

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

“It's been worth it”: The Experiences of Employed Caregiving Fathers

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Psychology

At Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand

Danielle Sian Bethune

2020

Abstract

An increasing number of men are in caregiving roles, yet the overwhelming majority of research at the work-family interface has focused on women's experiences, with little attention having been paid to men's. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was used to analyse the accounts of eight caregiving fathers to explore the experiences of men who have altered their working arrangements to care for their children. This resulted in rich, detailed knowledge about their experiences and produced two broad themes. The first theme *The Caregiving Father* was about participants' experiences entering and being located in a caregiving role. Men became caregiving fathers as an outcome of a range of interrelated factors shaped by social forces. Once in the role, they experienced a complex interplay in their masculine identities, suggesting that although hegemonic masculinity and fathering norms are expanding to be more inclusive of caregiving, breadwinning expectations and the norms around the ideal worker still linger. The second theme *Work Factors* was about work characteristics that influenced the management of caregiving fathers' work, careers and caregiving commitments. Participants' access to flexible working arrangements was highly dependent on the extent to which their employer valued them both professionally and personally. Work-life balance decisions and experiences were clearly impacted by their organisations' generally strong work-family cultures. Caregiving fathers appeared to exist in a paradox where they were not discriminated in hiring and progression opportunities, although taking advantage of progression opportunities necessitated the relinquishment of their flexibility to some extent. Overall, these fathers found that benefits associated with their caregiving roles outweighed any negative impacts, and highlighted the value of acknowledging individuals' self-direction in their careers, the role of social forces in shaping these, and that career success can be subjectively determined.

Acknowledgements

This journey has not been completed alone, and it is important to acknowledge those whose support has been fundamental in me reaching the finishing line.

Dr Veronica Hopner, you are an incredibly talented researcher, teacher and mentor. Your expert guidance, encouragement and calm demeanor have been invaluable, and I am very grateful to have had you supervise my work.

Mum, thank you for being my biggest cheerleader. Your unwavering support in many forms has been integral in enabling me to pursue my passions. Dad, thank you for teaching me to follow my heart, think outside the box and use my voice. To the rest of my family, notably Alycia, Stu, nana, poppa, Deni, Greg and Honey, thank you for your ongoing interest in my studies, care and love.

To my lovely friends, particularly Emma, Hanna and Helen, thank you for being a constant source of strength over this past year and many previous. Your faith in my abilities, empathy and continuous encouragement has been invaluable, and I will be forever grateful to you. An especially big thanks to all of you who proofread parts of my thesis. Cheeky dumpling and wine evenings have certainly helped too.

Ayra, I cannot think of anyone I would have rather gone through the ups and downs of this roller-coaster year with. Thank you for being a constant source of support and encouragement, as we muddled through our theses together. I am sure this is the beginning of many more years of friendship.

Lastly, and most importantly, I wish to acknowledge all the men who bravely opened their homes to me and entrusted me with their deeply personal stories. This research would not have been possible without you.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	vi
Introduction.....	1
Gender Roles – A Brief Overview	3
Traditional gender roles	3
Rise of the involved father	9
Work-Life Balance.....	10
A decision of circumstance and choice.....	10
Work flexibility.....	15
‘Gender neutral’ legislation.	17
Organisational Factors	19
Employment relationship in negotiation	19
Work-family cultures	21
Career-Giving Trajectories	24
Flexible fathers and career progression.	24
Career conceptualisations.	26
Conclusion	28
Methodology	29
Aims and Rationale.....	29
Research Approach	29
Participants.....	30
Sampling	31
Potential sampling limitation	33
Data Collection	34
Semi-structured interviews.	34
Presence of children.....	35
Potential data collection limitation.	36
Analysis.....	36
Reflexivity.....	38
Validity.	39
Ethical Considerations	40
Cultural Considerations	41
Findings.....	43

Theme One: The Caregiving Father	43
Sub-theme one: Reasons for Role	44
Sub-theme two: Gender Roles.	61
Theme Two: Work Factors	74
Sub-theme three: Workplace Relationships and Culture	74
Sub-theme four: Career Consequences	91
Conclusion	107
Limitations	109
Directions for Future Research	110
References	112
Appendices	133
Appendix A: Information Sheet	133
Appendix B: Interview Schedule	136
Appendix C: Informed Consent Form	137
Appendix D: Abbreviations	138

List of Tables

Table 1: Participant Characteristics	32
Table 2: Themes.....	43

Introduction

When New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced her partner Clarke Gayford was going to be the primary caregiver of their expected child in 2018, political science professor Mark Duncan proposed, “This will be an opportunity to reflect as a nation on men as carers.” (Cardwell, 2018, January 20, para 5). This announcement was symbolic of the remarkable transformation of fatherhood norms that have occurred throughout the past 40 years (Phillips, 1996; Wall & Arnold, 2007). Fathers at present are expected to be highly nurturant, attentive and emotionally involved in their children’s daily lives, which is in stark contrast with previous expectations for fathers to focus solely on financial provision, keeping caregiving at a distance (Dermott, 2008; Eerola, 2014; Phillips, 1996; Wall & Arnold, 2007). However, despite this shift, men’s masculine identities continue to depend on the assumption that they are breadwinners (Callister, 2005a; Cha & ThÉBaud, 2009). Accordingly, fathers are currently experiencing significant tension as they attempt to reconcile the conflicting fathering demands of breadwinning and *involved fatherhood* (Burnett, Gatrell, Cooper, & Sparrow, 2011; Humberd, Ladge, & Harrington, 2015; McLaughlin & Muldoon, 2014).

Against this backdrop, an increasing number of New Zealand men with young children appear to be entering caregiving roles (Ministry of Social Development, 2004; Statistics New Zealand, 2019c). Research suggests that stay-at-home fathers (SAHFs) enter this role as a result of a range of interrelated factors, including their spouses’ higher relative income capacity and career orientation, a reluctance to use formal childcare, a desire for a larger caregiving role, and factors related to their own careers, such as being in a transitional career phase, experiencing *work-family conflict* (WFC), or already having a flexible job (Chesley, 2011; Doucet, 2004; Doucet & Merla, 2007; Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018; McPherson, 2006; Rochlen, Suizzo, McKelley, & Scaringi, 2008; Schmidt, 2014).

