size of $d=.43$, the girls reported acting with a greater sense of authenticity than did the boys. Although the items for Self-Acceptance and Agency were excluded from the scale after factor analyses, it was still of interest to know whether the girls and boys would differ on these two items as well (Self-Acceptance: "I am the way I want to be"; Agency: "In the future, I think I will be able to live my life the way that I would like to"). Two-tailed independent t-tests at t_1 and t_2 showed that girls and boys agreed to these statements to a similar degree. Only at t_1 did the girls show a significantly higher score on Self-Acceptance ($p<.001$); however, with an effect size of $d=.23$, this difference is considered to be small.

Dimension	Gender	N	M	SD	t	Sig.	d
Life Coherence	Girls	573	3.623	.698	.188	.851	
	Boys	565	3.615	.785			
Authenticity	Girls	573	3.899	.793	7.216	.000	.43
	Boys	560	3.552	.825			
Acceptance	Girls	572	2.918	.974	-.973	.331	
	Boys	560	2.971	.857			
Integration	Girls	572	3.427	.902	1.607	.108	
	Boys	561	3.342	.863			

Table 4.15: Mean differences on effective identity work dimensions according to gender at t_1

The influence of gender in adolescent identity work becomes more apparent when the distribution of females and males across the three patterns of effective identity work

is examined. Here, the girls' higher scores on Authenticity come to light again. Table 4.16 shows a crosstabular in which the actual number of cases and the statistically-expected number of cases per cluster are presented. The highly significant chi-square result shows that girls and boys were not equally represented in the three different patterns of effective identity work. As shown in the table, the girls were overrepresented in the *High Authenticity-High Integration* and the *High Authenticity-Low Integration* identity work patterns and underrepresented in the *Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration* identity work pattern. In contrast, the boys were underrepresented in the *High Authenticity-High Integration* and *High Authenticity-Low Integration* patterns and overrepresented in the *Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration* identity work pattern. The same result was drawn from the data at t_2 with a slightly weaker effect, chisquare(1126,2)=19.872, $p<.001$, Cramer's $V=.13$, $p<.001$.

	Girls	%	Boys	%
Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration	202 (248)	36.0	286 (239)	52.9
High Authenticity-Low Integration	186 (166)	33.2	140 (160)	25.9
High Authenticity-High Integration	173 (146)	30.8	115 (141)	21.2
Total	561	100	541	100

$\chi^2(1102,2)=32.278$, $p<.001$, Cramer's $V=.17$, $p<.001$

Table 4.16: Crosstabulation of gender and identity work patterns (statistically expected number of participants per group is shown in parentheses)

4.2.2 Body experience

As was previously mentioned, the Body Appreciation Scale was only included in the second phase of data collection in Germany. As a result, all of the results that include data from the BAS are based on the German sub-sample of participants who were present at both t_1 and t_2. Table 4.17 presents the descriptive statistics for this sub-sample on the BAS. With a Mean of 3.95 on a 5-point Likert scale, in general, the

young people in the present study reported a strong sense of appreciation for their bodies.

	N	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Body Appreciation Scale	629	3.95	.70	-.740	.515

Table 4.17: Descriptive statistics on the BAS at t_2

Analyses of Variance were computed in order to test the effect of context factors on the scores on the Body Appreciation Scale. ANOVAs showed no significant main effects on age, national background, rural vs. urban environment, and type of school (tested at the level $p<.01$) and no significant interactions between these factors (also tested at the level $p<.01$).

4.2.3   Body experience and gender

In line with the original hypothesis, a one-way ANOVA showed that scores on the Body Appreciation Scale were significantly different between boys ($M=4.08$, $n=311$) and girls ($M=3.83$, $n=318$), Welch's $F(1,613.879)=20.395$, $p<.001$, with boys reporting slightly greater body appreciation than girls. The effect size of $d=.35$ for this difference is considered to be relatively small. Independent two-tailed t-tests on the individual items of the scale showed no significant differences on four items, including:"Despite its flaws, I accept my body for what it is", "I engage in healthy behaviours to take care of my body", "I respect my body", "Despite its imperfections, I still like my body". The t-tests produced significant differences between boys and girls on the remaining items with effect sizes ranging between $d=.22$ and $d=.44$. The largest difference was found on the item: "I feel good about my body".

4.2.4 Identity work and body experience

The following part of analysis focused on whether and how the dimensions of identity work and the resulting effective identity work patterns were connected with the positive body experience of female and male adolescents.

With the help of hierarchichal regression (See Table 4.18), it was possible to estimate the individual influence that gender and the dimensions of identity work at t_1 had on the body appreciation of male and female adolescents one year later (t_2). Thus, in this regression analysis gender and the values on the dimensions of identity at t_1 acted as predictor variables and the total score on the Body Appreciation Scale at t_2 as the criterion variable. Gender was entered into the equation first, followed by the four factors of effective identity work identity work (simultaneously). Results showed that in comparison to the combined influence of the identity work dimensions (12.6% variance explained), gender played a relatively small albeit statistically significant role (2.8% variance explained) in predicting body appreciation scores one year later. As can be deduced from Table 4.18, the Authenticity dimension of identity work had the greatest influence on positive body image. Specifically, this means that the higher the young people's scores were on Authenticity during the first phase of data collection, the higher their scores on body appreciation one year later. The same was true, although to a lesser extent, for the Life Coherence and Integration dimensions. In contrast, the Acceptance dimension of identity work did not prove to be a significant predictor of body appreciation.

The regression was also performed including the two items on Self-Acceptance and Agency. While Agency did not prove to be a significant predictor of body appreciation, Self-Acceptance was the strongest predictor of all (β=.238, t=5.794, p<.001) and increased the variance explained by the identity work dimensions to 17.3%.

In order to investigate whether there were differences in body appreciation scores between the three different identity work patterns and the effect that gender might have on this relationship, an Analysis of Variance was performed with scores on the BAS as

	R^2	Change in R^2	Change in F	$df1$	$df2$	Sig.
Block 1	.028	.028	17.093	1	590	.000
Gender						
Block 2	.154	.126	21.832	4	586	.000
Life Coherence						
Authenticity						
Acceptance						
Integration						
Predictors		Regress. coef.	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
Gender		.271	.055	**.192**	4.939	**.000**
Life Coherence		.167	.038	**.176**	4.373	**.000**
Authenticity		.189	.034	**.214**	5.208	**.000**
Acceptance		.036	.030	.048	1.208	.228
Integration		.101	.031	**.128**	3.292	**.001**

Table 4.18: Hierarchical regression on the BAS at t_2 and identity work dimensions and gender as predictors at t_1

the dependent variable and the effective identity work patterns and gender as the two factors (which were entered simultaneously). As can be seen in Table 4.19, the ANOVA produced significant main effects on both identity work and gender. No interaction between identity work and gender, however, was found. Table 4.20 presents the mean scores for both girls and boys in each of the identity work groups on the BAS. As can be seen in Figure 4.6, young people with a Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration pattern showed the lowest scores on body appreciation, while those with a High Authenticity-High Integration pattern had the highest scores. Independent two-tailed t-tests on the BAS between each of the identity work clusters produced significant differences between the Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration and the High Authenticity-Low Integration patterns (d=.48) and between the Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration and High Authenticity-High Integration patterns (d=.60). Since results showed that the Authenticity dimension held the greatest predictive power for body appreciation of the four identity work dimensions, it was not surprising that the High Authenticity-Low Integration identity group did not have significantly lower scores on body appreciation than those with a High Authenticity-High Integration identity work pattern.
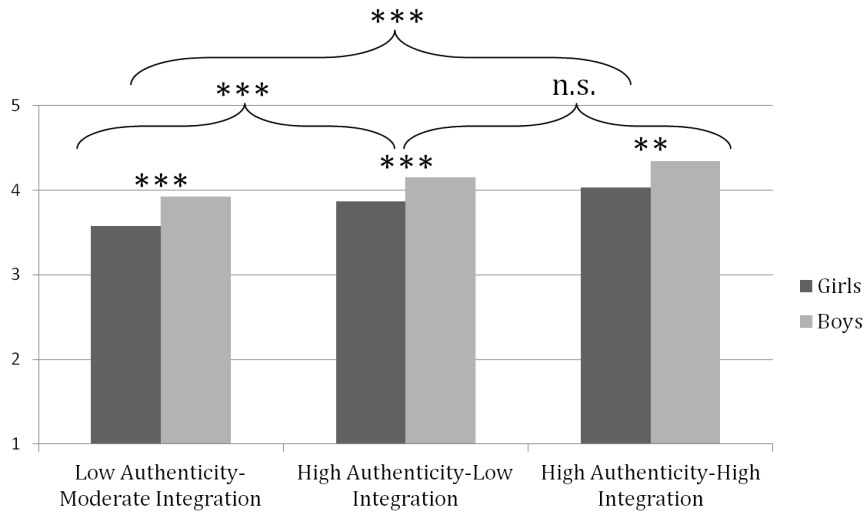
F=14.425, p<.001, R^2=.108; n.s.= non-significant, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

Figure 4.6: ANOVA on the Body Appreciation Scale according to gender and effective identity work patterns

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Identity work	22.797	2	11.398	26.151	.000
Gender	10.521	1	10.521	24.137	.000
Identity x Gender	.052	2	.026	.060	.942
R^2 = .101					

Table 4.19: ANOVA on body appreciation according to effective identity work patterns at t_2 and gender

As was already shown in Section 4.2.3, the boys in the study reported slightly higher scores on body appreciation than the girls. As the figure shows, this was the case for all three groups.

Identity work pattern	Girls	Boys	t	Sig.	d
Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration	3.57	3.92	-4.777	.000	.47
High Authenticity-Low Integration	3.87	4.15	-4.907	.000	.45
High Authenticity-High Integration	4.03	4.34	-3.468	.001	.50
Total	3.83	4.07	-4.365	.000	.35

Table 4.20: Mean scores on the Body Appreciation Scale according to identity work pattern and gender at t_2

Summary of the results in Part-Two

Results on effective identity work and gender showed that the girls in the study reported acting authentically in their interactions with friends, family, and at school to a significantly greater degree than did the boys. Otherwise, girls and boys reported similar levels of Life Coherence, Acceptance, Discrepancy/Integration in their lives. With reference to the patterns of effective identity work, findings showed that the girls were overrepresented in the High Authenticity-High Integration and High Authenticity-Low Integration groups and underrepresented in the Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration group, while the the boys showed the exact opposite distribution. Results from the Body Appreciation Scale showed that, in general, the young people in this study reported a strong sense of appreciation for their bodies. As had been hypothesized, the boys' overall score on the BAS was slightly higher than the girls'. In regression analyses on body appreciation, however, the effect of gender proved to be small (explaining only 2.8% of the variance). The combined influence of three of the factors of effective identity work explained 12.6% of the variance on body appreciation with Authenticity showing the greatest predictive power. When Self-Acceptance was included, the amount of variance explained increased to 17.3%. Results showed that the higher the values on Life Coherence, Authenticity, Integration (and Self-Acceptance), the greater the body appreciation among both girls and boys. The three effective identity work patterns were also related to body experience. Specifically, the High Authenticity-High Integration group showed the highest values on the BAS, followed by the High Authenticity-Low Integration group, and finally the Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration group.

4.3 Part Three: The impact of effective identity work, gender, and body experience on mental health

This third and final part of the results from the present study introduces mental health as a construct, measured here using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Goodman, 1997), and examines its relationship with the other constructs of interest (i.e., effective identity work, gender, and body experience). In a first step, paired t-tests and correlation anaylses were carried out in order to test the stability of scores on the SDQ between t_1 and t_2 for the whole sample (N=1152). All the subscales (emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, peer relationship problems, and prosocial behavior) as well as the total difficulties score (the combined score of the four problem subscales) were correlated at the significance level $p<.001$ with correlations ranging from $r=.49$ to .61. T-tests showed no significant differences between t_1 and t_2. These results suggest that the scores on the SDQ were stable across the two phases of data collection.

In order to test the effect of context factors on the scores of the SDQ, correlation analyses and multiple and one-way analyses of variance were computed in a second step. No correlations were found between the subscales of the SDQ or total difficulties score and age. Furthermore, (M)ANOVAs showed almost no significant main effects on national background, rural vs. urban environment, type of school, or socioeconomic background (all tested at the level $p<.01$). The only exceptions were socioeconomic background and type of school in the German sample which were significantly related to peer relationship problems ($p<.01$). Since these, however, were relatively small effects that were only present in the German data, they were not controlled for in further analyses using the whole sample.

With reference to differences between Germany and Switzerland, MANOVA at both t_1 and t_2 revealed that, while a few of the subscales produced significant differences

between Switzerland and Germany, only two subscales met the criterion of significance at the $p<.01$ level. With corresponding effect sizes of $\eta^2=.008$ or lower, these differences were deemed negligible.

4.3.1 Gender and mental health

In order to find answers to the research question "How and to what extent do adolescent girls and boys differ on mental health?" independent two-tailed t-tests were performed and the similarities and differences between the boys and girls on each of the subscales of the SDQ as well as the total difficulties score were examined. Results from these analyses are presented visually in Figure 4.7 and in more detail in Table 4.21. The original hypotheses that girls would report experiencing greater emotional problems and boys more conduct problems were confirmed. However, the hypothesis that boys would also report more hyperactivity/attention problems could not be confirmed since no significant differences between males and females were found. T-test results on peer relationship problems showed that the boys at t_1 reported having slightly more difficulties than the girls. The girls reported behaving in a more prosocial manner than the boys. The effect sizes of the differences on the SDQ subscales ranged from small ($d=.21$) on peer relationship problems to moderately large ($d=.77$) on emotional problems. When accounting for all of the problem subscales in the total difficulties score, however, girls and boys showed more similarity in their reported experience than difference. Specifically, with reference to the total difficulties score there was only a significant difference at t_2 and, the size of this effect ($d=.20$) was small.

As was discussed in Section 3.1.3, the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire is often used in clinical and other diagnostic settings. As a result, the standardisation of the scale is such that 80% of the population fall into a 'normal' range, while 10% fall into a 'borderline' category, and another 10% fall into an 'abnormal' category. For this reason, it was also possible to examine the data from a categorical perspective in order to see how the boys and girls would be represented in each of these categories.
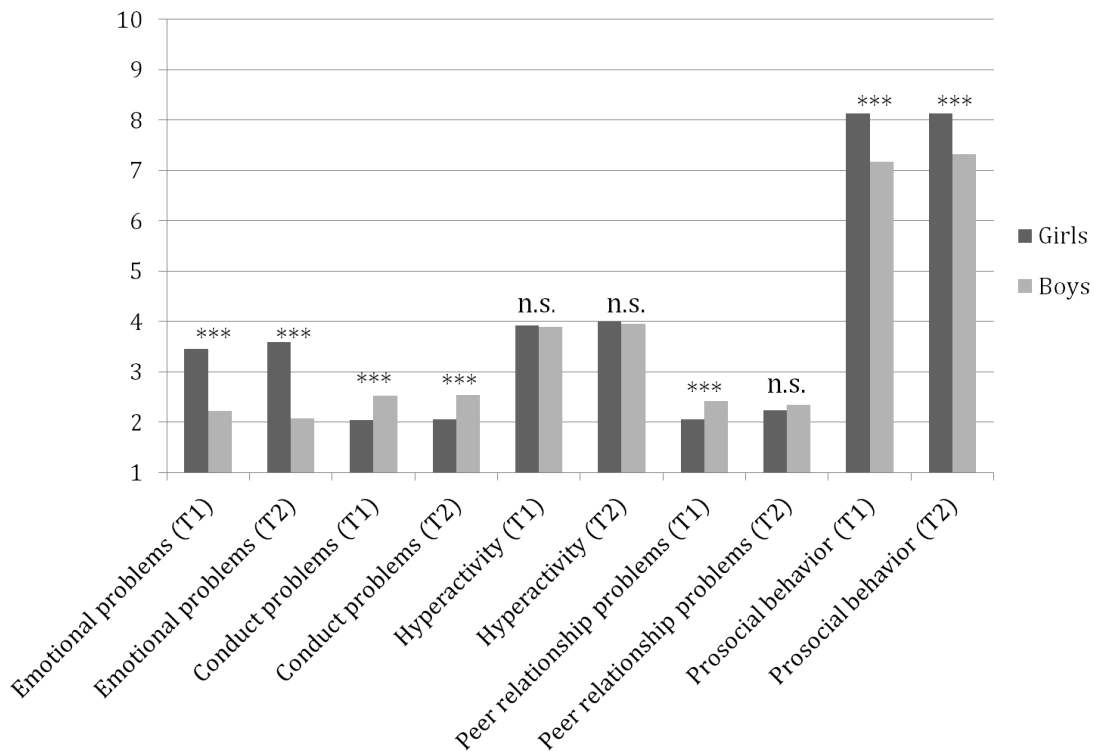
Note: n.s. = non-significant; ***p<.001

Figure 4.7: t-test results between girls and boys on the SDQ at t_1 and t_2

Results from crosstabulations with chi-square tests of association from t_1 are presented in Table 4.22. These results illustrate the more practical implications of the gender differences on the SDQ. For instance, the data on emotional problems show that the girls were about six times more likely to fall into the 'abnormal' category than the boys. In comparison, the boys were a little more than twice as likely to fall into the 'abnormal' category on conduct problems than the girls. With reference to hyperactivity(/inattention) about 11% of both girls and boys fell into the 'abnormal' category. Finally, in the present study, compared with the norm of 10%, only about 6% of both boys and girls fell into the 'abnormal' category on the total difficulties score.