Among employees with caregiving commitments, *flexible working arrangements* (FWAs) are key in effectively managing their work and care obligations and achieving *work-life balance* (WLB) (Allen, 2001; Fleetwood, 2007; Hornung, Rousseau, & Glaser, 2008; Luketina, Davidson, & Palmer, 2009; Statistics New Zealand, 2019e; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). Accessibility to and experiences using FWAs to meet caregiving obligations largely depends on the quality of employees' relationships with their employer (Ho & Tekleab, 2016; Hornung, Rousseau, Glaser, Angerer, & Weigl, 2010; Kelly & Kalev, 2006; Rousseau, Ho, & Greenberg, 2006), and the extent their organisation has a *work-family culture* (Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999). However, men often perceive FWAs to meet caregiving obligations to be for women, as combining childcare and paid work continues to be framed as a women's issue (Cooklin et al., 2016; Rudman & Mescher, 2013). Furthermore, fathers frequently feel their paternal roles are largely ignored at work, rendering them "a ghost in the organisational machine" (Burnett, Gatrell, Cooper, & Sparrow, 2013, p. 632).

Although men, particularly fathers, may experience numerous advantages over women in the workplace (Correll, Benard, & Paik, 2007; Munsch, 2016), studies suggest that the opposite is true when it comes to temporarily exiting the workforce (Pedulla, 2016; Weisshaar, 2018) or using FWAs to meet caregiving commitments (Allen & Russel, 1999; Butler & Scattebo, 2004; Rudman & Mescher, 2013; Vandello, Hettinger, Bosson, & Siddiqi, 2013; Wayne & Cordeiro, 2003). Historically, career progression has been conceptualised as a linear series of steps related to position and salary that occur at semi-predictable times (Hall, Yip, & Doiron, 2018; O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005), with success measured by objective outcomes (Hall, 2002). However, various contemporary career theories postulate that career success can be subjectively determined, acknowledge individuals' self-direction in managing their careers and consider the influence of social forces in shaping these (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2002; Moen & Sweet, 2004; O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005).

The overwhelming majority of research at the work-family interface has focused on the experiences of women, thoroughly rendering men's experiences an understudy (Humberd et al., 2015; McLaughlin & Muldoon, 2014). This is particularly so in New Zealand, where most studies focusing on *caregiving fathers'* experiences are at least ten years old and are quantitative. Accordingly, there is a lack of relevant rich, detailed knowledge about New Zealand men's experiences in caregiving roles. However, as the number of men in caregiving roles appears to be steadily increasing (Ministry of Social Development, 2004; Statistics New Zealand, 2019c), such research is highly pertinent. New Zealand is a particularly interesting country in which to explore this topic, as its *very high* ranking on Porter, Stern and Green's (2017) social progress index, and overperformance on the measures of "Personal Rights, Personal Freedom and Choice, and Tolerance and Inclusion," suggest it may be particularly open and accepting of men in caregiving roles (p. 26). This thesis will contribute towards filling the current gap in the literature through the exploration of the experiences of men who have altered their working arrangements to care for their children on an ongoing basis. This qualitative study will be conducted through the analysis of interviews with eight employed caregiving fathers.

Gender Roles – A Brief Overview

Traditional gender roles.

From a historical perspective, the traditional gender roles of men as breadwinners and women as homemakers emerged in the West during the 19th and early 20th centuries (Coltrane, 1996). *Gender roles* are internalised behavioural expectations associated with individuals' biological sex, which are learned through socialisation, and include masculinity and femininity (Connell, 2005). While masculinity is historically associated with toughness, strength and aggression, femininity is synonymous with nurturance, compassion and emotionality (Connell, 2005; Hanlon, 2012).

Hegemonic masculinity is a prominent patriarchal theory developed by Connell (2005), which refers to the most honourable and desirable way to be a man, and is essentially “the opposite of femininity” (Connell, 2000, p. 31). Following Connell and Messerschmidt’s (2005) conceptualisation of hegemonic masculinity, multiple masculinity forms exist in a hierarchy, which is fluid, and historically and culturally located. Men can interact with notions of hegemonic masculinity in various ways, such as adopting it when it is desirable and distancing themselves from it when it is not (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). As hegemonic masculinity is normative rather than normal, few men enact it in its entirety, although it prescribes practices for the performance of masculinity in men’s daily lives (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Norms refer to implicit rules and standards that encourage people to behave in certain ways (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). They develop through social interactions, and sanctions for their violation, such as being unwanted, disliked and rejected, generally come from individuals’ social networks (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). As all men are compared against hegemonic masculinity, it legitimises the subordination and marginalisation of men not enacting hegemonic masculinity, in addition to women (Connell, 2000; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Throughout the West, hegemonic masculinity continues to be heavily intertwined with breadwinning, paid work and full-time employment (Cha & ThÉBaud, 2009; Connell, 1987; Davies & Frink, 2014). Accordingly, men’s masculine identities remain largely dependent on the assumption that they are full-time breadwinners (Callister, 2005a; Cha & ThÉBaud, 2009). Conversely, women are offered the homemaking role, requiring them to bear primary responsibility for housework, such as cooking and cleaning, in addition to the caring and rearing of children (Connell, 2005).

Traditional gender roles developed in response to the separation of work and home, which occurred as a result of the Market and Industrial Revolutions (Davies & Frink, 2014; Dermott, 2008). Previously, all family members worked together producing goods and

performing household labour (Davies & Frink, 2014; Gray, 1983). The Market Revolution (19th century) redefined work to comprise exclusively of paid tasks, meaning homemaking responsibilities were no longer considered legitimate work (Davies & Frink, 2014). The Industrial Revolution (late 18th to early 19th centuries) resulted in the physical separation of paid work and homemaking, as people shifted from home-based work to factories (Davies & Frink, 2014; Phillips, 1996). This encouraged the specialisation of men in breadwinning and women in homemaking roles (Dermott, 2008).

The separation between work and home in New Zealand lagged behind other Western countries, not occurring until between 1880 and 1920, as it was a relatively isolated, agriculturally-reliant country (Phillips, 1996). This happened even later for many Māori families, who tended to live in fairly remote, rural communities where all family members continued to work together for survival (Brookes, 2016). However, urbanisation, enhanced trading systems and the importation of British family ideals meant that New Zealand gradually followed suit (Phillips, 1996). As the home was now maternal territory, New Zealand men kept homemaking and family responsibilities at a distance (Phillips, 1996). Their breadwinning obligations were legally enshrined in the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Amendment Act (1936), which established base-rate wages for men “to maintain a wife and three children in a fair and reasonable standard of comfort” (p. 76).

Traditional gender roles have been perpetuated by the *ideal worker norm*, which emerged during the early 20th century in response to an influx of employees in white-collar occupations (Davies & Frink, 2014; Phillips, 1996). This norm refers to the pervasive belief that employees should be entirely devoted to their employer, not distracted by personal matters such as family obligations (Acker, 1990; Davies & Frink, 2014; Williams, 2001). The ideal worker is a masculine norm personified by a white, middle-class, professional man with a homemaking wife who supports his commitment to his employer by meeting his personal

needs and caring for his children (Munsch, 2016; Williams, 2001). Employees' devotion to their employer and long, uninterrupted hours in the workplace are rewarded through career progression (Davies & Frink, 2014; Williams, 2001). Accordingly, those who split their commitments, typically women, are clustered in jobs lower down the organisational hierarchy with poorer pay (Acker, 1990; Williams, 2001).