4.3.2 Body experience and mental health

In order to test the relationship between positive body experience and mental health among adolescents, correlation analysis was performed with gender as a control vari-

SDQ Subscales	$M(SD)$		t	df	Sig.	d
	Girls	Boys				
Emotional problems						
t_1	3.45(2.22)	2.22 (1.89)	10.199	1131.488	.000	.60
t_2	3.59(2.20)	2.07(1.76)	13.108	1116.171	.000	.77
Conduct problems						
t_1	2.04(1.44)	2.53(1.73)	-5.223	1126.510	.000	.31
t_2	2.05(1.46)	2.53(1.79)	-5.024	1111.994	.000	.30
Hyperactivity						
t_1	3.92(2.05)	3.90(2.04)	.167	1162	.867	
t_2	4.00(2.21)	3.95(2.10)	.390	1163	.696	
Peer-relationship problems						
t_1	2.06(1.55)	2.41(1.80)	-3.550	1134.444	.000	.21
t_2	2.24(1.71)	2.34(1.86)	-1.008	1151.251	.314	
Prosocial behavior						
t_1	8.14(1.51)	7.17(1.80)	9.936	1130.760	.000	.58
t_2	8.13(1.57)	7.32(1.75)	8.336	1145.290	.000	.49
Total difficulties score						
t_1	11.47(4.84)	11.05(5.04)	1.439	1162	.150	
t_2	11.88(4.74)	10.89(5.12)	3.418	1163	.001	.20

Note: No significant differences were found at the $p<.01$ level on any of the subscales or total difficiculties score for either boys or girls between t_1 and t_2.

Table 4.21: Results on the SDQ according to gender at t_1 and t_2

able. The total score on the Body Appreciation Scale was significantly correlated with each of the individual subscales and the total difficulties score on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. These results are presented in Table 4.23. With the exception of the prosocial behavior subscale, all correlations were negative, showing that the higher the reported values were on body appreciation, the lower the problem scores were on the aspects of mental health. Results from the individual subscales showed that the connection between positive body experience and emotional problems was the strongest even after gender was controlled for. Furthermore, there was a moderate to large negative correlation between positive body experience and the total difficulties score. These results suggest that how one experiences and feels about his/her body was related at least to a moderate extent to the emotional, behavioral, and social aspects of mental health as they were captured in the SDQ.

SDQ Scale	Gender	normal	borderline	abnormal	χ^2	df	Sig.
Emotional problems	Girls	80.9%	8.6%	10.5%	45.932	2	.000
	Boys	93.0%	5.3%	1.7%			
Conduct problems	Girls	84.7%	8.9%	6.4%	24.394	2	.000
	Boys	73.7%	12.2%	14.1%			
Hyperactivity	Girls	78.0%	10.5%	11.5%	.196	2	.907
	Boys	79.0%	10.1%	10.8%			
Peer-relationship	Girls	83.5%	13.9%	2.6%	12.893	2	.002
problems	Boys	75.9%	18.2%	5.9%			
Prosocial behavior	Girls	93.6%	4.6%	1.7%	42.015	2	.000
	Boys	81.1%	12.0%	6.9%			
Total difficulties	Girls	78.9%	15.5%	5.7%	2.712	2	.258
	Boys	81.4%	12.2%	6.4%			

Table 4.22: Crosstabulation results on the SDQ according to gender at t_1

	Emotional problems	Conduct problems	Hyper-activity	Peer relationship	Total difficulties	Prosocial behavior
BAS	-.290	-.220	-.251	-.200	-.366	.217

Note: n=627; all correlations are significant at the level p<.001

Table 4.23: Partial correlations on the BAS and the subscales and total difficulties score of the SDQ controlling for gender at t_2

4.3.3 Effective identity work and mental health

The further empirical objective of this study was to investigate whether and in what ways both the dimensions of effective identity work and the patterns of identity work may be related to or influence the mental health of young people. In a first step, multiple regression analyses were performed using the four dimensions of identity work at t_1 as predictor variables and the individual subscales as well as the total difficulties score of the SDQ at t_2 as the criterion variables. Table 4.24 presents these results. Integration of discrepancies proved to be the strongest (negative) predictor for emotional problems, conduct problems, and hyperactivity, while Authenticity was the best predictor for peer relationship problems and prosocial behavior (the regression coefficient of the latter was positive). With reference to the regression on the total difficulties score, the Acceptance dimension was removed due to its low correlation
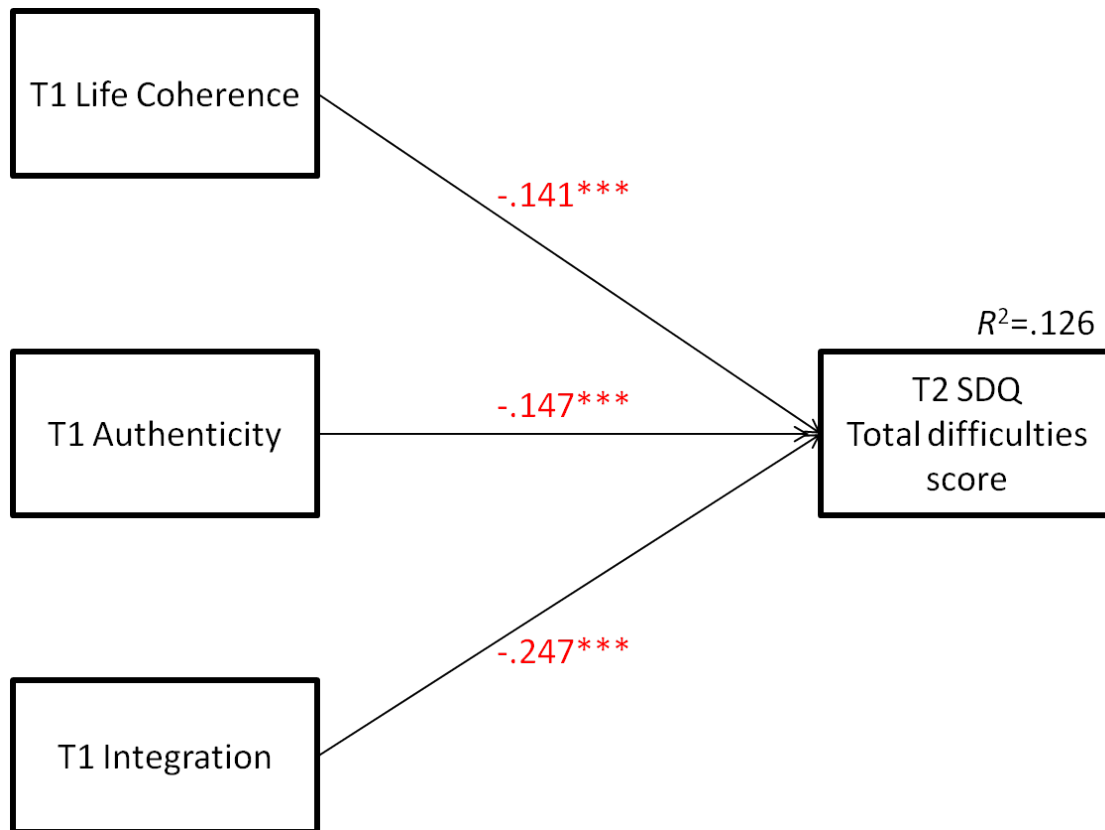
Figure 4.8: Regression analysis on the SDQ total difficulties score at t_2 according to dimensions of effective identity work at t_1

with the criterion variable. The remaining three predictors (Life Coherence, Authenticity, Integration) together explained 12.6% of the variance in the total difficulties score ($F(3,1103)=53.065$, $p<.001$). The predictors were entered simultaneously and yielded the following standardized regression coefficients: Life Coherence, $\beta=-.141$, $p<.001$; Authenticity, $\beta=-.147$, $p<.001$; Integration, $\beta=-.247$, $p<.001$. In general, the results of the regression analyses suggest that the Integration dimension is the best of the three predictors of mental health one year later. Specifically, this means that the young people who reported being able to deal with discrepant expectations at t_1 also reported experiencing less mental health problems at t_2.

Since three unique patterns of effective identity work were identified in the first part of the study, it became of special interest to understand how each of these patterns might be related to the mental health of the adolescents. In order to examine this relationship, a MANOVA was carried out on the five subscales of the SDQ and

a one-way ANOVA on the total difficulties score according to both the identity work patterns and gender. The results presented in Table 4.25 indicate a significant main effect of the identity work patterns on each of the mental health subscales ($p<.001$) and the total difficulties score ($p<.001$). Effect sizes between the individual identity work patterns on the SDQ subscales ranged from $d=.28$ to $.64$. Figure 4.9 illustrates the mean differences of the identity work patterns on each of the SDQ subscales. In Figure 4.10 the mean differences between the three effective identity work pattern groups on the total difficulties score are illustrated. Here, the effect sizes between the High Authenticity-High Integration group and the Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration ($d=.87$) and High Authenticity-Low Integration ($d=.73$) groups demonstrate a large effect on the total difficulties scores.
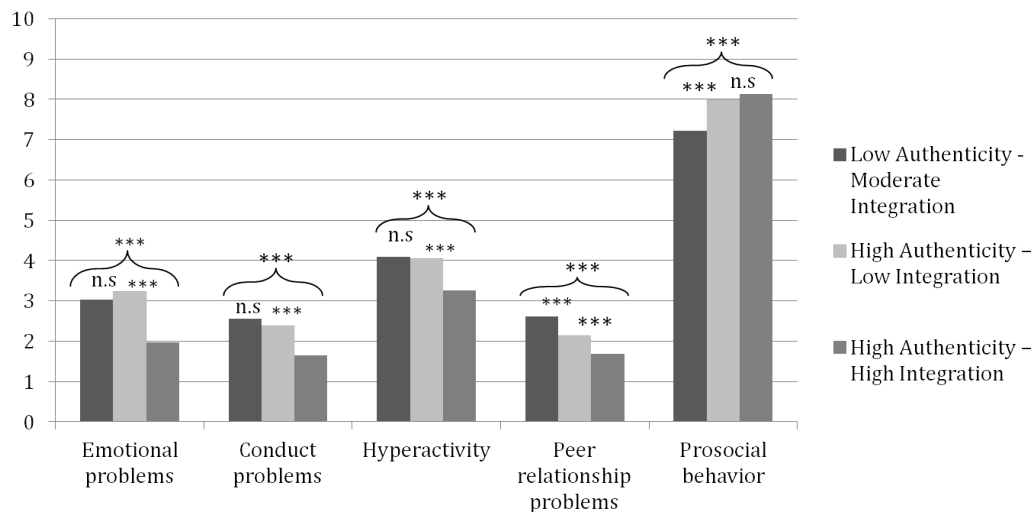
Figure 4.9: MANOVA on SDQ subscales according to identity work patterns

As was seen in Section 4.3.1, gender had a significant main effect on emotional problems, conduct problems, prosocial behavior and a small effect on the total difficulties score. The only significant interaction between identity work and gender was found on the prosocial behavior subscale, though the effect size ($\eta^2=.009$) of this result was very small.
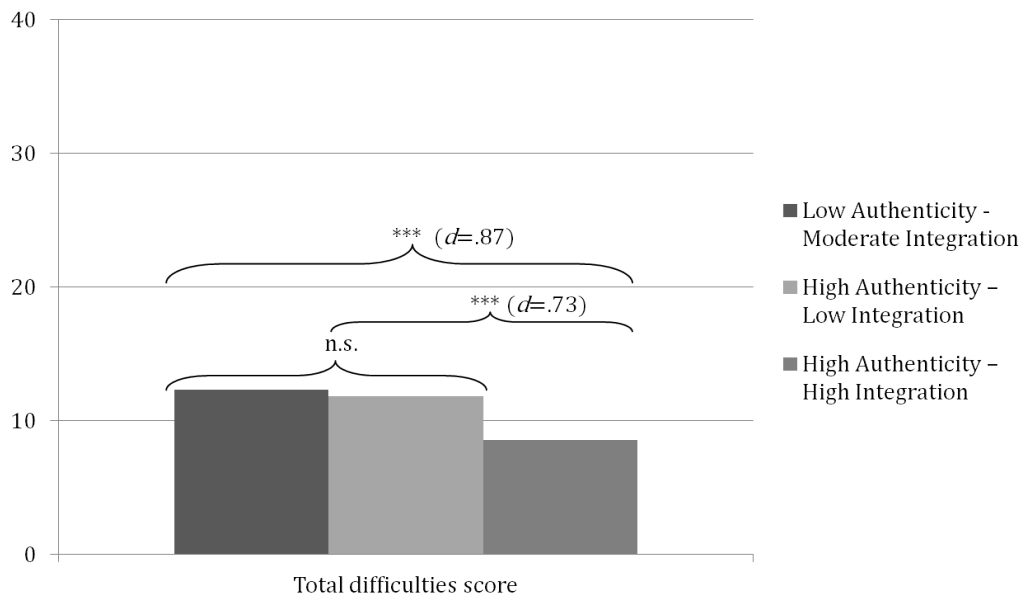
Figure 4.10: ANOVA on SDQ total difficulties score according to effective identity work patterns

As in the previous section, in a further step a slightly different perspective was followed using the categorical data of the SDQ. Specifically, analyses of descriptive crosstabulation results with chi-square tests of independence were conducted in order to see if a relationship between the identity work patterns and the standardized categories of the SDQ exists. As was previously mentioned, on each of the SDQ subscales individuals' scores fall into one of three categories: normal, borderline, or abnormal. Table 4.26 presents the categorisation of the young people according to their identity work patterns and SDQ scores. In this case, the chi-square test of association was used to test the null hypothesis that identity work and mental health, as they were measured here, were independent constructs (i.e., not related). The null hypothesis was rejected on all four problem subscales as well as on the total difficulties score, signifying a connection between mental health and the effective identity work patterns. As Table 4.26 and Figure 4.10 demonstrate, on the problem subscales and the total difficulties score, individuals who fell into Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration or High Authenticity - Low Integration identity work group were categorized to a significantly greater degree into the 'borderline' and 'abnormal' categories than the individuals who showed a High

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Authenticity - High Integration identity work pattern.

The picture is, however, slightly different for the prosocial subscale. Here, as can be seen in Table 4.26 and Figure 4.12, individuals who fit the High Authenticity - Low Integration or High Authenticity - High Integration identity work pattern were significantly more likely to fall into the 'normal' category than those with a Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration pattern.

Upon closer examination, both the data on the mean differences (Figure 4.9) and the crosstabulation results (Table 4.26) comparing the three effective identity patterns on the SDQ showed that the group of individuals with a Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration pattern reported the greatest conduct problems and peer relationship problems and the least prosocial behavior. In contrast, the group of individuals with a High Authenticity - Low Integration pattern reported the most emotional problems and hyperactivity/inattention. Lastly, the individuals in the High Authenticity - High Integration group reported having the least problems on all four difficulties subscales.

Dimension/subscale	R^2	$F(df)$	Sig. of F	Beta	t	Sig.
Emotional problems	.06	17.352(4,1097)	$p<.001$			
Life coherence				-.148	-.4754	$p<.001$
Authenticity				.007	.206	n.s
Acceptance				.014	.463	n.s.
Integration				-.190	-6.325	$p<.001$
Conduct problems	.07	20.558(4,1097)	$p<.001$			
Life coherence				-.061	-1.956	n.s.
Authenticity				-.108	-3.424	$p<.01$
Acceptance				-.090	-2.951	$p<.01$
Integration				-.190	-6.353	$p<.001$
Hyperactivity	.062	18.001(4,1097)	$p<.001$			
Life coherence				-.078	-2.505	$p<.05$
Authenticity				-.076	-2.376	$p<.05$
Acceptance				-.090	-2.954	$p<.01$
Integration				-.184	-6.128	$p<.001$
Peer-relationship problems	.057	16.703(4,107)	$p<.001$			
Life coherence				-.051	-1.624	n.s.
Authenticity				-.191	-5.990	$p<.001$
Acceptance				.046	1.512	n.s.
Integration				-.093	-3.101	$p<.01$
Total difficulties score	.126	53.065(3,1103)	$p<.001$			
Life coherence				-.141	-4.734	$p<.001$
Authenticity				-.147	-4.890	$p<.001$
Integration				-.247	-8.707	$p<.001$
Prosocial behavior	.067	19.672(4,1097)	$p<.001$			
Life coherence				.100	3.215	$p<.01$
Authenticity				.184	5.791	$p<.001$
Acceptance				.063	2.058	$p<.05$
Integration				.007	.229	n.s.

Note: N=1102; predictors were entered simultaneously.

Table 4.24: Multiple regression analyses predicting the impact of identity work dimensions at t_1 on the scales of the SDQ at t_2

SDQ Scale	Sum of squares	df	F	Sig.	η^2	R^2
Emotional problems						.15
Identity work patterns	340.86	2	44.454	.000	.075	
Gender	420.179	1	109.598	.000	.091	
Identity x Gender	1.458	2	.190	.827		
Conduct problems						.08
Identity work profiles	137.176	2	29.463	.000	.051	
Gender	42.085	1	18.079	.000	.016	
Identity x Gender	6.194	2	1.330	.265		
Hyperactivity						.04
Identity work patterns	164.611	2	20.809	.000	.037	
Gender	8.441	1	2.134	.144		
Identity x Gender	22.390	2	2.830	.059		
Peer relationship problems						.05
Identity work patterns	136.309	2	26.099	.000	.046	
Gender	12.920	1	4.947	.026	.004	
Identity x Gender	3.471	2	.665	.515		
Prosocial behavior						.12
Identity work patterns	127.093	2	24.889	.000	.043	
Gender	152.358	1	59.675	.000	.052	
Identity x Gender	25.385	2	4.971	.007	.009	
Total difficulties score						.12
Identity work patterns	2869.524	2	67.798	.000	.11	
Gender	177.474	1	8.386	.004	.008	
Identity x Gender	58.643	2	1.386	.251		

Table 4.25: MANOVA and ANOVA on SDQ according to effective identity work pattern and gender at t_1

SDQ scale	Identity work	normal	borderline	abnormal	χ^2	df	Sig.
Emotional problems	Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration	85.4%	8.0%	6.6%	22.158	4	.000
	High Authenticity-Low Integration	83.4%	**8.6%**	**8.0%**			
	High Authenticity-High Integration	**95.1%**	2.8%	2.1%			
	Total sample	86.9%	7.0%	6.1%			
Conduct problems	Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration	74.0%	**11.9%**	**14.1%**	36.144	4	.000
	High Authenticity-Low Integration	79.1%	11.1%	9.8%			
	High Authenticity-High Integration	**90.7%**	6.9%	2.4%			
	Total sample	79.2%	10.6%	10.2%			
Hyperactivity	Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration	76.6%	**12.3%**	11.1%	19.881	4	.001
	High Authenticity-Low Integration	75.8%	9.5%	**14.7%**			
	High Authenticity-High Integration	**86.4%**	8.7%	4.9%			
	Total sample	78.5%	10.3%	11.2%			
Peer relationship problems	Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration	71.5%	**22.8%**	**5.7%**	40.556	4	.000
	High Authenticity-Low Integration	84.9%	12.6%	2.5%			
	High Authenticity-High Integration	**88.5%**	8.7%	2.8%			
	Total sample	79.7%	16.1%	4.2%			
Prosocial behavior	Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration	81.2%	**12.7%**	**6.1%**	42.413	4	.000
	High Authenticity-Low Integration	94.2%	3.7%	2.1%			
	High Authenticity-High Integration	**93.4%**	3.8%	2.8%			
	Total sample	87.4%	8.3%	4.3%			
Total difficulties score	Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration	76.0%	16.4%	7.6%	51.643	4	.000
	High Authenticity-Low Integration	75.5%	**16.9%**	**7.7%**			
	High Authenticity-High Integration	**95.1%**	3.8%	1.1%			
	Total sample	80.2%	13.8%	6.0%			

Table 4.26: Results on the SDQ according to identity work pattern at t_1 (the highest percentage in each column for each subscale is shown in bold)
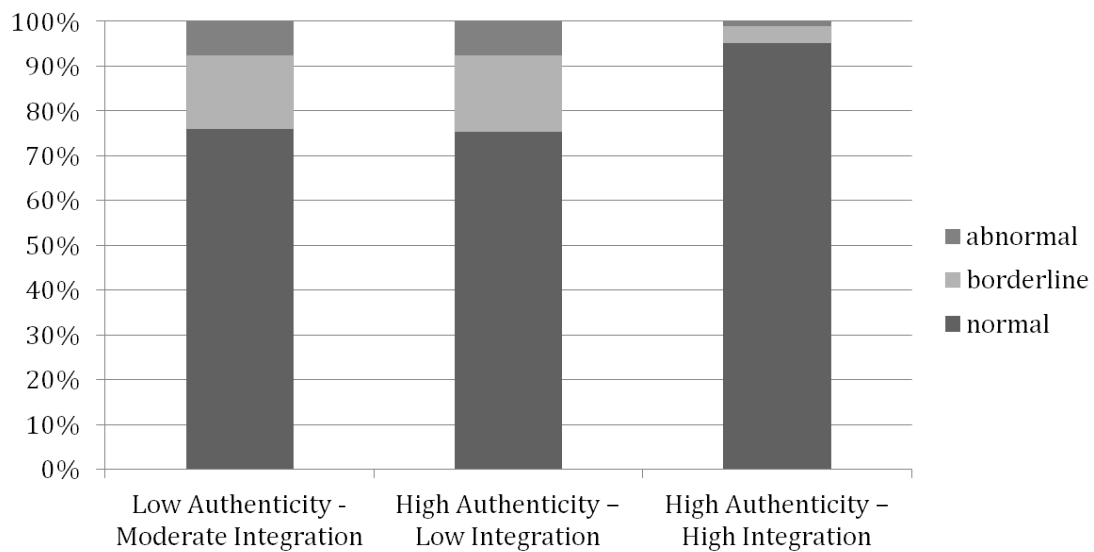
Figure 4.11: SDQ total difficulties score categories according to effective identity work patterns

4.3.4 Gender, body experience, identity work and mental health

In this final section, all three of the predictors (gender, positive body experience, and effective identity work) are drawn together in a multiple regression model predicting the total difficulties score of the SDQ. Since the data on body experience could only be taken from t_2, the data from the other predictors were also taken from t_2 (as was already shown in Section 4.3.3, Life Coherence, Authenticity, and Integration were found to be significant predictors at t_1 for the total difficulties score at t_2). Consequently, the result of the present regression analysis is cross-sectional in nature. All of the predictors were entered simultaneously. The Acceptance dimension did not prove to be a significant predictor and is therefore not included in the model presented in Figure 4.13. The regression model proved to be significant ($F(6,613)=42.987$, $p<.001$) with 29% of the variance in the total difficulties score explained by these five variables. As could be expected from the results on gender and mental health, gender was a weak predictor of the total difficulties score. Body appreciation, however, was the second strongest predictor after Integration and was followed by Authenticity and Life Coherence.

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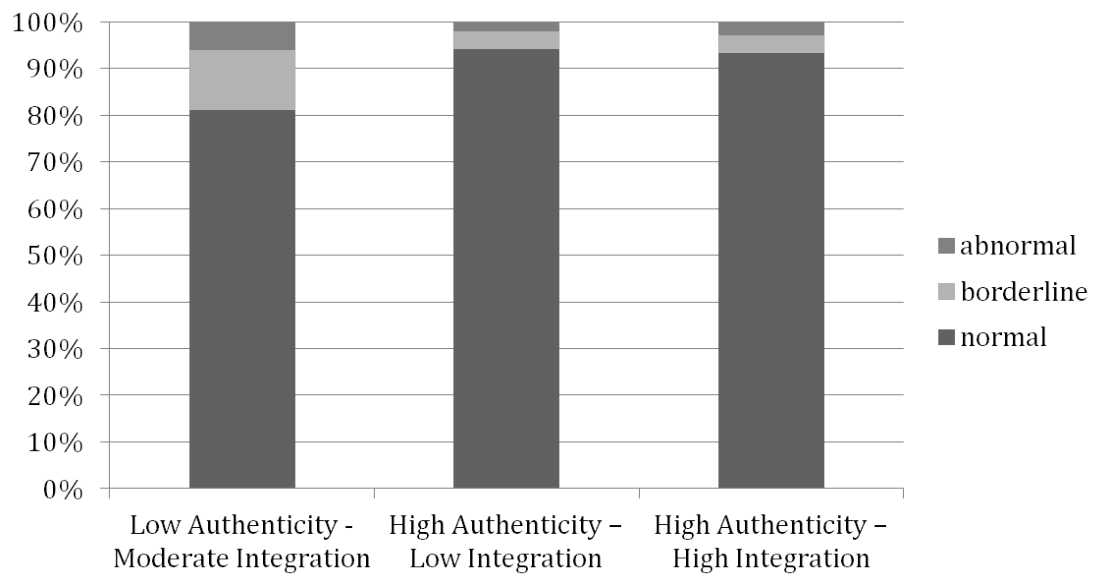
Figure 4.12: SDQ prosocial behavior scale categories according to effective identity work patterns
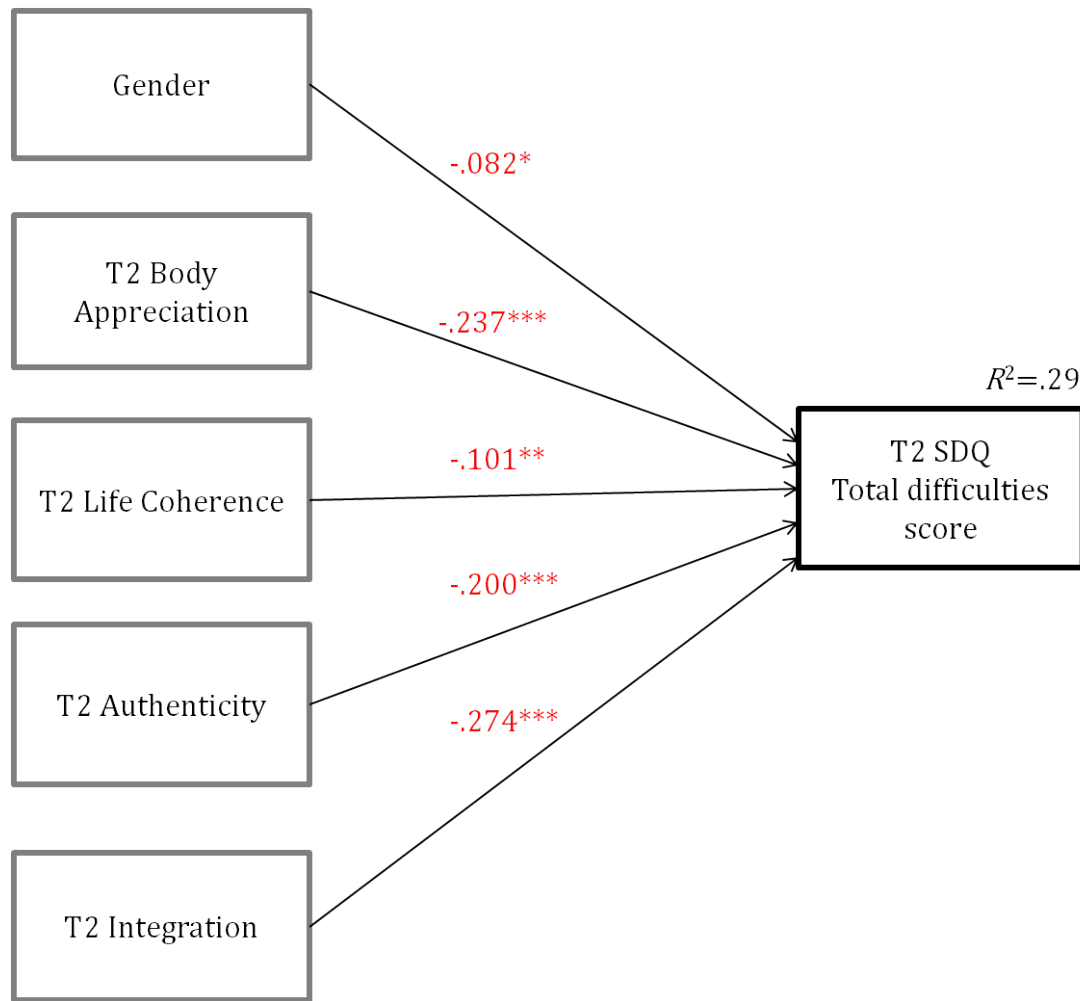
Figure 4.13: Multiple regression analysis of gender, body appreciation and identity work on mental health at t_2 (n=620)

Summary of the results in Part-Three

Results on gender and mental health were, on the one hand, in line with the hypotheses that girls would report experiencing greater emotional problems than boys while boys would report having more conduct problems than girls. On the other hand, the hypothesis for hyperactivity was not confirmed since girls and boys reported having a similar degree of difficulty with both hyperactivity and peer relationships. When the four problem scales were combined, the differences between boys and girls were insignificant. Furthermore, girls report acting in a prosocial manner to a significantly greater extent than boys. Results on positive

body experience and mental health showed that body appreciation was connected with the emotional, behavioral and social aspects of mental health. This was seen in the significant negative correlations between body appreciation and all of the problem subscales of the SDQ as well as the total difficulties score and the positive correlation with prosocial behavior. With reference to effective identity work and mental health, Integration proved to be the strongest predictor of mental health one year later with the exception of peer relationship problems and prosocial behavior for which Authenticity played the greatest role. In terms of the patterns of effective identity work, there was a significant main effect on both the subscales of the SDQ as well as the total difficulties score. The effect sizes of mean differences between the identity work patterns on the SDQ subscales and total difficulties score ranged from moderate to large. In general, individuals who showed the High Authenticity-High Integration pattern of identity work reported having the least amount of mental health problems. Furthermore, in comparison with the other two identity work patterns, this group of adolescence was more likely to fall into the 'normal' category on all of the SDQ problem scales. In comparison, the Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration group reported experiencing more conduct problems and peer relationship problems while the High Authenticity - Low Integration group reported having emotional problems to a greater extent than the other two groups. On the prosocial behavior scale, however, individuals with High Authenticity - Low Integration and High Authenticity - High Integration patterns were classified to a similar (high) extent into the 'normal' category, affirming the importance of Authenticity for prosocial behavior. A final regression model showed the influence of gender, body appreciation, and three aspects (Life Coherence, Authenticity, Integration) of effective identity work on the total difficulties score of the SDQ. The model reiterates the very small effect that gender had on mental health problems as a

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whole and the moderate (negative) relationship that body appreciation and the integration of discrepant expectations, in particular, had on mental health problems. Taken together, the five predictors could explain 29% of the variance on the total difficulties score.

Chapter 5

Discussion

5.1 Discussion of results

Just as Keupp et al. (2002) and other authors dared to challenge a theory of identity formation that has long found favor among researchers in the social sciences, with this thesis I offer a new approach to the quantitative measurement of identity formation. Building on Keupp et al.'s ideas, this is an approach that 1) accounts for (at least some of) the challenges of forming an identity in a postmodern society and 2) focuses on the strategies individual young people use as they actively engage in identity construction. With Keupp et al.'s rich theory as the cornerstone of my research, I feel I have been able to pay heed to Vignoles et al.'s (2011) plea for a more integrative view of identity in which,

> Identity is simultaneously a personal, relational, and collective phenomenon, it is stable in some ways and fluid in others, and identity is formed and revised throughout the lifespan of individuals and the histories of social groups and categories, through an interplay of processes of self-discovery, personal construction, and social construction, some of which are relatively deliberate and explicit, whereas others are more automatic and implicit. It is this very complexity that makes identity such a rich and valuable

theoretical construct for the social sciences, even if the richness can lead to confusion. (p. 8)

As Vignoles et al. (2011) argue, dealing with the richness and complexity of identity requires both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative methods can offer the depth of knowledge needed for a comprehensive understanding of identity, while quantitative methods reduce the complexity by shining a light on one part (or several parts) of a rich theory and, in some cases, linking it with other constructs of interest. Thanks to Keupp et al.'s (2002) extensive narrative work with young people over the course of several years, the complexity of the process of identity construction among adolescents in postmodern Germany has already been documented and a well-founded theory generated. From my perspective, the time was therefore ripe for the implementation of quantitative methodology that could focus on individual parts of Keupp et al.'s comprehensive work and empirically connect it with other important psychological constructs such as body image and mental health. Furthermore, by looking at the data with a gendered lens, I have been able to make some preliminary conclusions about how adolescent boys and girls differ with respect to aspects of effective identity work put forward by Keupp et al. The following sections focus on what I believe to be the most important results of the present study. I present interpretations of these results that link them with previous empirical and theoretical work and help infuse them with meaning beyond tests of significance and effect size.