The breadwinning father and homemaking mother model has gradually eroded, having been replaced by the dual-earner model, in which both spouses earn an income, as the most common work and care arrangement in New Zealand (Perry, 2017). During World War Two (1939-1945), assumptions about traditional gender roles were challenged as droves of women entered the workforce (Brookes, 2016; Davies & Frink, 2014). Subsequently, female labour force participation rates have continued to climb, and are now almost on par with male rates (Statistics New Zealand, 2018a). Other factors that have contributed to the erosion of traditional gender roles include declining fertility, a diminishing gender pay gap, more women completing higher education, later childbearing, the marketisation of unpaid work, greater prevalence of egalitarian ideologies, growth in female-dominated industries and decline in male-dominated industries (Callister, 2005a; Dermott, 2008; Julian, 1999; Statistics New Zealand, 2018b, 2019a).

The inundation of women into the workforce has been met by a trickling of men into the home, with evidence suggesting primary caregiving fathers are a gradually increasing minority (Ministry of Social Development, 2004; Statistics New Zealand, 2019c). While the number of men and women in parental caregiving roles is not measured by Statistics New Zealand (2019c), their data shows that in 2019, 19,700 men not in the labour force listed caring for their children as their main activity, which has steadily increased from 14,200 in 2016. In comparison, the number of unemployed women listing caring for children as their main activity decreased from 133,500 to 127,300 during this period. Likewise, a report by

The University of Auckland (2016a) from the longitudinal study *Growing Up in New Zealand*, which explored diversity among fathers, found that the second most common reason dads with young children were unemployed was because they were SAHFs.

Historically, caregiving has been contradictory to hegemonic masculinity, as caregiving involves adopting feminine characteristics, such as nurturance, comfort and emotionality, and femininity is antithetical to hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2000; Hanlon, 2012; Miller, 2010). Hanlon (2012) outlined three reasons caregiving is not associated with traditional masculinity. These are that caregiving is considered feminine and thus requires men to enact a feminine identity, it is perceived as something they are not proficient in, and it necessitates their relinquishment of some of the power associated with hegemonic masculinity, which some may be unwilling to accept. As Connell (1987) postulates, it is deeply ingrained in society that caring for children “is not a fit occupation for men” (Connell, 1987, p. 106). Hence, caregiving fatherhood has traditionally entailed resisting hegemonic masculinity and occupying a subordinated status on the hierarchy of masculinities (Elliott, 2016; Hanlon, 2012). Men who resist hegemonic masculinity risk experiencing various psychological and social penalties, including shame, marginalisation and social exclusion (Elliott, 2016; Hanlon, 2012).

However, hegemonic masculinity represents a “currently accepted strategy,” which mutates according to different social settings (Connell, 2005, p. 11). Hence, new masculinity forms may be exalted over old ones in a fight for hegemony (Connell, 2005; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Although hegemonic masculinity has historically been incompatible with care, this is ripe for change, as it has failed to keep pace with societal shifts, such as the prevalence of dual-earner families and fathers’ desire for increased caregiving involvement (Hanlon, 2012; Lee & Owens, 2002; Perry, 2017; Phillips, 1996). Men in caregiving roles are in a unique position to develop new masculinity forms that incorporate caring characteristics,

such as nurturance and emotionality (Doucet, 2006). While the adoption of such masculinity forms involves rejecting hegemonic masculinity, they have the potential to become hegemonic (Hanlon, 2012).

Elliott (2016) developed *caring masculinities*, a practice-based model advanced as the primary path towards gender equality. Elliott (2016) argues that the main barriers to men engaging in care work are related to hegemonic masculinity, as they fear that by caregiving, they will undermine their legitimacy as men. However, in developing caring masculinities, men embrace caregiving characteristics, such as nurturance, affection, and emotionality, without the rejection of masculinity (Elliott, 2016; Hanlon, 2012). The costs of not enacting hegemonic masculinity reduce as the benefits associated with caring masculinities increase (Elliott, 2016). These benefits include better psychological and physical health, a longer life-span, and the development of close, intimate bonds with their children (Kimmel, 2010). Furthermore, caring masculinities conceptualise care work as gender neutral (Elliott, 2016), fostering work and care arrangements that suit families as opposed to those dictated by traditional gender roles. Caring masculinities are underpinned by three characteristics (Elliott, 2016). The first is the rejection of domination, which involves men being disloyal to traditional masculine norms, such as domination and violence and instead embracing equality (hooks, 2004; Kittay, 1999). The second characteristic proposes that through care work, men embrace relational, interdependent, emotional and affective qualities of care, necessitating the rejection of the masculine norm emotional stoicism (Elliott, 2016; hooks, 2004). Lastly, men recast traditional masculine values to be interdependent, relational and care-oriented (Elliott, 2016).

Supporting the caring masculinities model, a myriad of studies suggest that through care work, men develop more flexible definitions of masculinity, constructing masculine identities that incorporate nurturant and caring traits (Coltrane, 1996; Doucet, 2006; Hanlon,

2012; Lee & Lee, 2018; Rochlen et al., 2008). It has also been found that while in caregiving roles men experience personal changes, such as embracing relational and emotional aspects of care (Lee & Lee, 2018), and placing greater value on their relationships with their children and the quantity of time spent with them (Chesley, 2011). Various studies have also found evidence indicating that through care work men recast their understandings of the provider role (Lee & Lee, 2018; Solomon, 2014) and legitimate work (Chesley, 2011; Doucet, 2004; Hanlon, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018) to be more inclusive of caregiving tasks and obligations.

Rise of the involved father.

Primary caregiving fathers are an extension of involved fathering, which refers to fathers' increased participation in the caring and rearing of their children (Dermott, 2008; Solomon, 2014). Involved fathers are highly nurturant, present and emotionally involved in their children's daily lives (Dermott, 2008; Eerola, 2014; Wall & Arnold, 2007). Historically men's involvement in family responsibilities began to increase in the 1950s, and from the 1980s, fatherhood ideals gradually shifted from breadwinning towards involved fathering (Phillips, 1996; Wall & Arnold, 2007). At present, being an involved father is not just accepted but demanded as a fatherhood norm in the West (Eerola, 2014).

Managing norms about fatherhood for caregiving men are complex. Evidence suggests that even when caregiving fathers resist hegemonic masculinity by constructing caring masculinities, they must still negotiate with it, resulting in a complex interplay in their masculine identities between hegemonic masculinity and caring masculinities (Hunter, Riggs, & Augoustinos, 2017). Rather than completely adopting caring masculinities, SAHFs simultaneously reject and retain different elements of hegemonic masculinity (Rochlen et al., 2008). There is variation in the extent that men who develop caring masculinities are comfortable in the distinct masculinity forms they enact (Hanlon, 2012; Höfner, Schadler, & Richter, 2011; Rochlen et al., 2008; Solomon, 2014). For example, Austrian fathers on

parental leave who indicated a hegemonic understanding of masculinity perceived themselves as feminised inferior men, while those with marginalised fathering identities developed masculinities with caring elements, and often demonstrated pride in these, despite recognising they are not hegemonic (Höfner et al., 2011).

While men have historically been motivated to avoid caregiving, as this is in breach of masculine norms, the increased normativity of involved fathering means engaging in care work no longer entails violating gender norms to the same extent as previously (Eerola, 2014). Mirroring this trend, numerous New Zealand studies (Callister, 1994; Luketina et al., 2009; Shirley, 1999; The University of Auckland, 2016b) have found evidence suggesting that at present, fathers are significantly more involved in their children's daily lives than in previous generations. However, this involvement varies according to intersectional factors, such as social policies, culture, education level and social class (Eerola, 2014). Dermott (2008) and LaRossa (1988) suggest that involved fathering may be a phenomenon of the middle class and highly educated, meaning breadwinning is more associated with the working class.

Work-Life Balance

A decision of circumstance and choice.

Influential circumstantial factors in men's decisions to enter caregiving roles are often related to their spouses' careers (Chesley, 2011; Doucet, 2004; Doucet & Merla, 2007; Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018; McPherson, 2006; Rochlen et al., 2008; Schmidt, 2014). This includes higher spousal income (Chesley, 2011; Doucet, 2004; Doucet & Merla, 2007; Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018; McPherson, 2006; Rochlen et al., 2008; Schmidt, 2014). New Zealand's gender pay gap has reduced by 40% since 1998 to 9.3% in 2019 (Statistics New Zealand, 2019b). Accordingly, an increasing number of women

are in financially better positions than their spouses, making it economically sensible for them to continue working full-time when they have children (Callister & Galtry, 2011).

Another important factor relating to men's decisions to enter caregiving roles is their spouse having a higher career orientation than them (Doucet, 2004; Doucet & Merla, 2007; Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Rochlen, McKelley, & Whittaker, 2010; Rochlen et al., 2008; Schmidt, 2014). Caregiving fathers are particularly likely to hold values of gender equality (Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Zuo, 2004), meaning they may be more likely to enter a caregiving role to support their spouses' careers than men with more traditional values. Spousal support in domestic duties is critical in enabling mothers to actively partake in the workforce and successfully pursue careers (Chesley, 2011; Hanlon, 2012; Hochschild & Machung, 1990; McPherson, 2006). According to *maternal gatekeeping theory*, mothers with a high career orientation and desire for their spouse to enter a caregiving role may use a *pushing* gatekeeping style (Schoppe-Sullivan & Altenburger, 2019). This involves actively encouraging their spouse to become a caregiving father to relieve themselves of domestic responsibilities, so they can focus on pursuing their career (Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Schoppe-Sullivan & Altenburger, 2019).

Another common factor in why men become SAHFs is their and their spouses' reluctance to put their children in formal childcare (Doucet, 2004; Doucet & Merla, 2007; Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018; Rochlen et al., 2010; Rochlen et al., 2008). Grounded in *intensive parenting culture* is the assumption that parents bear responsibility for their children's outcomes and thus should invest considerable time and resources into their caring and rearing (Shirani, Henwood, & Coltart, 2012; Wall, 2005). Hays (1996) initially conceived the term *intensive mothering* to illustrate a gendered parenting model that encourages mothers to devote extensive time and resources to rearing their children. As fatherhood ideals have shifted towards involvement (Eerola, 2014), intensive mothering has

been reframed as the gender-neutral intensive parenting (Shirani et al., 2012). Intensive parenting culture appears to be highly prevalent in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c), particularly with very young children (McPherson, 2006; Schmidt, 2014). According to Statistics New Zealand (2018c), of the 592,600 children not in formal education in 2017, the primary reason for this for 71% of them was their parents preferred to care for them at home (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c).

Another reason for SAHFs and their spouses' reluctance to put their children in day-care is about cost (Doucet, 2004; Doucet & Merla, 2007; Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018). The high cost of formal childcare is likely a particularly pertinent factor in New Zealand parents' work and care decisions, as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2017b) found that New Zealand couples spend the second highest proportion of their incomes on childcare in the OECD. The government funds 20 hours per week of early childhood education for children aged between three and five, and offers subsidies for low and middle-income families (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c). However, the OECD (2017b) calculated that even after childcare funding and subsidies are factored in, dual-earner couples in New Zealand still spend an average of 40% of the second earner's income on childcare.

Factors related to men's own careers are also important in their decisions to enter caregiving roles (Chesley, 2011; Doucet, 2004; Doucet & Merla, 2007; Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018; McPherson, 2006; Rochlen et al., 2008; Schmidt, 2014). For many men it is about their location in transitional career phases for reasons such as job loss, illness, taking a career break, or training for an alternative career (Chesley, 2011; Doucet, 2004; Lee & Lee, 2018; McPherson, 2006; Rochlen et al., 2008; Schmidt, 2014). Men may be increasingly pushed into caregiving roles by heightened job instability and uncontrollable circumstances related to paid work, such as redundancy (Chesley, 2011; McPherson, 2006).

Conversely, Doucet (2004) and Doucet and Merla (2007) found that some men's decisions to become SAHFs were due to their prior achievement of their career aspirations meaning they were seeking fulfillment in other life areas, such as fatherhood. This suggests that some men may only feel comfortable entering caregiving roles after having successfully fulfilled the provider role (Hunter et al., 2017).

Other influential factors relating to men's careers include their dissatisfaction with their careers, and WFC as a result of inflexible, demanding jobs (Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018; Schmidt, 2014). This reflects how at present, individuals are much less prepared to sacrifice family commitments for their careers than in previous times (Hall, 2002). WFC is defined as "a form of inter-role conflict in which work and family are mutually exclusive in some respect" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). This aligns with the scarcity model, which proposes that human time and energy are restricted in quantity, necessitating work and family spheres to compete for finite resources (Casper, De Hauw, & Wayne, 2013). WFC is bi-directional, meaning an individual's participation in their work role can interfere with participation in their family role, and vice versa (Casper et al., 2013; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Various studies have found that WFC is related to numerous detrimental outcomes, such as poorer mental and physical health, reduced quality of life, less job satisfaction and commitment, and higher actual and intended turnover (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Nomaguchi, Milkie, & Bianchi, 2005).