5.1.1 Part One: Development, evaluation, and implementation of the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI)

The Effective Identity Work Inventory

The aim of the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI) is neither to assess the complex *process* of identity work (as this could never be fulfilled with a short questionnaire and has already been done by Keupp and his colleagues) nor to pin point the *outcome*

of identity work (since this would suggest that the identity work process is complete). Instead, the VROID-MHAP team conceptualised this scale to take a snapshot of a few central elements in the process of identity construction that are specified and described by Keupp et al. (2002) during the period of adolescence. In particular, the EIWI aims to assess important aspects of effective identity work as they have been 'worked out' up to the point of the survey, including life coherence, authenticity, self-acceptance, acceptance from others, integration of discrepant expectations, and agency. I chose the term "effective" (instead of "successful", for instance) as the translation for the German *gelingend* in order to emphasise the underlying belief that each individual is driven to work on his/her identity with the goal of creating a good fit between his/her inner world and his/her social environment. In this view, one person's identity work is not better or more successful than another's. I also felt the word "effective" was most fitting because it does not imply that the process is in any way complete or finished. What might be effective in one phase of life may not be in another. In this way, the goal was to understand how these aspects of identity work might be used or experienced to a different extent by different young people and in what way these elements might be related to body experience and mental health. The components included in the scale assess how individuals experience themselves with respect to these different facets of identity work. The focus here is on one's 'sense' of him/herself in terms of a sense of life coherence, a sense of authenticity, a sense of acceptance of oneself and from others, and a sense of agency, as well as a sense of being able to integrate discrepant identities or expectations.

Results from exploratory factor analysis point a spotlight at just four factors (i.e., Life Coherence, Authenticity, Acceptance, and Integration of discrepant identities/expectations) which then became the primary foundation for further analyses. Based on these four subscales, the EIWI proved to be both acceptable in terms of its psychometric properties as well as useful in terms of predicting other areas of psychological development during adolescence. I believe the moderate stability of the test corresponds with Keupp

et al.'s (2002) understanding of identity work as a dynamic process. For, as individuals have new experiences, they are challenged with constructing new part-identities; accommodating these in their biographical narrations; renegotiating their sense of life coherence, authenticity, and self-acceptance; integrating discrepant identities and expectations, and finding a sense of agency with which they can act. Against this background, it would be more surprising for the scores to be completely stable one year later, especially during the transformative years of adolescence. As I discuss in more detail in Section 5.2 (Limitations of and suggestions for revision of the EIWI), an effort should be made to increase the internal consistency of the items in the questionnaire and to test its construct validity by correlating it with other related measures and by combining it with interview data.

From my perspective, the work presented here offers two main contributions to the field of research on identity formation. First, to my knowledge this is the only quantitative operationalisation of any aspects of Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory on identity construction to date. The second contribution is the preliminary 'discovery' of three unique patterns of effective identity work that I believe to be characteristic for adolescents living in a postmodern society. Depending on an individual's needs (and the resources at hand) for finding a good fit between his/her inner and outer worlds, he/she experiences each of the aspects of effective identity work to a different degree. For some individuals, a good fit is easier to achieve than for others. In each case, however, I believe the individual is actively working out his/her identity and that the pattern of effective identity work he/she shows at any given time serves a purpose for that person and his/her particular situation. In a study with children between 10 and 13 years of age Brinkman et al. (2014) note, "As active agents...children will attempt to balance the pressures of conforming (and risks of not conforming) against the benefits of being authentic to their sense of self. This balance may be more difficult for some children than others" (p. 846).

For instance, a young person who does not experience much discrepancy between

her different identities or in the expectations from her family, teachers, or friends does not have to work very hard to integrate these expectations into her own expectations for herself. A person in such a situation might also be more likely to feel she can act authentically across different situations and might feel she has the agency to make plans for her own life. Another adolescent might experience a great deal of discrepancy between his own expectations for his behavior and/or future and those of his family, friends, and school. He might feel he is a different person at home than with his friends or at school and have a hard time and have to work hard at integrating these different 'selves' and moving between these situations. He may (consciously or unconsciously) choose to neglect some of the expectations and to act authentically across situations even though, as a result, he might experience dissent from others. Neither of these hypothetical examples shows an identity work process that is more effective than the other; rather they simply show that different circumstances and different individuals require different patterns of identity work.

In particular, the Authenticity and Integration sub-scales of the EIWI stand out as being especially important in distinguishing between the three patterns of effective identity work. For this reason, the discussion about the three identity work patterns focuses first and foremost on how they differ on these two aspects. The first pattern (*Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration*) represents individuals who show a pattern marked by low authenticity and moderate integration of discrepant identities/expectations. In light of Keupp's ideas on effective identity work, it seems that the young people that show this pattern experience discrepant expectations from the outside but who also feel they are able to integrate these to a moderate extent and to act accordingly across different settings and when making plans for the future. These individuals' way of dealing with discrepant expectations, however, seems to be at the expense of their authenticity. Perhaps, in this way, they adapt their behavior to a certain degree to meet the expectations around them and thus forfeit a sense of authenticity which would require them to behave in a similar way across situations. In other words, the adoles-

cents who show this pattern of effective identity work stay true to their surroundings if not to themselves. As Kernis and Goldman (2006) suggest, individuals (whether consciously or unconsciously) may have very good reasons for not behaving authentically: "[it] sometimes takes courage because one's true inclinations may conflict with those of one's peers or authority figures who have strong evaluative or controlling tendencies (Deci & Ryan, 1995). Sometimes behaving authentically runs the risk of prompting others' scorn or ridicule, costs which can be very powerful inhibitors" (p. 340). In this way, I argue that this identity work pattern presents an active and effective strategy for finding a fitting match between one's inner and outer world, even though (as I will present in Section 5.1.3) it is not without a price when it comes to mental health.

As noted in Christl and Brodbeck (2012), this effective identity work pattern is reminiscent of the cultural-adaptive subcategory of identity diffusion described by Marcia (1989) in which he differentiates between four subcategories of identity diffusion. Marcia describes how he was challenged with revising the concept of identity diffusion after the percentage of young people with an identity diffusion status changed from 20% in 1984 to 40% in 1989. He suggests that these young people show adaptive characteristics in a postindustrial society. From Marcia's point of view, such individuals fearfully avoid making commitments, choosing therefore to be open to the sea of possibilities presented to them. In the present study, the results from the items on self-acceptance and agency show that the individuals who fall into a Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration pattern have a harder time accepting themselves for who they are and report not feeling very confident that they will be able to live their future lives as they wish (i.e., they have low scores on Self-Acceptance and Agency). Much like Marcia's results, the large proportion of adolescents in the present study who fit the Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration pattern of effective identity work (t_1: 44.3%; t_2: 36.7%) might suggest that the current societal environment in southern Germany and German-speaking Switzerland is fostering a large group of young people who, in reaction to the societal challenges, are open and flexible but, in turn, less stable and

self-assured (Christl & Brodbeck, 2012).

The second effective identity work pattern is the *High Authenticity - Low Integration* group and encompasses 326 participants (29.6%) at t_1 and 494 participants (43.8%) at t_2. The individuals who show this identity work pattern are able to act authentically but report experiencing discrepant norms and expectations in their different social circles and having difficulty reconciling them. One interpretation could be that, for these individuals, following their own convictions is more important to them than trying to integrate others' expectations into their own identities. In particular for girls, who in this study reported feeling a greater sense of authenticity than boys, this pattern is reminiscent of what Gilligan (2011) describes as, "the tendency in girls' lives at adolescence for a resistance which is essentially political—an insistence on knowing what one knows and a willingness to be outspoken" (p. 114). A slightly different interpretation is that individuals show this pattern of identity work who have a domininant aspect of identity that is not shared by much of their surrounding. For instance, in the previously-cited book chapter (Christl & Brodbeck, 2012), my colleague and I discuss the aspects of identity work and the three corresponding patterns with reference to religiosity using data from the same project. Results show that authenticity is positively correlated with religiosity while integration of discrepancies is negatively correlated with religiosity. This suggests that the more central the role of religiosity in an adolescent's life, the more discrepancy he/she reports experiencing and difficulty he/she has reconciling the different norms and expectations in his/her own life (or vice versa). Furthermore, analyses with the identity work patterns show that the largest proportion of highly religious individuals falls into the High Authenticity - Low Integration pattern. With these results in mind, it would be fascinating to investigate this relationship with other dominant part-identities that are not necessarily shared by one's surrounding (e.g., sexual orientation) to see if similar results are found.

The third pattern of effective identity work, *High Authenticity - High Integration*, is characterized by both high scores on Authenticity and high scores on Integration.

According to Keupp et al. (2002), this identity work profile fulfills two central goals of identity work and finds a good balance between the internal sphere (be true to oneself) and the external sphere (consider or submit to others' expectations). On the one hand, individuals who fall into this pattern may perceive that their own expectations for themselves overlap to a great degree with the norms and expectations of those in their social environment, leading them to experience little discrepancy. For these individuals, the task of integrating others' expectations into their own identities may not be nearly as demanding as with the previous two identity work patterns. Furthermore, without much dissent between one's own goals and others' goals for one's life, the costs of acting authentically are low. On the other hand, there could also be individuals in this group who experience a certain amount of discrepancy but feel capable of dealing with the differences in expectations and norms around them on a daily basis as well as integrating them into their own goals and plans for the future. In the present study, less than a third of the sample falls into this pattern of effective identity work, making it the smallest group at both t_1 and t_2.

I believe my application of Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory, in particular through the identification of three patterns of effective identity work, corroborates Schachter's (2005) notion that an identity theory "attuned to the issues raised by the postmodern discourse cannot portray a specific mature structure of identity that is uniform and universal...[but relies] on the conception that there are possible variations in structure...not only differences regarding content" (p. 153). Furthermore, my research supports his belief that such structures (or in this case, patterns) should not be placed on a chronological or psychological continuum; rather, as Schachter puts it, "it would be profitable to view them as diverse possible structures...[that are] preferred by different individuals or by different cultures" (p. 154). Following this line of thought, I believe that once an identity work pattern is no longer effective for one's situation, it will be replaced with another *more* effective pattern. The fact that only roughly half of the participants in this study showed the same identity work pattern at both points in time is evidence

for the dynamic nature of the identity work process.

Thus far, I have reiterated the goals of the EIWI and discussed a few of the contributions I feel this new measure and the resulting three patterns of effective identity work make to the field of identity research. Given that there has already been so much research in psychology on identity development, I feel it is necessary to consider whether and how this approach contributes something different than or goes beyond the models and measures for identity formation that are already being used. What follows, therefore, is a reflection on the unique value of this new approach in comparison to the widely adopted works of Marcia (1966) and Berzonsky (1989) and the more recent work of Adams and Marshall (1996) and Serafini (2002; 2013).

Effective identity work in comparison with Marcia's identity statuses, Berzonsky's identity styles, and Adams' and Serafini's functions of identity

In the first part of this section, I focus on Marcia's and Berzonsky's approaches together in comparison with the effective identity work approach to identity research. Then, I turn a discussion of some of the differences I see between Keupp et al.'s theory and the effective identity work approach with Adams and Marshall's theoretical and Serafini's empirical work on the functions of identity.

As was presented in the literature review (See Section 1.1.3), two theoretically-driven perspectives and empirically-derived classification schemata for classifying the process and/or outcome of identity development have been (for the most part) well-received and widely used in psychological research: Marcia's (1966) identity status paradigm and Berzonsky's (1989) social-cognitive approach and corresponding identity processing styles. I argue that there are three fundamental distinguishing factors between the paradigm and classification schemata postulated by Marcia (1966) and Berzonsky (1989) and the effective identity work measure and resulting identity work patterns presented here: 1) the focus on decision-making, 2) the hierarchical classification, and 3) the role of the individual and the context.

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Focus on decision-making   Both Marcia's (1966) and Berzonsky's (1989) approaches to the identity formation question focus on the process and outcome of moving through what Erikson (1950) describes as identity crises. Specifically, their works look at how individuals make (or have made) identity-related decisions. Marcia's paradigm focuses on the degree to which an individual has explored alternatives and made commitments in the process of forming his/her identity. Berzonsky zooms in on the information-processing behind *how* one makes the decision to commit to something. In this way, Berzonsky expanded Marcia's identity status paradigm, proposing three information-processing orientations that correspond to Marcia's four identity statuses: the informational style which has been empirically associated with the achieved status, the normative style which is connected with the foreclosed status, and the diffused/avoidant style which has been shown to be used by individuals with a diffusion identity status. The decision-making process with regard to identity relevant commitments represents an important part in the identity formation puzzle. Although it was probably never Marcia's intention, research on identity in psychology has often relied exclusively on this paradigm. As a result, there has been extensive critique of both its theoretical integrity (i.e., the overlap with Erikson's theory) and its practical usefulness (Côté & Levine, 1988). I argue that it accesses only one part or one level of this rich and complex construct. The research presented here aims to access another part of this puzzle.

The Effective Identity Work Inventory focuses primarily on how an individual experiences his/her day-to-day identity work within his/her social environment. In other words, how does he/she experience the world around him/her and how does he/she experience him/herself in that world? More specifically, it attempts to attain answers to the following questions: Do you understand how the world around you works and do you feel your goals and efforts are meaningful? Are you the person you would like to be and can you be that person in the various circles in which you live? Do you recognize yourself for the things you have achieved and do you receive recognition for

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these achievements from others? Do you live in a world where everyone expects something different of you and are you able to reconcile both your own and these other expectations for your life? Do you feel you can make your own choices and can plan and live the life you would like to live?

As was seen in a preliminary analysis of interview data on religiosity-themed dilemmas (Christl & Brodbeck, 2012), when focusing on how the adolescents make decisions, my colleague Kathrin Brodbeck and I noted a remarkable overlap between the decision-making strategies of adolescents with the three different patterns of effective identity work and Berzonsky's three identity styles. The decision-making strategies of the High Authenticity - High Integration adolescents were strikingly similar to what Berzonsky calls the informational processing style. The decision-making of individuals who were classified as having a High Authenticity - Low Integration identity work pattern resembled the normative processing style, and the strategies used by the adolescents with a Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration pattern were similar to the diffused/avoidant processing style. Though certainly much more analysis and more research would be necessary in order to understand the possible connections between these approaches, I believe that this overlap indicates that Marcia's (1966) and Berzonsky's (1989) ideas and the ideas presented here may indeed represent different puzzle pieces for one big picture.

Hierarchical classification   While there has been much controversy over whether Marcia's (1966) postulated four statuses represent a developmental pathway (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001), a general assumption underlying Marcia's theory is that the differing degrees of ego identity represented by each of the statuses reflect differing levels of developmental maturity. Specifically, the diffusion status and avoidant style are meant to represent a developmentally lower identity formation process or a weak ego identity and the achieved identity and informational processing style are seen as indices for a more advanced identity formation process or a strong ego identity (Côté & Levine,

1988). As Schwartz (2005) puts it, "Identity achievement and diffusion may be taken to represent the two endpoints of Erikson's (1950) unipolar dimension of identity versus identity confusion" (p. 206).

In line with Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory, the Effective Identity Work Inventory does not aim to uncover a developmental pathway. Rather, as I have already noted, I view the three patterns of identity work as equally effective efforts on the part of the individuals to create a good fit between themselves and their environments - a dynamic and ongoing process. Constructing a good fit might be more demanding for one person than another and during some phases of life than others. From my point of view, however, the actual identity construction process each person works through should not be viewed on a continuum of performance or development. This corresponds with both Keupp et al.'s theory as well as analyses of the data in the present study comparing ages and looking at pattern change after one year, both of which failed to reveal any developmental trends.