WFC can be separated into three types: time-based conflict, strain-based conflict and behaviour-based conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Time-based conflict arises when individuals experience a lack of time in one role because of the time demands of another. Strain-based conflict occurs when they experience tension or stress in one role, which

psychologically distracts them from their other role. Behaviour-based conflict describes the occurrence of behaviours used in one role being inappropriately applied to another role.

Working longer hours is associated with higher levels of WFC (Cooklin et al., 2016). While mothers generally reduce their working hours upon parenthood, fathers' hours usually remain constant (Sin, Dasgupta, & Pacheo, 2018), and in some circumstances increase (Knoester & Eggebeen, 2006; Lundberg & Rose, 2000). Fathers of young children in New Zealand work an average of 47 hours per week (The University of Auckland, 2016b), while the national average is 34 (Statistics New Zealand, 2019c). Hence, it is unsurprising that a report by The University of Auckland (2016a) from the longitudinal study Growing Up in New Zealand suggested a high prevalence of both time-based and strain-based conflict among fathers of young children. Half of the fathers in their study reported missing out on important family obligations as a result of work commitments, while 36% said they did not have the time or energy to be the kind of father they wanted to be.

This reflects how men at present are experiencing conflicting fatherhood expectations to be both involved fathers and breadwinners (Burnett et al., 2011; Lee & Owens, 2002; Miller, 2010). Furthermore, as the ideal worker norm lingers, breadwinning generally requires men to be highly committed to their jobs and work long hours (Davies & Frink, 2014). However, the ideal worker norm is incompatible with involved fathering expectations, as while the ideal worker norm assumes men do not have caregiving responsibilities and can be entirely devoted to work, involved fathering expectations demand heavy caregiving involvement (Humberd et al., 2015; McLaughlin & Muldoon, 2014). Considering this, it is unsurprising that many studies of SAHFs have also found a desire for a more significant caregiving role to be an important factor in their decisions to enter the role (Chesley, 2011; Doucet, 2004; Doucet & Merla, 2007; Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018; Rochlen et al., 2010). Another career-related factor in this choice is already having flexible work

(Doucet, 2004; Doucet & Merla, 2007; Fischer & Anderson, 2012). In these studies, flexibility was related to remote working, as well as flexitime and part-time hours. This enabled participants to more effectively meet caregiving obligations without significantly altering their working arrangements than what their spouse would experience.

Work flexibility.

There is growing employee demand for FWAs (Mercer, Russell, & Arnold, 2014), which are benefits that enable employees a degree of autonomy over the place, hours and times they work, ideally fostering WLB (Mercer et al., 2014; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). FWAs can be classified as either *employer friendly* or *employee friendly* (Fleetwood, 2007). Employer friendly FWAs are those pursued by employers primarily for profit, with the enhancement of employee WLB a secondary factor (Fleetwood, 2007). These include overtime hours, stand-by and call-out arrangements, and involuntary temporary working (Fleetwood, 2007). Employee friendly FWAs are those predominantly sought by employees to improve their WLB (Fleetwood, 2007), and include flexitime, voluntary part-time hours, job sharing, compressed work weeks, and remote working (Fleetwood, 2007; Kelly & Kalev, 2006; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). Over half of New Zealand employees have flexitime arrangements, and 16% are paid to work from home (Statistics New Zealand, 2019e). Employee friendly FWA policies are associated with a myriad of benefits for employers, including increased employee retention, productivity, job commitment, recruitment opportunities, public image, and reduced employee turnover, absenteeism and stress (Varuhas, Fursman, & Jacobsen, 2007; Williams, 2001).

These FWAs can be seen as individuals prioritising WLB, which can be defined as “the individual perception that work and non-work activities are compatible and promote growth in accordance with an individual’s current life priorities” (Kalliath & Brough, 2008, p. 326). Underpinning this definition is the perception that WLB levels vary over time, as

important life events cause the salience of different demands to fluctuate. For example, the importance of individuals' non-work role likely increases when they are new parents.

Successful WLB is thought to result in positive development and growth within either or both domains, depending on the current salience of each role to the individual (Kalliath & Brough, 2008).

Studies suggest that while employer friendly FWAs restrict WLB, employee friendly arrangements promote it, enhancing employees' ability to effectively manage their work and familial commitments (Allen, 2001; Fleetwood, 2007; Hornung et al., 2008; Luketina et al., 2009; Statistics New Zealand, 2019e; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). In New Zealand, it was reported that 79% of employees with employee friendly FWAs were satisfied with their WLB compared with 71% of those without (Statistics New Zealand, 2019d).

Self-employment can be seen as a mechanism for achieving work flexibility and successful work-life balance. Self-employed people are almost three times more likely to report having high autonomy over their work than employees (Statistics New Zealand, 2019e). Lim (2019) found that U.S. mothers often use self-employment as a strategy to gain greater control over their work, so they can more effectively manage their domestic obligations. This proved successful, with self-employed mothers spending a further two hours each day with their children compared to their employee counterparts (Lim, 2019). However, using self-employment to manage caregiving responsibilities may be gendered, as Dawson, Henley and Latrielle's (2009) study found evidence suggesting that while women primarily enter self-employment to manage work and family obligations, men do not.

The enhancement of individuals' WLB and ability to meet caregiving commitments through FWAs or self-employment can be understood in relation to *work-family enrichment theory*, which is defined as "the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in another role" (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 73). *Instrumental enrichment* occurs

when performance in Role A is enhanced as a result of the direct transferral of resources from Role B (Casper et al., 2013). Flexibly working parents in Andrejic's (2017) New Zealand study experienced instrumental enrichment, as they discussed how their use of FWAs directly enhanced their ability to fulfil their caregiving obligations, and how skills transferred between their work and family roles.

'Gender neutral' legislation.

Gender neutral legislation and policies have also gone some way to support flexible caregiving arrangements for working parents. The Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Act (1980) initially entitled women to 26 weeks unpaid maternity leave and protected their employment had they been with the same employer for at least 18 months (as cited in Brookes, 2016). The Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act (1987) was later introduced, enabling fathers to take unpaid leave when their child was born. This Act has received numerous amendments, the latest being the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Amendment Act (2017), in which paid parental leave is being incrementally extended from 18 weeks to 22 in 2018, and to 26 in 2020. To receive this leave, employees must have been employed by the same employer for at least six months. Those who have been with the same employer for a minimum of 12 months are also entitled to 52 weeks unpaid leave, while those who have done so for six months may take up to 26 weeks.

While the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act (1987) is supposedly gender neutral, the mother is given decision-making power, as the onus is on her to transfer her leave entitlements to the father (Callister & Galtry, 2011). Hence, this policy is underpinned by the assumption that mothers are primary caregivers of infants (Callister & Galtry, 2011; Schmidt, 2014). Mothers' primary caregiving status is likely particularly strong for infants due to such parental leave entitlements, recovery from birth, breastfeeding commitments, and societal views privileging maternal care, which diminish as children age

(McPherson, 2006; Schmidt, 2014; Schoppe-Sullivan & Altenburger, 2019). Hence, it is unsurprising that in 2017 approximately 300 New Zealand fathers took paid parental leave in comparison to 30,000 mothers (Prichard, 2019, September 11). Indeed, it has consistently been found that even when parental leave policies are structured as gender neutral, they are almost always exclusively used by mothers (Ásdís, Guðný, & Ingólfur, 2013; Naz, 2010). The only context where a large amount of fathers have used parental leave is in the Nordic countries, where a *use it or lose it* period of paid leave is ringfenced for fathers (Ásdís et al., 2013; Naz, 2010).

The Employment Relations (Flexible Working Arrangements) Amendment Act (2007) also emerged in response to shifts in family dynamics, such as the increased prevalence of dual-earner couples, and a desire to encourage more mothers into the workforce (Ravenswood, 2008). This policy legally enshrines employees' right to request a variation in working hours, dates and locations, as well as employers' obligation to consider such requests and respond as soon as possible. Refusal of a request may be made on a limited range of business grounds. Changes made in part 6AA of the Employment Relations Amendment Act (2014) include that any employee can make requests as often as they like regardless of their caregiving obligations, and that employers have to respond to requests within one month.

Under the Employment Relations (Flexible Working Arrangements) Amendment Act (2007), the right to request flexibility is also gender neutral. However, even when family-friendly policies are depicted as gender neutral, men tend to perceive them to be for mothers (Burnett et al., 2013). Using FWAs to meet caregiving obligations is a feminine norm, as combining childcare and paid work continues to be framed as a women's issue (Cooklin et al., 2016; Rudman & Mescher, 2013). Women were found to be more likely to intend to work flexibly than men, despite both genders being equally likely to value WLB and FWAs

(Vandello et al., 2013). Furthermore, Holter (2007) found evidence suggesting that men who request FWAs to meet family obligations are frequently met with negative reactions. Hence, it is unsurprising that men often feel that their paternal roles are generally ignored by employers, contributing to their reluctance to use FWAs (Burnett et al., 2011; Burnett et al., 2013).

A New Zealand survey indicated that while between 21-40% of women in their organisation worked flexibly, less than 5% of men did (Hays, 2017). Furthermore, over twice as many New Zealand women work part-time than men (Statistics New Zealand, 2019c), suggesting the presence of a *flexibility gap*, as there appears to be large discrepancies in men and women's access to FWAs (Golden, 2008). However, while some studies have found evidence indicative of a flexibility gap favouring women (Burnett et al., 2011; Hays, 2017; Vandello et al., 2013), other research suggests that there is a flexibility gap favouring men in some circumstances (Golden, 2008; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). Men were found to be 3-5% more likely than women to access flexitime (Golden, 2008), and more likely to report accessibility to most FWAs (Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). It may be that men are more likely to negotiate FWAs because workplace negotiation is a masculine norm (Bowles, Babcock, & Lai, 2007).

Organisational Factors

Employment relationship in negotiation.

The quality of the employment relationship is a critical factor in employee access to FWAs (Ho & Tekleab, 2016; Hornung et al., 2010; Kelly & Kalev, 2006; Rousseau et al., 2006). Employers may be represented by various agents, such as managers, supervisors and human resources personnel (Rousseau et al., 2006). Kelly and Kalev (2006) found that when formal FWA policies are in place, employers grant requests in an ad-hoc fashion using formalised discretion. However, informal FWAs may be particularly prevalent in New

Zealand, as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are more likely to have informal FWAs (Dex & Scheibl, 2002) and recruitment strategies (Barber, Wesson, Roberson, & Taylor, 1999) than larger businesses, and 97% of New Zealand businesses are SMEs (Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment, 2017).

Informal FWAs generally arise from employees and employers negotiating flexibility *idiosyncratic deals* (i-deals) (Rousseau et al., 2006). These are individualised employment arrangements that vary from other employees and benefit both the employer and i-dealer (Rousseau et al., 2006). I-deals are classified as either *ex-ante* (occurring before employment) or *ex-post* (occurring after employment) (Rousseau et al., 2006). While *ex-ante* i-deals are more likely to occur in tight labour markets where prospective employees' skills are in high demand but short supply, *ex-post* i-deals often occur within high-quality employment relationships (Rousseau et al., 2006).

A purpose of i-deals is to offer a valuable, high-performing employee or prospective employee something not generally available to other employees in an attempt to attract, retain, develop or motivate them (Hornung et al., 2008; Rousseau, 2005). Employees are more likely to vocalise their needs and negotiate i-deals when they believe they are of high value to the organisation and have bargaining leverage (Rousseau, 2005). Hence, i-deals generally occur within the context of employment relationships with symmetrical power, as opposed to asymmetrical power, which has historically dominated employment relationships (Rousseau et al., 2006). Various studies have highlighted how FWAs are often used to reward valuable, high performing employees (Golden, 2008; Rousseau, 2005; Rousseau et al., 2006; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). For instance, Zodgekar and Fursman (2008) found that approximately two-thirds of New Zealand respondents agreed that employees who are more valuable or senior in organisations are more likely to be granted FWAs.

Employees' *human capital*, or their knowledge and skills in relation to organisational productivity, contributes to successful negotiations of i-deals (Becker, 1993; Coleman, 1988; Rousseau et al., 2006). While this human capital can enhance employees' power in i-deal negotiations through their personal characteristics, *social capital* can do so via the characteristics of their relationships with employers (Coleman, 1988; Ho & Tekleab, 2016; Uhl-Bien, Graen, & Scandura, 2000). Uhl-Bien et al. (2000) propose that *leader-member exchange* (LMX) is a form of social capital that exists within employment relationships. According to LMX theory, leaders' behaviour patterns vary between subordinates depending on the relationship quality (Cashman, Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1976; Rousseau et al., 2006). Subordinates either fall into *in-groups* in which they have high-LMX relationships, are deeply trusted, valued, and have great latitude to negotiate their interests, or *out-groups*, where they have low-LMX relationships, and the opposite is true (Ho & Tekleab, 2016; Landy & Conte, 2016). Andrejic (2017) found evidence that employees with high-LMX relationships are more likely to construct flexibility i-deals, as participants perceived employees who were considered more trustworthy and dependable by their employer to have greater access to FWAs.

Work-family cultures.