The role of the individual and the context The third difference between the work I have presented here and the ideas put forth by Marcia (1966) and Berzonsky (1989) lies in the focus on the individual, the lack of attention paid to the individual in his/her social context, and the view on the stability of the statuses. In an editorial essay on the state and future of Eriksonian and neo-Eriksonian identity research, Schwartz (2005) notes that the central limitation of identity research has been its narrowness. He states,

> Personal identity represents goals, values, and beliefs — the bulk of what identity status theory and research has attended to. However, there is another aspect of personal identity to which identity status theory has not attended namely, the self that the individual presents to the outside world and the processes by which one presents this self to the world...[and] by which one negotiates one's way through the social world (p. 295)

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In creating the Effective Identity Work Inventory, the VROID-MHAP team specifically made an attempt to view the individual within his/her social environment, asking, for instance, whether the individual feels he/she can be himself with family, friends, or at school and to what degree the individual experiences discrepant identities or expectations from others and how easily he/she can deal with these in his/her life. In this way, changes in one's social environment would most likely change how one experiences his/her identity work.

Much like Schwartz, Côté and Levine (1988) suggest, "[Marcia] has overlooked two essential characteristics of ego identity insisted upon by Erikson: (1) that while it has a psychological dimension, it has to be understood and investigated as a psychosocial phenomenon in terms of both its development and maintenance, and therefore cannot be viewed in purely psychological terms, and (2) that at the psychological level, it is not a personality structure, but is, rather, a dynamic characteristic of the ego that reflects variations in the egos ability to be an active agency in a multifaceted environment" (p. 174). Marcia's statuses have come to be used like dispositions, neglecting to account for the context in the identity formation process and, in turn, creating the illusion of identity development being stagnant (certainly once the achieved status has been reached). Marcia (1976), in his own words, acknowledges this shortcoming: "The problem with the statuses is that they have a static quality and identity is never static, not even for the most rigid Foreclosure, who must somehow accommodate himself to each new life cycle issue. There has always been a process aspect inherent in the determination of identity status...The issue now is to more explicitly define and then measure these process elements" (p. 158). Furthermore, Côté and Levine (1988) point out an essentialistic quality to Marcia's statuses: "One unfortunate consequence of thinking in terms of outcomes or states is that such concepts are reified and attached to individuals as if that is 'all' that the individual is" (p. 177). With the Effective Identity Work Inventory, I believe I have been able to take a snapshot of this (identity) 'work in progress', rather than measure variables of outcome. Cluster analysis allowed me to

pinpoint three 'typical' patterns in this process as a basis for comparison; however, as I have mentioned previously, it would contradict Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory to believe that these patterns represent enduring states.

Against this background, I argue that the Effective Identity Work Inventory and the three patterns of effective identity work do not offer a replacement for Marcia's and Berzonsky's useful paradigms but a complimentary approach in the effort to measure and understand the complexity of identity formation.

As I discussed 1.1.3, Adams and Marshall (1996) presented an essay in which they put forward a person-centered theory of identity construction captured in 15 propositions. Included in these propositions are what they (based on Erikson's writings) consider to be the five functions of (optimal) identity: providing as sense of structure; providing a sense of harmony between beliefs and commitments; providing a future orientation; providing goals and direction; and providing a sense of personal control. Their ideas show significant parallels to Keupp et al.'s conclusions, and the Functions of Identity Scale developed and validated by Serafini and Adams (2002); Serafini and Maitland (2013) shows some similarity with the Effective Identity Work Inventory. In particular, the harmony factor in the FIS is reminiscent of the life coherence and authenticity factors in the EIWI, the structure factor (FIS) includes items very much like the self-acceptance factor in the EIWI, and the personal control factor (FIS)corresponds to the agency factor (EIWI). As I see it, both measures seek to assess the extent to which individuals experience components that are "integral to a well-functioning sense of self" (Crocetti et al., 2013, p. 3). Neither scale focuses on capturing the *process* of identity construction nor on the 'outcome' of identity construction in the sense of an end result, for this would suggest that the process of constructing one's identity is at some point complete. Instead, I feel that both instruments, as I have described it, take a snapshot of the goals or functions of identity as they have been worked out up to the point of the survey. This, I feel, fits better with the belief that identity construction is a dynamic and lifelong process. While Adams' and Keupp's theories as well as the the

FIS and EIWI present certain parallels, I have identified two important differences.

The first difference I see between Adams and Marshall's (1996) and Keupp et al.'s (2002) ideas refers to their view on the construction of one's identity. Adams and Marshall incorporate Marcia's identity status paradigm into their understanding of this process, arguing that the identity statuses can be separated into two categories: passive and active construction. Serafini and Adams (2002) note:

> A passive identity is based on identification and imitation, and is best represented by the foreclosed and diffused identity statuses. Passive identity is based on either avoidance of identity decision making or conformity to external social conventions. An active identity is based on exploration, self-construction, and experience and is best represented by the moratorium and identity achieved statuses. Active identity is based on internal construction of self-regulatory psychological systems that direct and guide behavior.

It is my understanding of Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory of identity construction that, among other things, in light of the magnitude of options given to individuals in postmodern contexts, no identity formation process is ever passive. Instead, as I see it, even if an individual imitates others' behavior or takes on others' beliefs, this individual is still driven to actively construct his/her identity and that these are choices that have been made (consciously or unconsciously) because at this time they help the individual find the best fit between his/her inner and outer world. If, within an individual's outer world, the price of exploring and commiting to alternative values or acting authentically is too high, then both imitating behavior and taking on others' beliefs could still very well be the result of an 'active' choice in one's own identity construction process.

This points to the second difference I see, in particular, between the Functions of Identity Scale (Serafini & Adams, 2002; Serafini & Maitland, 2013) and the Effective Identity Work Inventory. While Adams and Marshall's essay clearly view the person and his/her identity formation process in context, with the exception of a few items in the Personal Control factor of the Functions of Identity Scale (e.g. "Much of who

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I am seems to be based on compliance to my parent(s) wishes."), in which parents or 'others' are mentioned, none of the items directly refers to the individual's context or the people in it. From my perspective, Keupp et al.'s ideas on the goals (and prerequisites) of effective identity work, which have been incorporated into the EIWI, include the individual's context in two ways. First, Keupp et al. argue that experiencing acceptance and recognition from those within one's social circles is a goal of effective identity work. Although I do not feel that the current items for "Acceptance" in the EIWI are an appropriate operationalisation for Keupp's definition of acceptance and recognition from others (See Section 5.2 in this chapter for a discussion of this limitation), I believe that this is an important goal or function of identity that is missing in both Adams and Marshall's (1996) essay and Serafini's Functions of Identity Scale (2002; 2013). Second, it is certainly an important part of identity synthesis (as is described by Erikson (1968)) or synthesis work (as is described by Keupp (2003)) for individuals to find a sense of consistency, coherence and harmony between their values, beliefs and commitments in order to establish overarching goals and be able to act accordingly (a factor clearly assessed in the Harmony subscale of the Functions of Identity Scale and only partly assessed by the Authenticity subscale of the EIWI). However, what seems increasingly important for individuals in a postmodern context is not only the the ability to synthesise or integrate one's values with their beliefs, and goals or actions, but also to be able to integrate differing and even contradicting values, beliefs and commitments and then be able to act with agency. My results from the integration of discrepancies subscale seem to confirm that many young people living in a postmodern context are confronted with values and expectations that contradict one another. For this reason, it seems critical, not only to assess the extent to which one feels able to integrate the different values or commitments and the expectations but also to undertand more about the extent to which one is confronted with discrepancies in their social context. By including items that assess both the extent of experiencing discrepant expectations from others as well as the extent to which individuals struggle

with integrating these different values, beliefs, and goals, I feel that the EIWI fills a gap that (to my knowledge) has not yet been addressed in other neo-Eriksonian measurement instruments. It is not enough to theoretically 'see' identity formation and the individual in context; rather, it is increasingly important that contextual and social factors be integrated into and assessed in the measurement of identity structures, processes, and 'outcomes'.

5.1.2 Part Two: Gender, body experience, and effective identity work

Identity is not only constructed within a social context. It is also constructed with and within the body as context. The body separates us from but also connects us with our environment. Since the body offers arguably the most immediate experience and expression of identity, it seems both surprising that it has often been neglected in empirical identity research and vital that it is integrated more and more into identity efforts. The following section focuses on results of the present study linking gender and body experience with identity work and my interpretations of these results.

Effective identity work and gender

In reference to results from analyses with gender and the different aspects of effective identity work, Authenticity stands out as the only variable with a meaningful gender difference. Based on the literature, one could expect that boys would show greater authenticity than girls. Following in Gilligan's (1982) footsteps, who believes that girls are taught to be relational, quiet, compliant, and introspective, Archer (1989) notes, "In our society males have consistently been identified with concepts of individuation, separateness, and agency, while females have been associated with concepts of care, in relationship to others, and communion" (p. 119). As Harter, Waters, and Whitesell (1997) summarize some of Gilligan's thoughts, "beginning in adolescence, many girls compromise their authenticity...to preserve connectedness in some lesser form. If they

were to speak their minds, express their true voices, it may well cause tension or conflict in the relationship, it might anger the other person, it could hurt the other's feelings, and, at worst, it may lead the other to reject or abandon them altogether" (p. 155). However, just as Harter et al. concluded from their own study, the results I have presented here suggest that these societal norms do not necessarily mirror the reported experiences of girls and boys today. While Harter et al. found no indication of overall gender differences, the results presented here paint a picture of girls who report acting with greater authenticity in their social circles and, although the effect is weaker, also report greater self-acceptance. It could, of course, also be the case that the girls in the present study (in line with Archer's observations) answered the questions to a greater extent based on what they felt would be most socially desirable. In this regard, it could be that, with some participants, authenticity is actually being masked with the experienced desire or felt pressure to meet others' expectations or needs. Unfortunately, since no tests of social desirability were included in the VROID-MHAP questionnaire, this interpretation cannot be ruled out. In terms of the other goals of identity work, including a sense of life coherence, acceptance, integration of discrepant norms, and even agency, the reported experiences of boys and girls show no differences.

As the first study to specifically examine the relationship between (dispositional) authenticity and gender, Wenzel and Lucas-Thompson (2012) used Kernis and Goldman's Authenticity Inventory (2006) to investigate potential gender differences in authenticity and its mental health correlates among 18-22 year-old college men and women. In contrast to the current study, Wenzel et al. did not find any statistically significant gender differences on dispositional authenticity. That this result differs from what I found in my data with adolescents and that so little research up to this point has focused on this topic, complicates the interpretation of the gender difference I have presented here. In what follows, I draw on the results from the three patterns of effective identity work and offer an interpretation of these and the aforementioned results combined.

Against the background of the gender difference on authenticity, it is not surprising that there are also gender differences in the three patterns of effective identity work. Specifically, results show that the girls are significantly overrepresented in the High Authenticity - High Integration and High Authenticity - Low Integration groups and underrepresented in the Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration group, while the opposite is seen among the boys. This means that, within this sample, there are significantly more boys who fit the Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration pattern of identity work. How is this gender difference on authenticity to be interpreted? What does it mean that boys report behaving with less authenticity than girls? In terms of gender identity Keupp et al. (2002) state that it is important for both young boys and girls to integrate discrepant identities and expectations into their own individual understanding of (their) masculinity/femininity and, in turn, be able to act authentically according to this understanding. One interpretation of the gender difference on authenticity could be that regardless of how well boys might integrate discrepant norms and expecatations, they have better reasons not to act authentically than do girls. This idea is supported by Pleck's (1995) observation that boys and men seem to feel pressure to "prove their masculinity" - an idea that sounds "odd and alien" when transferred to girls and women (p. 27). This masculinity, which as R. F. Levant (1995) and Pleck (and now many others) argue, does not describe an 'essence' of manhood inherent to males, but a socially or culturally-constructed product. This constructed notion of masculinity, which prescribes men to be "powerful, strong, efficacious, physically fit, and athletically successful" (Ricciardelli & McCabe, 2007, p. 200), is closely tied to the appearance and functionality of the male body. As a result, the desire for a muscular body build among (young) men is great.

For a particularly helpful social construction theory, I turn to Pleck's (1995) gender role strain paradigm and, in particular, the dynamic he calls "gender role discrepancy" (p. 12). Here, he asserts that there are cultural standards, expectations, and norms (in this case) for masculinity that are imparted to boys and men through gender role

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socialisation (a paradigm closely related to and in some ways a precurser to the social construction of gender). Males compare themselves with these standards and either feel they fit or do not fit them to a certain degree. Studies with males have shown that not conforming to society's ideals and/or experiencing discrepancy between the perceived standards and one's own subjectively-experienced masculinity can have negative consequences on an individual's psychological well-being. Furthermore, Pleck argues that not conforming to or violating gender roles has more serious consequences for males than for females. However, conforming to the masculine ideal is complicated for, as Pleck states, there are "multiple, competeing conceptions of masculinity" (p. 22), and a young boy could be confronted with several contradictory conceptions of masculinity from different sources (e.g., within the family, among friends, from the media, in school). Against this background, results seem to suggest that, with reference to one's feelings and behavior across different settings, girls have an easier time staying true to themselves than boys.

When the focus is specifically on the body, adolescent girls seem to have a more difficult time nurturing a positive relationship with their physical selves than boys. Interpretations for this finding and for the seemingly complex relationship between identity work, gender, and body experience are discussed in the following section.

Effective identity work, gender, and body experience

With regard to results from the Body Appreciation Scale, four effects stand out. First, girls show lower scores on the BAS than boys. Second, this gender difference on body appreciation is small and gender is only a weak predictor of body appreciation. Third, on a whole, both boys and girls report having a quite positive relationship with their bodies. Finally, effective identity work proves to be helpful for understanding more about factors associated with positive body image.

Since the data presented here show that female adolescents experience a greater sense of authenticity in their identity work than male adolescents and that authentic-

ity is a strong predictor of body appreciation, one might expect female adolescents to also report feeling greater appreciation for their bodies than male adolescents. The fact that we see the opposite result here (i.e., boys report a slightly more positive body experience than girls) confirms the complexity of the relationship between identity work, body experience, and gender. An interpretation of this result could be that, in comparison with boys, girls feel more comfortable being true to themselves around their family, friends, and in school with respect to their feelings and behaviours; However, when it comes to their bodies, they feel greater pressure to meet others' (including society's) standards. As Cash, Ancis, and Strachan (1997) note, "Many researchers and feminist scholars have argued that cultural norms and expectations encourage girls and women to be attentive to and psychologically invested in their appearance" (p. 434). While girls and women are often taught to focus on the appearance of their bodies, boys and men are encouraged to focus to a greater extent on what their bodies can do. Although the cultural standards for male bodies, as have been disseminated through images in popular media, seem to have (negatively) affected young male's body image, the expectations for the male body are still rooted in both its functionality and its aesthetics. In a focus-group study with young adolescent boys and adults, Grogan and Richards (2002) found that muscle tone and muscle mass were reported as being important for all of the boys and men, regardless of age. Their participants described how the ideal body should be muscular (however, not extreme) both for its aesthetics and its function. I argue that, with the exception of competitive athletics (and later on perhaps during pregnancy and birth), the functionality of the female body is rarely valued or given much attention. In a previous study, in which I conducted and analysed narrative interviews with young women about their body image and experiences with nakedness, I developed a concept I call Body Orientation which "represents the subjective view a woman has of her body. It determines the way in which a person's body is important for her and regulates which body-related actions a person might make and her reasons for doing so" (Christl, 2008, p. 52). I identified three different orien-

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tations: a visual-orientation, a functional-orientation, and an existential-orientation. "The visual-orientation characterizes a view of the body in which its appearance is of greatest importance...the women focus on how their bodies look, how their appearance compares to others' (i.e., seeing one's body in relation to others' bodies), how they would like their bodies to look, or how they think their bodies should look. Visually-oriented women's body-related actions are geared toward changing, maintaining or manipulating their physical appearance" (p. 53). In contrast, "the women who have a functional-orientation toward their bodies base their body image on what their bodies can do and how their bodies feel physically...[they] talk about their bodies in terms of physical capabilities or performance. The goal of body-related actions is not to change the appearance of the body but rather to increase or maintain the functionality of the body." (p.54). Finally, the existential-orientation "is characterized by a great appreciation for one's body, for having a body that functions, and by the desire to protect this body from possible future ailments or difficulties. Here, the majority of body-related behaviours concentrate on prevention and the desire to take care of the body in the best possible way..." (p. 55). Among the women interviewed, the majority showed a visual-orientation. Although the functional and existential orientations were each represented by only a small minority, the women who fell into these categories seemed to have a much more positive relationship with their bodies than the women with a visual-orientation. Although a similar study with men might generate other body orientations, I hypothesize that a larger proportion of boys and men would follow a functional-orientation or that the visual and function orientations might be enmeshed with one another in a hypothetical "masculine-orientation".