Work-family cultures are also highly influential in employees' decisions and experiences managing their work and care obligations (Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019; Thompson et al., 1999). Such cultures acknowledge employees' family roles, are supportive and accommodating of their caregiving obligations, and do not make the prioritisation of family above work antithetical with career progression (Allen, 2001; Lapierre et al., 2008; Thompson et al., 1999). Work-family cultures are a form of *organisational culture*, which refers to the embedded organisational structure, and is grounded in members' values, beliefs and assumptions (Denison, 1996).

Thompson et al. (1999) identified three dimensions of work-family cultures: managerial support for family needs and WLB, norms regarding organisational time demands, and beliefs about career outcomes from utilising family-friendly policies. Family-supportive organisational cultures are positively related to affective commitment, engagement, health, confidence in organisational leaders, organisational pride, successful flexibility i-deal negotiations, uptake of family-friendly policies, and negatively related to WFC and turnover intentions (Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019; Perrigino, Dunford, Troup, Boss, & Boss, 2019; Thompson et al., 1999). A raft of studies have also found evidence that family-supportive organisational cultures are critical in men's WLB decisions and experiences, suggesting that such cultures are necessary for family-friendly policies to be effective (Allen, 2001; Andrejic, 2017; Holter, 2007; Huffman et al., 2014; Lapierre et al., 2008; McLaughlin & Muldoon, 2014; McNaughton & O'Brien, 1999; Varuhas et al., 2007; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008).

The importance of managerial support for WLB and family needs in men's decisions and experiences managing their work and care obligations has received considerable empirical support (Allen, 2001; Andrejic, 2017; Holter, 2007; Humberd et al., 2015; Miller, 2010; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). Managers generally gatekeep access to FWAs regardless of whether there are formalised policies in place (Kelly & Kalev, 2006; Rousseau et al., 2006). Furthermore, they normally control employee workload allocation, and congruence between workload and FWAs is critical in achieving WLB (Andrejic, 2017). Employees' fears of receiving a negative reaction from their managers to their FWA requests is a significant barrier in their access (Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). However, this may be alleviated by managers role-modelling the use of FWAs, as opposed to merely verbalising their support (Huffman et al., 2014; Humberd et al., 2015; McPherson, 2006; Williams, 2001).

Studies suggest that managers who have been involved parents themselves may be particularly supportive of employees' WLB and family needs (Chesley, 2011; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). For instance, in Chesley's (2011) study, some of the men who had gone into recruiting positions after being SAHFs said that their caregiving roles led them to view parents more favourably when hiring. Experience caring for children is considered to enhance empathy for other parents, including employees (Chesley, 2011).

The extent to which flexibility is embedded in organisational norms is important in employees' WLB decisions and experiences (Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019; McNaughton & O'Brien, 1999; Thompson et al., 1999). Norms regarding FWAs determine the extent to which their use is acceptable, and in turn, whether employees request and use them (Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019). Organisational norms continue to frequently be built on the ideal worker norm, meaning employees often fear that using FWAs sends negative signals regarding their organisational commitment (Davies & Frink, 2014; Vandello et al., 2013).

Employees who request or use FWAs to meet caregiving obligations frequently receive discrimination dubbed *flexibility stigma* (Williams, 2001). Such employees are in breach of the ideal worker norm, as they are prioritising obligations outside of work and are thus not entirely devoted to their jobs (Davies & Frink, 2014; Munsch, 2016). Accordingly, they are at increased risk of discrimination in hiring, progression and termination (Acker, 1990; Williams, 2001). Sanctions for violating the ideal worker norm are likely stronger for men as this is a masculine norm (Vandello et al., 2013). Furthermore, men who use parental leave (Prichard, 2019, September 11) or FWAs to achieve WLB and meet family commitments (Rudman & Mescher, 2013; Vandello et al., 2013) may face additional penalties as a result of *femininity stigma*. This describes the phenomenon where men perceived to be acting femininely are considered to have less masculine traits, such as

assertiveness and courage, and more feminine traits, like uncertainty and weakness (Rudman & Mescher, 2013).

Men who alter their working arrangements to care for their children often receive social sanctions for breaching organisational norms in the form of subdued discrimination and degrading remarks from colleagues (Berdahl & Moon, 2013; Holter, 2007; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). For example, in Holter's (2007) study across six European countries, men were often mocked by colleagues when they engaged in caregiving or spent increased amounts of time at home. Likewise, Berdahl and Moon's (2013) study of Canadian employees found that caregiving fathers receive greater levels of mistreatment and harassment in the workplace than both fathers in traditional roles and childless men, suggesting the presence of *not man enough harassment* for engaging in care work, in which men are derogated for being perceived as too feminine.

Career consequences for negotiating flexibility i-deals or using employee friendly FWAs largely depend on whether these go against organisational norms and performance measurements (Rousseau et al., 2006; Thompson et al., 1999). For example, flexibility i-deals in an organisation with norms grounded in a *high face-time orientation* (physical presence at work) and the ideal worker norm are likely to come with particularly harsh career progression penalties (Rousseau, 2005; Shockley & Allen, 2010; Thompson et al., 1999; Williams, 2001). Hence, high-performing, valuable employees exist in a paradox in which they are more likely to negotiate flexibility i-deals, but this may subsequently hinder their performance ratings, and ultimately career advancement (Rousseau et al., 2006).

Career-Giving Trajectories

Flexible fathers and career progression.

There is a general consensus that women who exit the workforce for an extended period of time or alter their working arrangements to meet caregiving obligations are often

relegated to a *mummy track*, in which they are perceived to be less serious about their careers and receive fewer advancement opportunities (Sidle, 2011; Williams, 2001). Although men tend to remain highly committed to work after having children, evidence suggests that any who digress from this norm are frequently consigned to a comparable *daddy track*, in which they too are considered less committed to their careers and have fewer progression opportunities (Coltrane, 1996; Hanlon, 2012).

There is a strong perception in New Zealand that the use of FWAs stifles career advancement (Hays, 2017; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). One reason for this is that employers often perceive an incompatibility between FWAs and positions higher up organisational hierarchies, as flexibility is considered contradictory to effective performance in these roles (Andrejic, 2017; Hays, 2017; McPherson, 2006; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). Many flexibly working New Zealand parents in Andrejic's (2017) study discussed how their careers had suffered as a result of prioritising WLB, with some also reporting having moved to industries or work areas that were more supportive of WLB.

For men who give up work to care for children there may be serious consequences when trying to re-enter the workforce. Human capital theory proposes that these are the outcome of employers' perception that applicants' capital deteriorates when they are not in formal employment (Crittenden, 2001; Mincer & Ofek, 1982; Pedulla, 2016). Individuals are perceived to have diminished skills and abilities compared to those who are continuously employed (Crittenden, 2001; Mincer & Ofek, 1982; Weisshaar, 2018).