An additional interpretation of the difference between boys' and girls' body experience during adolescence focuses on how (differently) their bodies change during this time. With the onset of puberty, the majority of female bodies begin to lose their thin boy-like shape through weight gain, breast development, and a widening of the hips. These physical changes move girls' bodies further away from the "current un-

realistic standard of female beauty which places an inordinate emphasis on thinness" (Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2004, p. 351) and make it more difficult for them to embrace their bodies. Boys' bodies usually begin putting on weight and building more muscle and they generally get taller. In contrast with girls, however, the tall, muscular male body corresponds with the body ideals advanced by the media. As a result, boys may approach this phase of life with more anticipation and experience their changing bodies more positively than girls.

Together with recent literature, these ideas propose that boys and men evaluate their own bodies in more and in different ways than girls and women and that young men's bodies 'naturally' begin to meet some of the socially-constructed ideals for the male body. In this way, adolescent boys may be better able to appreciate their bodies for what they are and how they are changing than girls. However, the pressure for males to achieve the aesthetic ideals for the male body seems to be (at least at an unconscious level) influencing boys' and men's feelings towards their bodies and motivations for body-related behaviours. As Grogan and Richards (2002) conclude, "although the lean, muscular look was associated in men's discourse with health and fitness, their given reasons for wanting to attain this look were primarily cosmetic (relating to social acceptance)" (p. 230). The men and boys stressed the "trivial nature of concerns to look slender and muscular for its own sake, although they were clearly concerned that their bodies looked socially acceptably slender and muscular and reported that a positive body image would make them more confident/happy" (p. 230). These findings clearly contradict previous research that suggests that male body image is dictated by concerns about functionality and not aesthetics. In this way, the social changes in cultural expectations of male bodies, as have been disseminated through popular media, seem to have affected young male's body image and, as the findings from the present study confirm, the gap between female's and male's body image seems to be closing. The relatively small gender difference ($d=.35$) found among the adolescents in this study is in line with the majority of previous studies using the BAS (with

the exception of Swami et al. (2010) who found no significant gender difference among British adults). This small gender difference and the finding, here, that gender predicts only 2.7% of the variance on body appreciation, from my point of view, suggest that gender may not play as important a role in the degree of (dis)satisfaction young people feel toward their bodies as has been theorised in much of mainstream literature on body image.

Furthermore, contrary to the majority of studies on body image which assess negative body image or body dissatisfaction and focus usually only on the size of the body, results from studies using the Body Appreciation Scale (Avalos et al. 2005; Swami et al. 2008) show that, when items are phrased positively and dimensions beyond the appearance of the body are included, males and females alike show positive attitudes toward their bodies (Christl, Morgenthaler, & Käppler, 2012). In this way, the results presented here suggest a 'normative contentment' among both boys and girls rather than the "normative discontent" put forward by Silberstein, Striegel-Moore, and Rodin (1987). Against this background, I believe it is important to reiterate the relevance of looking beyond the "single-problem perspective" (Cash et al., 2004, p. 8) that focuses on negative body image and its association with eating disorders, in order to capture a more complete picture of individuals' feelings toward their bodies.

The results on identity work show that the combined influence of four aspects of effective identity work (including life coherence, authenticity, integration, and self-acceptance) account for 17.3% of the variance on body appreciation. Even more than authenticity, self-acceptance (which here was only assessed using one item) proves to be the strongest predictor of positive body image included in analyses. Whereas authenticity taps into whether an individual feels he/she can act according to his/her true self and express his/her true feelings across different settings, self-acceptance represents the extent to which a person feels he/she is the person he/she would like to be. It is conceivable that how an individual feels about his/her body plays a central role in whether he/she accepts who he/she is on the whole. As the results suggest,

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individuals who feel good about the person they are and feel they can act and share their feelings accordingly with others, are more appreciative of their bodies (one year later). Since the breadth of research on *positive* body image is still relatively modest, I believe the findings presented here on the effect of both gender and aspects of effective identity work help to fill some of the gaps present in this field and, with further research, could be helpful in understanding more about ways to promote positive body experience during adolescence.

5.1.3 Part Three: Identity work, gender, body experience, and their impact on mental health

The inclusion of mental health as a dependent or criterion variable greatly increases both the theoretical and the practical value of this research. The following sections focus on key results in the investigation of the impact of gender, positive body experience, and aspects and patterns of effective identity work on the mental health of adolescents.

Gender, body experience, and mental health

In line with reports from the World Health Organisation (2002), results on gender and mental health in the present study suggest that adolescent girls and boys are burdened to a similar extent with mental health problems but that the types of difficulties boys and girls face are different. This is particularly the case for emotional problems which the girls report experiencing to a greater extent than the boys and conduct problems which the boys report experiencing to a greater extent than the girls. Specifically, 19.1% of the girls' scores on emotional problems fall into the 'borderline' or 'abnormal' categories compared to 7% among the boys. With reference to conduct problems, the scores of 26.3% of the boys and only 15.3% of the girls are considered 'borderline' or 'abnormal'. These results are in line with the view that females tend to internalise their problems and show more affective symptoms while males tend to externalise

their problems in aggressive or antisocial behaviour (WHO, 2002). Contrary to Nolen-Hoeksema's (1994) suggestion that such gender differences emerge after the age of 15, the data presented here with 12-16 year-olds show that this may be the case for younger adolescents as well.

Identity work and mental health

The results from analyses on the influence of the different aspects of identity work on mental health suggest that the extent to which individuals experience the various aspects of effective identity work is related to their well-being. This is consistent with Haberlandt et al. (1995) who argue that identity is a central resource that can mobilise the subject to deal with wearying, adverse, and contradictory everyday experiences in a productive way and to prevent sickness. Specifically, results from the present study show life coherence, authenticity, and the integration of discrepant expectations to be significant predictors for (from a longitudinal perspective) and correlates of (from a crossectional perspective) mental health. The strongest relationship is between the integration of discrepant identities/expectations and mental health, suggesting that the less discrepancy one experiences in his/her and others' expectations and the better one is able to integrate such discrepancies and move between settings, the fewer emotional, behavioural, and social problems he/she experiences (or vice versa). This is reminiscent of Higgins' (1987) discrepancy theory in which he explains how a gap between one's actual self and one's own and his/her perceptions of others' expectations of his/her "ought self" can lead to psychological discomfort. Furthermore, the results reported here confirm what other researchers have found in the link between authenticity and mental health, i.e., the greater authenticity one experiences in his/her own life, the fewer problems he/she has regarding mental health.

Although I have presented the three patterns of identity work as being equally effective strategies for finding a good fit between one's inner and outer world, the experience of the individuals in these three groups with respect to mental health cannot be

considered equal. The results from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire show that (with one exception on peer relationship problems), on average, individuals in the Low Authenticity-Moderate Integration and High Authenticity - Low Integration groups are at least three times more likely than the High Authenticity-High Integration group to report borderline or abnormal values on each of the four problem subscales (emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity, and peer relationship problems) and nearly five time more likely to reach a borderline or abnormal value on the total difficulties score. This, I feel, confirms that finding a good fit between one's inner and outer world is more demanding for some individuals (or perhaps under certain circumstances) than others. These findings correspond with one of the points Erikson (1956, 1959) made when discussing psychosocial identity. He felt (building on Hartmann's (1939) "average expectable environment") that children and adolescents need an environment that is sensitive to their needs in order to develop healthily. In particular, such an environment offers an individual a value system made up of "a coherent body of shared images, ideas, and ideals which...provide for the participants a coherent, if systematically simplified, over-all orientation in space and time, in means and ends" (1959, p. 113). According to Erikson, then, an environment marked by incoherence in which one is presented with contradictory values and discrepant ideals could hinder healthy development. It is understandable that needing to integrate several discrepant identities or expectations would be emotionally draining. Likewise, if a young person feels that he/she is met with different expectations in each context (i.e., family, friends, school), he/she may not understand what type of conduct is appropriate across contexts or in each context.

On the one hand, it seems that the individuals with a High Authenticity - Low Integration pattern of identity work experience what Kernis and Goldman (2006) describe as the costs of authenticity. From their point of view, "accurate self-knowledge can be painful, behaving in accord with one's true-self may occasion others' disfavor, and opening oneself up to an intimate makes one vulnerable to rejection or betrayal.

Such adverse consequences potentially associated with authenticity are likely to undermine individuals'... subjective, well-being" (p. 341). Specifically, more than either of the other groups, the individuals who show a High Authenticity - Low Integration pattern are burdened with emotional problems. On the other hand, although living authentically can have its own costs, the results I have presented here also confirm that "behaving in ways that are at odds with one's true-self merely to satisfy controlling pressures can also undermine well-being" (p. 340). In particular, identity work marked by a Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration strategy is associated with conduct problems and difficulties with peer relationships.

In comparison with individuals whose identity work fit the High Authenticity - High Integration pattern, it seems that the young people who fall into the Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration or High Authenticity - Low Integration patterns are challenged to greatest extent by the demands of forming their identity in a postmodern society. Going back to Keupp et al.'s (2002) model of identity work and his patchwork metaphor (See Section 1.1.2), it could be that, in particular during the transformative phase of adolescence, many individuals are in the process of constructing new part identities or identity projects. Accordingly, each individual first has to work out what this new piece (or these new pieces) of the patchwork should look like, how dominant it should be, what it means for the other pieces of the patchwork, what new expectations arise within oneself and from others as a result, and what authenticity means in terms of this new part-identity. Depending on all these factors, a new identity may be more or less difficult to integrate into one's existing patchwork and more or less psychologically demanding. As Kernis and Goldman (2006) state, "for people to attain optimal well-being through identity formation, they may have to temporarily endure costs to well-being in the course of exploring who they can be" (p. 341). Unfortunately, it is not possible with the questionnaire data collected here to understand the factors contributing to why and when individuals follow any one of the patterns of effective identity work. The results on identity work and mental health, however, suggest that

these processes are not insignificant for individuals' well-being and would be worth investigating at a deeper level. The following section focuses on such limitations of the present study and suggestions for both how to improve it and what questions of interest could (or should) be explored in future research endeavors.

5.2   Limitations and suggestions for future research

> In the process of operationalizing any complex construct such as identity, the construct is drained of some of its meaning...However, a judicious and fairly broad selection of dependent variables, if they are theoretically grounded, will, through numerous studies, replenish and extend the meaning of the construct... (Kroger & Marcia, 2011, p. 36)

There is no doubt that the operationalisation of part of Keupp et al.'s (2002) rich theory into a short paper-and-pencil measure has, just as (Kroger & Marcia, 2011) state, "drained" the individual constructs included in the Effective Identity Work Inventory of some of their meaning. I hope, by incorporating gender as well as two other central aspects of adolescent experience (i.e., body image and mental health) into my analyses, to have succeeded, at least in part, in "replenishing and extending" the meaning of these constructs.

The instrument developed and evaluated to operationalise identity work as has been theorised by Keupp et al. shows promise as a research tool. However, the main limitation of these results is that they are preliminary in nature. As the first study to incorporate an operationalisation of what Keupp et al. describe as the goals (and prerequisites) of identity work, the work I have presented here should be seen as a preview of how useful the EIWI could be in both clinical and research settings. Additional efforts, however, are needed to improve the internal consistency of the self-rating scale and to strengthen its substantive, structural, and external validity (Loevinger, 1957) through the a) revision and extension of the pool of items; b) in-depth analysis of cor-

responding qualitative data; c) administration of the EIWI alongside other validated measures of identity and measures that correspond to the individual subscales of the EIWI; as well as d) the inclusion of a test of social desirability.

While the subscales for Life Coherence, Authenticity, and Integration proved to be useful for the study of adolescent development, in order to establish strong substantive validity of the scale, I believe some revisions of the EIWI are in order.

First and foremost, I feel that the items created to assess Keupp's description of 'acceptance' or 'recognition' should be reviewed and revised. As was previously mentioned, the items developed and implemented here focus on the adherence to what others expect rather than on the sense of acceptance or recognition that individuals receive from others. I do not believe that a strong sense of adherence to other's expectations follows what Keupp et al. (2002) describe as a key to effective identity work. On the contrary, for Keupp et al., it is important that an individual experience acceptance for who he/she is and be recognised for his/her efforts, abilities, and achievements. From my point of view, the following items would be better able to capture Keupp et al.'s understanding of acceptance and recognition by others:

1. I feel accepted for who I am by my family.

2. I feel accepted for who I am by my friends.

3. I feel accepted for who I am by my teachers/ my school.

4. My family members recognize me for my efforts and abilities.

5. My friends recognize me for my efforts and abilities.

6. My school/my teachers recognize me for my efforts and abilities.

From Keupp et al.'s (2002) point of view, acceptance/recognition from others, integration of divergent expectations and agency represent the external dimensions in an

individual's endeavor to find a good fit between themselves and their social environment. Furthermore, together with the internal dimensions of coherence and authenticity, Keupp sees acceptance/recgonition and agency as indispensable modes of daily identity work and important indices for a successful identity (Keupp, 2003).

In my reading (and rereading) of Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory, it seems that self-acceptance as an internal dimension and agency as an external dimension are equally as important aspects (and goals) in the identity work process as life coherence, authenticity, acceptance/recognition (from others), and integration of discrepant expectations. With this in mind, my second suggestion for revision to the Effective Identity Work Inventory is to include additional items in order to more fully assess self-acceptance and agency. With only one item each in the current version, both of these elements were removed after factor analyses. It would therefore be interesting to see if, with more items, both self-acceptance and agency themselves could stand alone as factors in a factor analysis, thus creating two more subscales in the identity work scale. Possible additions to these subscales could include:

- Self-Acceptance

  1. I feel good about the person that I am.

  2. I can accept my weaknesses.

  3. I feel good about my strengths.

  4. I am proud of the person I am becoming.

- Agency

  1. I can influence what happens in my life.

  2. I am able to make decisions and act in a way that fits who I am.

  3. I am able to make plans and see them through.

  4. I struggle to know how to act appropriately in different situations.

  5. I look to others before I act.

  6. My actions reflect who I really am.

Furthermore, authenticity items included in the Effective Identity Work Inventory measure only one dimension of authenticity as a construct, namely, whether a person believes he/she can be him/herself and show his/her true feelings in three different social contexts. Authenticity theorists and researchers, however, have identified a number of important dimensions of authenticity. For Kernis and Goldman (2006), these include: self-awareness, unbiased processing of internal experiences, actions that are in accordance with one's own feelings and needs, one's experience in relation to others. With a slightly different perspective, Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, and Joseph (2008) focus on authentic living, accepting external influence, and self-alienation. Considering that there are already established instruments for measuring authenticity as an individual difference variable (The Authenticity Inventory by Kernis & Goldman, 2006; The Authenticity Scale by Wood et al., 2008) from a multidimensional perspective, it would be worth considering incorporating (parts of) one of these scales.

By including these suggested additions (and perhaps even more) as well as the original items of the EIWI, the pool of items then entered into factor analyses would be much larger and the resulting factors or subscales would likely have a stronger basis for both substantive validity (based, in part, on internal consistency) and structural validity. Furthermore, unlike in the present study in which factor analysis produced only a 4-factor solution, with well chosen additions to the items on self-acceptance and

agency, all six theoreised aspects of effective identity work might be mirrored in the results of factor analysis.

The fact that no other measures of identity formation were included in this study presents both a central limitation of this work and the impetus for the following suggestion for future research. As Crocetti et al. (2013) recently noted, "In order to avoid divergences among identity conceptualizations that share the same core theoretical foundation, it is necessary to reflect on theoretical interconnections and to investigate them empirically. This is an essential step towards gaining a more comprehensive understanding of identity development" (p. 11). In particular, I feel it would be important to administer the EIWI together with the Functions of Identity Scale (Serafini & Adams, 2002) in order to identify both their similarities as well as the unique value of each of the tests. Furthermore, it would be interesting to see if the clusters identified here are in any way related to empirically derived identity statuses based on Luyckx et al. (2008) and Crocetti et al. (2008), including undifferentiated, achievement, classical moratorium, searching moratorium, foreclosure, carefree diffusion, and diffused diffusion statuses) as well as Berzonsky's (1989) three identity styles (informational, normative, diffused-avoidant). By statistically correlating the EIWI and its subscales with other measures of identity and instruments measuring the individual constructs captured in the subscales of the EIWI, would greatly extend the external validity of the scale.

Considering that Keupp et al.'s theory was developed based on interviews with individuals in late adolescence and in line with Arnett's (2000) widely accepted proposal of a new critical phase of identity formation between 18 and 25 years (emergent adulthood), a further suggestion for future research is to validate a revised version of the EIWI not only using 12-16 year olds (as was the case in the present study) but also with samples of late adolescents and emergent adults. In addition, it would be interesting to implement the (revised) Effective Identity Work Inventory with samples from other countries (or even other parts of Germany and Switzerland). By imple-

menting both of these suggestions, it would be possible to see if different development phases and/or different cultural or social settings produce different patterns of effective identity work. As well, it would be highly interesting and helpful to understand which aspects of effective identity work are related with mental health during later phases of development and how this might be affected by the context.

As was presented in Christl and Brodbeck (2012), my colleague Kathrin Brodbeck and I performed some preliminary analyses on the three patterns of effective identity work linking the quantitative results with qualitative interview material. Continuing this exploratory and comparative work combining these quantitatively-generated groups with the rich data from semi-structured interviews and social network analyses, I believe, would be an important further step in this research process. In particular, it would be fascinating to examine the "voices" behind each of these patterns and to gain greater understanding about the social environments and resources surrounding these individuals as they work through their identities.

Finally, in the following section I put on a gendered lens and discuss a few of the limitations and suggestions for future research specifically related to gender.

A gendered lens

In the study I have presented here, gender was assessed with only one item and as a dichotomous factor. Consequently, I have not been able to gain greater understanding about the process of gender construction during adolescence. I believe that the data I have presented here are a reflection of the construction process at work in adolescents' lives, and I realise that these results, as well, contribute to the process of constructing not only gender but also body image and mental health.

I agree with Davis and Gergen (1997) that "one cannot ignore value considerations and claim that one is merely reporting the facts. Because facts are socially constructed, they are always subject to questioning for their ethical implications." (p. 6). With this in mind, I have aimed to be transparent about following a social construction of gender

paradigm and have attempted to interpret the results accordingly. Nonetheless, I feel one of the major limitations of this research is the lack of the inclusion of a scale that assesses the gender expression of the participants, such as Wylie, Corliss, Boulanger, Prokop, and Austin (2010), in which participants report to what extent they feel and present themselves as feminine and masculine. In addition, I feel it would be helpful to also include one combined or two separate gender-related ideology scales, such as the Male Role Norms Inventory-Revised (MRNI-R) by R. Levant, Smalley, et al. (2007) or the recently validated version for adolescents (R. F. Levant et al., 2012) and/or the Femininity Ideology Scale (R. Levant, Richmond, Cook, House, & Aupont, 2007). The inclusion of such scales would allow researchers to gain an understanding about the meaning of gender (both in terms of gender identity and gender role ideology) in the identity construction process and in the relationship between body experience and identity work that would go well beyond the search for similarities and differences between males and females.

Even though I believe it would be fascinating and important to look beyond gender similarities and differences, the results presented here are still helpful for generating questions for future research on gender and identity formation. In particular, with regard to the gender difference found on authenticity (but also in terms of the integration of discrepant identities and expectations), I would be interested to know if a gender difference would still exist among adults. Many of the (identity) struggles that females face who live in a postmodern context revolve around the "balancing act" that women (with children) are faced with in needing to meet the demands of both family and work. As Austin, Harkins, and Ronayne (2010) note,

> Integrating contradictory societal expectations for work and family commitments is now a problem for individual women to solve; and the mandate to balance roles has become the unquestioned norm. One result of the postmodern context is that role commitments now come with a steeper "price". Women are aware that paths close as a result of their choices (Gergen, 1991,

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2000)—that is, identifying with one role or value often excludes commitment to other, often conflicting values. (p. 104)

This balancing act presents a challenge that the girls in the present study have not yet needed to approach (or at least not in the same way). I hypothesize that the demands of integrating discrepant identities (as well as the corresponding expectations) and the costs of being authentic across settings may be higher for adult women than for adolescent girls. This is certainly a question that I believe would be worth investigating empirically.

I am aware that the list of limitations I have named here is not exhaustive and that my suggestions for future research represent only the tip of the iceberg in terms of how this research could be improved, extended, and continued. Nonetheless, I feel that the points I have mentioned, if carried out, would greatly help to increase the validity of the Effective Identity Work Inventory and, in so doing, contribute to a better understanding of identity construction in the context of a postmodern world. Furthermore, if followed, some of these ideas could generate fascinating work on identity, gender, body experience, and lead to more helpful findings on the protective factors of mental health in (adolescent) development.

5.3 Conclusion

From my perspective, the empirical work presented here makes two main contributionsto the field of research on identity formation. First, to my knowledge this is the only quantitative operationalisation of any aspects of Keupp et al.'s (2002) theory on identity construction to date. Although I have suggested some revisions and extensions to the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI), this first version of the scale proved to have acceptable psychometric properties and showed relevance for the study of identity formation during adolescence. The second contribution is the preliminary 'discovery' of three unique patterns of effective identity work that I believe to be characteristic of

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adolescents living in a postmodern society. Depending on an individual's needs (and the resources at hand) for finding a good fit between his/her inner and outer world, each individual experiences the aspects of effective identity work to a different degree. Finding a good fit is more demanding for some individuals than for others. In particular, the balancing act between being true to oneself (Authenticity) and being able to integrate discrepant identities and expectations (from others) for one's life into a coherent whole (Integration) challenges adolescents living in postmodern Germany and German-speaking Switzerland. The individuals who fall into the Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration pattern show a balancing act in which they accommodate others' expectations for their lives but do not feel they can "be" themselves in their social circles. In contrast, the individuals who show a High Authenticity - Low Integration pattern seem to be true to themselves across settings but in doing so also experience dissent from those around them. The final group of individuals, who fall into the High Authenticity - High Integration pattern, does not seem to have to choose between being true to themselves and being true to what others expect from them either because there is a great deal of overlap between the two or because they have the resources they need to easily reconcile both.

The balance that one finds between authenticity and the integration of discrepant identities and expectations has consequences for other areas of development. As results show, both of these constructs are significant predictors of positive body image and mental health (Authenticity is the strongest predictor out of the four factors of effective identity work for body image and Integration is the strongest predictor for mental health). The three patterns of effective identity work represent three unique balancing acts and, consequently, the groups of individuals behind these patterns show different results on the measures of positive body image and mental and behavioural health. Specifically, the group of individuals who show a Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration pattern of effective identity work report having a less positive body image than the High Authenticity - Low Integration and High Authenticity - High Integration

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groups (who did not differ significantly from one another on positive body image). The results on mental and behavioural health show that the Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration and High Authenticity-Low Integration groups face a similar high degree of mental and behavioural problems compared with the group with a High Authenticity - High Integration pattern. In particular, it seems that the those who forfeit their authenticity in order to accommodate others' expectations (Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration) experience more conduct problems and peer relationship problems, while those who stay true to themselves despite experiencing dissent from others (High Authenticity - Low Integration) are challenged with more emotional problems. Against this background, I conclude that the process of finding a good fit between one's inner and outer world is more psychologically demanding for the individuals who show either a Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration or a High Authenticity - Low Integration pattern of effective identity work. With respect to all of the items and measures of effective identity work and well-being, including self-acceptance, agency, positive body image, and mental health, the group of individuals with High Authenticity-High Integration identity work pattern show the highest scores. Unfortunately, in the present study, this was the smallest group of adolescents at both points of data collection. Further research is needed to understand more about the resources and social environments experienced by these young people in comparison with those who fall into the Low Authenticity - Moderate Integration and High Authenticity - Low Integration patterns of effective identity work.

The exploration of relationships between gender, effective identity work, body image, and mental health shows that these are multifaceted and complex. Results suggest that, although the literature posits that girls' 'true voices' are suppressed in adolescence, the girls in this study report acting more authentically in their social circles than do boys. However, despite the association between authenticity and positive body image, boys report a slightly more positive body image than girls. This result may be indicative of a shift in which girls have (re)gained their voices in this individualized,

globalized, destabalized, media-driven postmodern society, but have not yet regained their bodies and thus may not be as free from cultural body ideals as boys to appreciate their bodies just as they are. Despite the gender difference on body image, the results presented here suggest that the gap between males and females on body image is smaller than the literature has often asserted.

With reference to mental health and gender, findings demonstrate that boys and girls experience different difficulties albeit, in general, a similar degree of mental health problems. With the exception of hyperactivity (where no gender differences were seen), the typical pattern of gender differences on mental and behavioural health (with girls showing more emotional problems and boys more conduct problems) was affimed in the present study.

The effective identity work approach to identity formation follows a resource-oriented perspective, includes the social context, and proposes a non-hierarchical classification scheme in its aim to assess and categorise individuals' experiences in day-to-day identity work. In this way, I feel the effective identity work approach complements mainstream approaches to the measurement of identity formation in psychology and offers a tool to gain greater understanding about how adolescents face the challenges of working out their identities in a postmodern context.

Epilogue

> Erikson drew his understanding and examples from his own experiences
> and interests— his own search for self, the lives of remarkable men (e.g.,
> Ghandi), the experiences of his patients, and questions of intrigue to men
> of his day (e.g., vocations and ideologies). It is the responsibility of other
> scientists to examine his theory in light of their own sociocultural and
> historical life-span experiences and questions to determine its relevance for
> them. (Archer, 2002, p. 267)

I believe this not only to be true for Erikson's theory, but for any theory in the social
sciences, for no matter how objective and scientific a theorist or researcher might aspire
to be, from my perspective it would be detrimental to completely ignore, rationalise,
or exclude the subjective experiences that lead us toward certain interests, particular
ideas, and specific interpretations of our research.

It was this conviction that led me to include this Epilogue in my dissertation. In
these few pages I reflect on the impetuses and motivational and influential factors that
helped shape this work and I describe a few of the struggles and joys I experienced
in the process. In particular, I want to use this space to increase transparency with
respect to the decisions I (and the VROID-MHAP research team) made both on a
methodological and content level. I briefly describe how I journeyed from quantitative
methods to qualitative approaches only to return back to quantitative methods of data
collection and analysis for this dissertation; I touch on my growing fascination with
Keupp et al.'s (2002) identity construction theory; then I introduce the gender and

body theme that has accompanied my research interests and efforts for some time; and finally, I discuss in short how the inclusion of mental health into this dissertation seemed unavoidable.

During my undergraduate schooling in Psychology at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, Canada I was taught to think of Psychology as a natural science. I learned that there was no place for the first person in scientific writing and that the more objective the research(er), the better the results. It seemed the Experiment was always the goal and every step away from an experimental study design presented a compromise in the objectivity and validity of the results thus limiting their generalisability. In line with this school of thought, I was imparted with a solid foundation in and understanding of quantitative analysis methods (for which I am now truly grateful). In contrast to this, the courses I was taking for my minor in Women's Studies at Simon Fraser opened my eyes to work that was social critical, subjective, and highly reflective - not to mention often very personal. Instead of seeing gender merely as a dichotomous factor, a control variable, or a statistical moderator, I was also learning to look behind scientific facts and to understand that the 'truths' about gender (and other social categories) I had taken for granted might actually be social constructions. Here, the focus was not on large sample sizes, representivity, and generalisability but on the individual and collective experiences of women and visible minorities, on their participation, and empowerment. For the first time in my academic career I felt stuck between a rock and a hard place. It was clear to me that psychology was where I wanted to be, but I longed for a psychology with voice: a psychology where my own experiences and reflections could compliment and give greater meaning to the results of my research. A psychology where the individual research participant would be treated as an individual whose voice is valued. Eventually, after my move to Germany, I had the opportunity to fulfill this wish during my first graduate study program thanks to a few supportive mentors and a supervisor who was willing to let me be a "pioneer" during my diploma research. My thesis, "The Naked Truth about Body Image: A Qualitative Study with

Young Yomen on the Subjective Construction of Body Image and the Experience of Nakedness", was the culmination of a research dream. On a content level, I found answers to questions I had been pondering about body image and women's experiences with nakedness since my first trip to Europe. On a methodological level, both my own and other women's voices found a place, and yet, the work remained empirical (though not necessarily objective). I felt my results were meaningful, intriguing, and brought new perspectives to the understanding of women's relationships with their bodies and the impact of sociocultural beliefs and practices surrounding nakedness on body experience. The feedback I received from others (psychologists, gender researchers, and non-academics alike) was remarkably positive.

When I was offered a job to be part of the research team of the VROID-MHAP Study (Values and Religious Orientations in Relation to Identity Development and Mental Health: Adolescent Perspectives) with the task of carrying out the parallel study in Germany, I was excited about the opportunity to join my knowledge about quantitative research methods and analysis with my interest and (newfound) experience with qualitative methodologies. Not only did I look forward to mixing methods, but also to mixing approaches. I was excited about the prospect of having statistically verifiable results but did not feel quite ready to let go of my subjective and reflective stance. Furthermore, the team was kind enough (and seemed quite pleased) to let me integrate some questions on body experience into the questionnaire and interview. During the data collection phase, however, it was not completely clear what the focus of my dissertation would be. There were only a few doctoral candidates working on the project and it was evident that the data we were collecting could be the basis for many dissertations. It went without question that both gender and the body would play a role in my work, but in relation to what? religiosity, values, personality, social context, identity, mental health? The possibilities seemed endless. I did some presentations and wrote a paper on religiosity, gender, and the body, but didn't find the results substantial enough for a dissertation. As time went on, it was Keupp et

al.'s identity construction theory that fascinated me most. Since his theory has not be published widely in English, I had not come across it during my time at university. Right away, however, it resonated with my own experience and with what I knew about Erikson's identity theory. I appreciated the narrative approach they followed and the complexity and depth of their results. I became very interested in the kinds of questions I could ask and results I could find using our team's quantitative operationalisation of Keupp et al.'s ideas on identity work. Little did I know, I would be so positively consumed by my quantitative results (especially after incorporating the connection between identity work and mental health) that I would not even have time or space to mix it with the qualitative data (see the section on Future Research for some of my ideas on how to compliment this research with qualitative data). But I believe it was my experience with and interest in qualitative approaches that lead me to some of the findings presented here. For, as Prof. Christopher Day recently noted in his keynote lecture at the annual conference of the Center for Qualitative Psychology, qualitative research is marked by a search for patterns (March 28, 2014, Weingarten, Germany) . The search for and discovery of three patterns of effective identity work among the adolescents was the driving force behind and foundation for many of the analyses presented here.

Once I began putting all my results together I found myself once again between a rock and a hard place. The results I would present were quantitive, voiceless, even generalisable. Although I was fascinated by my work, the writing was at first strenuous. It felt academic, formal, impersonal, objective. Still I longed for a space where I could be subjective and reflective. I slowly began to smuggle an "I" in here and there, explaining and taking responsibility for the decisions and conclusions I (or we as a team) made. It was the above quote by Archer that motivated me to include some of these thoughts and to make my own reflective and subjective process more transparent throughout the dissertation. In this way, I have felt able to acknowledge, confront, and attend to my own biases and be honest with myself and my readers about both the

strengths and limitations of this research.

Although the present work focuses on the central period of adolescence, my own interest in identity construction was piqued during my mid-twenties when I got married, moved to Germany (from my home in Canada), and was challenged with living a new life, in a new language, with a new name. Due to the preliminary language barrier, I went from being 'Taylor', an outspoken, ambitious, and independent young women to 'Frau Christl', a mostly silent wife who was (at least initially) dependent on her husband's help to navigate through the language barriers and bureaucracy of her new life. The German expectation of formality and privacy did not coincide with my Canadian first name basis and open door upbringing. Who was this Frau Christl? and who was she to become? I asked myself. What began was a period of hard work, discovery, and surprise as I journeyed through a process of identity construction in which I have sewed together a colorful patchwork of identities. It is a patchwork that changes perpetually, one in which certain colors and patterns vary in their intensity depending on the setting. On paper I am a woman who is half Canadian, half U.S. American, and has landed immigrant status in Germany. I am a psychologist, doctoral candidate, family therapist, wife, and mother of a daughter and a son, but if I were asked to describe who I am, these are not necessarily the things I would say make me "me". Like many of the adolescents in this study, I am forced to negotiate my identities between two (sometimes three) cultures, each with their own norms and expectations and integrate them into a comprehensive whole. I am challenged with reconciling the feeling that I am in some ways a different person in English than I am in German in order to achieve a sense of authenticity across settings. Merely with regard to family, I have needed to work out my roles as a wife, mother, daughter-in-law etc. in order to find acceptance from my husband, his family, and my own children here in Germany without completely neglecting my roles of daughter, sister, or aunt to my family back in Canada - all the while staying true to myself. As Keupp et al. suggest, identity is not just something one has to discover, rather it requires active pursuit and hard work.

There were phases in this process that were much more challenging than others and I expect that over the course of my 10 years here in Germany, I, at one time or another, have fit into each of the three patterns of effective identity work I presented here.

My own experiences, interests, and research efforts surrounding gender and the body have led me to wonder about the interplay between identity and body experience across the life-span, how this may be different or similar for males and females, and how it influences individuals' well-being. I believe this interest to be a sign of the times in which we live: A time in which the body plays a central role in the construction of (young) male and female identities, significantly influencing how others feel about them and how they feel about themselves; a society in which the criteria for outward beauty are plastered on nearly every billboard and connected with the majority of consumer products; an environment in which we are taught through ads and reality TV shows that everyone can achieve the standards of physical beauty if they invest enough work and enough money; and a time in which a carefree childhood is quickly being devoured by an increasingly early onset of puberty, the pressure to perform, and a transformation in forms of social contact and communication through internet-based social networks.

For a long time researchers believed that such environments were only detrimental to female development and well-being, but more and more research suggests that boys' and men's body experience is also (if not equally) affected by the pressure to fit the ideal, perpetual sexualisation, and constant comparision that influence how they feel about and deal with their emotional and physical selves.

My own experiences growing up as a young woman naturally led me to research interests and questions that primarily focused on girls' and women's body experience and body image development. For this reason, in particular, the opportunity to look at adolescent boys' and girls' body experience in an effort to better understand the similarities and differences between them has been very exciting. After completing my diploma level research on women's body image and experiences with nakedness, I

concluded that there was a need for more research that focused on positive body image and was therefore very pleased to be able to incorporate the Body Appreciation Scale (Avalos et al., 2005) into the VROID-MHAP Study.

After I set my focus for the dissertation to identity work, gender, and their relationship with body experience of adolescent boys and girls, the final inclusion of mental health seemed only reasonable. In the latter part of the present research I began working part-time in family therapy. The majority of the families I worked with had teenagers who were considered to be 'out of control' in their externalised symptoms as seen in aggressive behavior, disobedience, and sometimes hyperactivity. In a number of the other families, however, the young person seemed to internalise his/her problems and (subconsciously) turn to depression, eating disorders, and/or self harm to deal with their pain. Although I believe that many different factors play into such mental health problems, I could not help but wonder (and reflect on) how these individuals were performing their identity work and constructing their identities. I wondered how they would answer the questions in the Effective Identity Work Inventory and if I should focus my work with them on how to live more authentically, reach a stronger sense of coherence, better deal with discrepant expectations, and/or accept themselves just as they are. Then I had to ask myself how this could be done and what role the parents, teachers, friends etc. might play in creating the demands that might lead to low authenticity, seemingly irreconcilable expectations, or a lack of (self) recognition. As I gathered my results on the relationship between identity work and mental health, these feelings grew stronger. Although I believe that each of the patterns of identity work serve a purpose and are an effective way of reconciling one's inner and outer world, the results comparing the three patterns on mental health suggest that, for the psyche, they are not all created equal. The results have encouraged me to think about the preventative potential of focusing on young people's identity work in order to foster mental health during the formative years of adolescence and how parents, teachers, youth workers etc. might be able to nurture a greater sense of authenticity, help inte-

grate discrepant expectations, work on self-acceptance, or promote a sense of agency. Since the objective of the present study was first and foremost to make an empirical and theoretical contribution to the study of identity, I chose, however, not to elaborate on the practical application of the results. Understanding more about how the effective identity work approach could be used at a practical level for nurturing positive body experience and mental health or preventing mental and behavioral problems, I believe, could and should be one of the objectives of further research.

The culmination of this doctoral dissertation feels both like the finishing line of a long race and a stepping stone in a hopefully long career of applied work and research efforts on gender, identity, and the body. In this process it has become clear to me how important it is to work on something I feel passionate about and to stay true to myself in the process. I feel these quantitative findings have been looked at through a qualitative lens and the product is something I hope is useful and interesting for researchers and practitioners alike regardless of their methodological orientation.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Component	Items
Lebenskohärenz	a) Ich verstehe, wie meine Umwelt (z.B. Schule, Familie, Freundeskreis) "funktioniert", und kann in etwa voraussagen, was als nächstes geschehen wird. b) Ich kann mit Veränderungen in meinem Leben gut umgehen und Probleme in der Regel lösen, entweder alleine oder mit der Hilfe von anderen. c)Ich setze mich für meine Ziele und Pläne ein, denn ich bin überzeugt, dass mein Einsatz sich lohnt.
Authentizität	d) In meiner Familie kann ich ich selber sein und meine Gefühle zeigen. e) In der Schule/Lehre kann ich ich selber sein und meine Gefühle zeigen. f) In meinem Freundeskreis kann ich ganz ich selber sein und meine Gefühle zeigen.
Akzeptanz	g) Ich verhalte mich in den meisten Situation so, wie ich mich nach Meinung meiner Eltern verhalten sollte. h) Ich verhalte mich in den meisten Situation so, wie ich mich nach Meinung der Schule /Lehrpersonen verhalten sollte. i) Ich verhalte mich in den meisten Situation so, wie ich mich nach Meinung meines Freundeskreises verhalten sollte.
Selbstakzeptanz	j) Ich bin so wie ich selber sein möchte.
Diskrepanzerleben	k) Ich finde, dass die Erwartungen und Regeln, wie ich mich in verschiedenen Umgebungen zu verhalten habe (z.B. in der Schule, in meiner Familie, in meinem Freundeskreis, usw.), sehr verschieden sind. l) Die Menschen, mit denen ich häufig zusammen bin (z.B. meine Eltern, meine Lehrpersonen, meine Freunde), haben unterschiedliche Vorstellungen, was ich aus meinem Leben machen soll.
Integrationsleistung	m) Ich finde es schwierig, von einer Umgebung auf die andere "umzuschalten" und alles unter einen Hut zu bringen. n) Die unterschiedlichen Vorstellungen machen es schwierig für mich zu wählen, was ich aus meinem Leben machen möchte.
Handlungsfähigkeit	o)Ich denke, ich werde mein späteres Leben so gestalten können, wie ich es möchte.

Table 1: Original German items of the Effective Identity Work Inventory (EIWI)

Appendix B

Information für Schulleitungen, Lehrpersonen und JugendgruppenleiterInnen über das Forschungsprojekt „Die Bedeutung von Religiosität und Werten für Jugendliche"

Rahmen: Die Studie handelt sich um ein gemeinsames Projekt der PH Ludwigsburg und der Universität Bern, welches vom Schweizerischen Nationalfonds unter der Leitung von Prof. Dr. Christoph Käppler von der Fakultät für Sonderpädagogik der Pädagogischen Hochschule Ludwigsburg und Prof. Dr. Dr. Christoph Morgenthaler von der Theologischen Fakultät der Universität Bern finanziert wird.

Inhalt: In unserer Studie werden Religiosität und Wertorientierungen von ca. 800 Jugendlichen im Stuttgarter und Frankfurter Raum sowie eher ländlich orientierten Regionen in der Umgebung im Alter von 13 -16 Jahren mit unterschiedlichem religiösem Hintergrund befragt. Zudem werden die Zusammenhänge dieser beiden Faktoren mit der Persönlichkeit- und Identitätsentwicklung sowie der psychischen Gesundheit untersucht. Die Daten aus dieser Befragung werden mit den Daten aus einer parallel laufenden Studie in der Schweiz verglichen, wo bereits 750 Jugendliche befragt wurden.

Ziele: Neben dem Forschungsziel, diesen Bereich jugendlicher Erlebenswelt auszuleuchten, sollen die Ergebnisse auch praktisch im pädagogischen Alltag umgesetzt werden. Anhand der Resultate werden Interventionen entwickelt, die den Jugendlichen helfen, sich in einer multireligiösen Gesellschaft zurechtzufinden, über ihre religiösen Einstellungen und ihre Wertorientierungen nachzudenken und in diesen Bereichen ihre Identität zu entwickeln. Zudem soll mit den Befunden dieser Studie ein Beitrag zum interreligiösen Dialog unter Jugendlichen geleistet werden. Dies ist auf dem Hintergrund der Veränderungen in der religiösen Landschaft des deutschsprachigen Raums im Hinblick auf integrations- und gesundheitspolitische Herausforderungen und für ein nachhaltiges friedliches Zusammenleben religiöser Bevölkerungsgruppen in Deutschland und in der Schweiz von großer Bedeutung.

Durchführung: Geplant ist folgendes Vorgehen: Zunächst werden die Eltern mit einem Brief informiert und können mit einer Rückantwort mitteilen, wenn sie mit der Teilnahme ihrer Tochter/ihres Sohnes nicht einverstanden sind. Danach findet die Erhebung in der Klasse / Jugendgruppe statt. Sie dauert ca. 1-1.5 Unterrichtsstunden. In ungefähr einem Jahr wird eine zweite Befragung durchgeführt, um herauszufinden, was die Jugendlichen ein Jahr später denken und inwiefern sie ihre Meinungen geändert haben oder nicht. Bei der zweiten Befragung bekommen die Jugendliche einen CD Gutschein als Dankeschön für ihre Teilnahme.

Datenschutz: Die Angaben aller Teilnehmenden sind anonym. Lehrpersonen/JugendgruppenleiterInnen und Eltern haben keine Einsicht in die ausgefüllten Fragebogen. Die Forschenden haben keinen Zugriff auf die Identität der Versuchspersonen.

Weitere Informationen/Rückfragen:
Für weitere Informationen stehen wir Ihnen gerne zur Verfügung.

- **Internet:** Homepage des Schweizerischen Nationalfonds: www.nfp58.ch, Näheres zum Projekt: ww.nfp58.ch/d_projekte_jugendliche.cfm?projekt=77

- **Telefon oder Email:** Die Mitarbeitenden des Forschungsteams beantworten **gerne** Fragen per E-mail oder Telefon.

The **VROID-MHAP**-Study**: V**alues and **R**eligious **O**rientations in **R**elation to **I**dentity **D**evelopment and **M**ental **H**ealth**: A**dolescents' **P**erspectives
Prof. Dr. Christoph Käppler; Dipl.-Psych. Taylor Christl
Kontakt: christl@ph-ludwigsburg.de Tel.: (0)7121 271 9383 / (0)177 8255520; kaeppler@ph-ludwigsburg.de Tel.: (0)7121 271 93-19

Leitfaden zur Information der Jugendlichen durch Lehrpersonen oder JugendgruppenleiterInnen

Damit alle Teilnehmenden eingangs in etwa über den gleichen Wissensstand verfügen, bitten wir Sie, bei der Information der Jugendlichen die folgenden Punkte zu erwähnen:

1. STUDIE / ZIELE
Die Studie handelt sich um ein größeres Forschungsprojekt, das in vielen, zufällig ausgewählten Schulen/Jugendgruppen durchgeführt wird. Befragt werden ca. 800 Jugendliche im Alter von 13 bis 16 Jahren in Baden-Württemberg und Hessen (Stuttgarter und Frankfurter Raum sowie eher ländlich orientierte Regionen in der Umgebung).
Es handelt sich dabei um folgende Fragen:
- Was ist Eurer Ansicht nach im Leben wichtig ist und was möchtet Ihr im Leben erreichen?
- Welche Meinung habt Ihr zum Thema Religion?
- Welche Bedeutung hat Religion in Eurem Leben?
- Beeinflusst dies, wie Ihr Euch fühlt und wie Ihr über Euch und über andere denkt?
Es spielt dabei keine Rolle, ob Ihr einer Religionsgemeinschaft angehört oder nicht. Es spielt auch keine Rolle, welcher Religionsgemeinschaft Ihr angehört. Die Forschenden möchten die wirklichen Meinungen von möglichst vielen Jugendlichen erfahren.

2. VORGEHENSWEISE
In nächster Zeit wird jemand aus dem Forscherteam in unsere Klasse/Gruppe kommen und einen Fragebogen verteilen, der in der Klasse/Gruppe ausgefüllt wird. Diejenigen, die nicht teilnehmen, werden in dieser Zeit etwas anderes bearbeiten.
In ca. einem Jahr werdet Ihr nochmals zu denselben Themen befragt. Dabei geht es darum, herauszufinden, was Ihr ein Jahr später zu diesen Fragen denkt und ob sich Eure Meinungen vielleicht geändert haben.

3. DATENSCHUTZ
Wichtig: Die Angaben aller teilnehmenden Jugendlichen sind **anonym**. Das bedeutet, dass das Forschungsteam nicht weiss, wer welchen Fragebogen ausgefüllt hat. Die ausgefüllten Fragebogen werden auch **Eure Lehrpersonen/-JugendgruppenleiterInnen und Eure Eltern nicht sehen.** Das bedeutet, dass Ihr die Fragen ganz ehrlich und offen beantworten könnt.

4. DANK
Wer an der Befragung teilnimmt bekommt für die erste und zweite Befragung jeweils einen CD-Gutschein.

5. EINVERSTÄNDNIS DER ELTERN
Eure Eltern werden mit einem Elternbrief über das Projekt informiert. Die Forschenden würden sich natürlich sehr freuen, wenn möglichst viele von Euch mitmachen. Wenn Eure Eltern nicht möchten, dass Ihr am Projekt teilnehmt, müssen sie den abtrennbaren Abschnitt ausfüllen. Diesen Abschnitt müsst Ihr mir dann abgeben.

6. WEITERE INFORMATIONEN/FRAGEN
Wenn Ihr oder Eure Eltern mehr erfahren wollt über das Projekt, könnt Ihr Euch informieren über:
Internet: Homepage des Schweizerischen Nationalfonds: www.nfp58.ch , Näheres zum Projekt: ww.nfp58.ch/d_projekte_jugendliche.cfm?projekt=77

Telefon oder Email: Die Mitarbeitenden des Forschungsteams beantworten **gerne** Fragen per E-mail oder Telefon (siehe unten).

Betreff: Die Bedeutung von Religiosität und Werten für Jugendliche

Liebe Eltern,

zurzeit wird in Deutschland und in der Schweiz eine große Studie mit Jugendlichen über Werte und Religiosität durchgeführt. Mit Hilfe dieser Studie möchten wir Antworten zu folgenden Fragen finden:

- Was ist nach Ansicht der Jugendlichen im Leben wichtig, und welche Lebensziele verfolgen sie?
- Wie religiös sind Jugendliche mit unterschiedlicher Religionszugehörigkeit? Wie üben die Jugendlichen und ihre Familien ihre Religion aus?
- Wie beeinflussen die Religiosität und die Lebensziele der Jugendlichen ihre Entwicklung und ihr Wohlbefinden?

Insgesamt werden wir ca. 1500 Jugendliche im Alter von 13-16 Jahren in Deutschland und der Schweiz befragen. Geplant ist, dass Ihre Tochter/Ihr Sohn in der nächsten Zeit in der Schule oder in den Gemeinschaftsräumen Ihrer Gemeinde einen Fragebogen ausfüllt. In etwa einem Jahr wird eine zweite Befragung durchgeführt. Wir möchten die Jugendlichen ein zweites Mal befragen, um herauszufinden, was diese ein Jahr später denken und ob sich ihre Meinungen geändert haben oder nicht. **Alle Daten werden anonym und streng vertraulich behandelt.** Die Schulleitung bzw. die Leitung der Gemeinde sind über die Studie und den Fragebogen informiert und unterstützen unser Forschungsanliegen.

Um zu aussagekräftigen Ergebnissen zu gelangen, ist es wichtig, dass möglichst viele Jugendliche aller Religionszugehörigkeiten teilnehmen. Falls Sie mit der Teilnahme Ihrer Tochter/Ihres Sohnes jedoch **nicht** einverstanden sein sollten, füllen Sie bitte den folgenden abtrennbaren Abschnitt aus und geben Sie ihn Ihrem Sohn/Ihrer Tochter zu Händen der Lehrperson/des Jugendgruppenleiters mit. Ihr Kind wird dann nicht an der Befragung teilnehmen. **Wenn Sie mit der Teilnahme einverstanden sind, brauchen Sie nichts zu unternehmen.**

Für eventuell noch bestehende Rückfragen stehen wir Ihnen gerne zur Verfügung. Bitte zögern Sie nicht, uns per Email oder Telefon (s. unten) zu kontaktieren.

Mit herzlichem Dank für ihre Zusammenarbeit und freundlichen Grüßen,

Prof. Dr. Christoph Käppler   Dipl.- Psych. Taylor Christl

O Ich möchte nicht, dass meine Tochter/mein Sohn an der Studie teilnimmt.

Name Ihrer Tochter/Ihres Sohnes (Bitte in Blockschrift)_____

Unterschrift Eltern _____