Weisshaar (2018) found that job applicants who opted out of the workforce to meet family obligations were significantly less likely to receive a call-back for a job than those unemployed for the same period of time as a result of job loss, or those continuously employed. This author found that men receive greater penalties than women for not having continuous full-time employment histories, and proposes that this is the outcome of breaches

to the masculine norm of the ideal worker. Weisshaar (2018) also suggests that applicants who opt out of the workforce receive harsher sanctions than those who have lost their jobs, because they are in greater breach of the ideal worker norm, as this signals that they prioritise family above work.

However, individuals engaged in care work during their unemployment spells may actually create human capital (Crittenden, 2001). Caregiving requires various specialised skills, such as flexibility in plans, time commitments, and extensive knowledge of daily events (Fischer & Tronto, 1990). Various studies have found that men often develop transferable skills through care work, such as patience, empathy, flexibility, nurturance, tolerance, communication, conflict resolution, managing challenging behaviours, and the ability to view situations from a different perspective (Brandth, 2012; Chesley, 2011; Coltrane, 1996; Doucet & Merla, 2007). Some men in Brandth's (2012) study of Norwegian fathers on parental leave conceptualised fathering as a new form of capital they could bring to the workplace, demonstrating how skills developed while caring for children can transfer to paid work. For example, developing new skills in areas such as empathy, communication and flexibility may improve managerial performance (Brandth, 2012). Despite these potential benefits, caregiving has historically been devalued by patriarchal capitalist society, which only considers paid work legitimate (Davies & Frink, 2014; Fischer & Tronto, 1990). The notion that caregiving responsibilities could be conceptualised by employers as an asset as opposed to a burden is noteworthy, considering the historical prevalence of the ideal worker norm (Brandth, 2012). Brandth (2012) argues that if employers can appreciate the capital men gain from caregiving, perhaps the ideal worker norm can be reconceptualised.

Career conceptualisations.

Traditional career models around paid work have been conceptualised in relation to vertical mobility within a single organisational hierarchy (Hall, 2002). Such models measure

success by objective outcomes (Hall, 2002), and consider career progression as a linear series of predictable events relating to position and salary, which occur at semi-predictable times (Hall et al., 2018; O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005). This understanding of careers is based on breadwinning men's career experiences, and largely ignores their family situations (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2010).

These traditional career models are now outdated as a result of societal shifts, such as the dual-earner norm and the increasing synonymy of organisational life with constant change (Hall et al., 2018; Moen, 2005). The volatile nature of careers at present is the outcome of trends such as globalisation, technological advances, and the gig economy, which is characterised by contingent temporary contracts and freelance work (Hall et al., 2018). Hence, traditional career trajectories and the association between seniority and job security are in decline (Hall et al., 2018; Moen, 2005). This requires individuals to exercise a higher degree of adaptability and self-direction in their careers, involving continuous learning, skill development and frequent identity changes (Hall, 2002; Hall et al., 2018).

Moen and Sweet (2004) argue that although outmoded cultural templates, such as traditional gender roles, are incompatible with modern realities, they continue to influence family dynamics through normative practices and policies. These author's *life course perspective* advocates for the consideration of shifting career and family dynamics across time, together and within contexts shaped by social forces. Moen and Sweet (2004) suggest that linear understandings of careers should shift to *flexible careers*, which acknowledge greater variability in career templates across genders, and conceptualise work schedules and life stages as extending beyond individuals' occupations into other aspects of their lives, such as their families. Accordingly, people may have *family careers*, progressing through their family lives as they would their *occupational careers* (Moen & Sweet, 2004).

Conclusion

Hitherto, the experiences of employed men in caregiving roles is an under-researched area. The majority of studies on caregiving fathers are quantitative, and qualitative studies have predominantly explored the experiences of unemployed men. Furthermore, most studies of men in caregiving roles are from abroad, and only look at a narrow range of aspects about their experiences, such as their masculinity negotiations, or workplace experiences, as opposed to considering their experiences more holistically. At present, organisational and national policies and practices at the work-family interface are primarily based on research about women's needs and experiences, although as has been highlighted, these differ from men's. With evidence suggesting that an increasing number of New Zealand men are in caregiving roles (Ministry of Social Development, 2004; Statistics New Zealand, 2019c), how to support them is a pertinent issue for employers and government bodies. Accordingly, more holistic, in-depth knowledge about the experiences of employed caregiving fathers in New Zealand would be constructive. The objective of this study is to explore the experiences of men who have altered their working arrangements to care for their children on an ongoing basis.

Methodology

Aims and Rationale

This research project aimed to explore the experiences of men who have altered their working arrangements to care for their children on an ongoing basis. This chapter outlines the processes taken to collect and analyse the data in relation to the research aim.

Research Approach

The methodology employed in this project was *interpretative phenomenological analysis* (IPA), which is a qualitative approach pioneered by Jonathan Smith (Smith, Larkin, & Flowers, 2009). The primary goal of IPA is to get to the heart of participants' lived experiences by deeply engaging with their reflections to discern how they make sense of their experiences in relation to the phenomena-of-interest (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006; Smith et al., 2009). This involves an in-depth analysis of a small number of accounts from people with insider knowledge on the phenomena-of-interest (Larkin et al., 2006). IPA was an appropriate approach for achieving the research aim, as it resulted in rich intimate knowledge about employed caregiving fathers' understandings of their experiences.

IPA is informed by the theoretical frameworks of phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography. Husserl (1982), one of the primary phenomenological philosophers, advocated for the suspension of predefined human classification systems, and reflexively going "back to the things themselves" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 12). This involves stepping out of our natural attitude into a phenomenological one, which entails exercising reflexivity and shifting our focus from objects in the world to our perceptions of those objects (Husserl, 1982). In IPA it is considered impossible for the researcher to access participants' first-hand accounts directly. However, through reflection, bracketing and intentionality they can get as close to them as possible (Larkin et al., 2006).

Heidegger, one of the founding hermeneutic philosophers, linked phenomenology with hermeneutics (theory of interpretation), as while phenomenology endeavours to find meaning in a text, such meaning may be hidden, requiring interpretation of the text (Moran, 2000). Interpretation is fundamental in IPA, as getting to the heart of participants' lived experiences is considered an interpretative process for both researcher and participant (Smith et al., 2009; Willig, 2013). The researcher is involved in a double hermeneutic, as they attempt to make sense of how participants are attempting to make sense of their lived experiences (Smith et al., 2009). Central to IPA is the hermeneutic circle, which describes the dynamic relationship between the parts and the whole (Smith et al., 2009). As understanding the whole requires consideration of its parts, and understanding each part requires consideration of the whole, analysis involves a circular process moving between the parts and the whole (Smith et al., 2009). This repetitive movement encourages the researcher to think about the data in different ways, fostering the construction of rich, intimate knowledge (Smith et al., 2009).

IPA is also informed by idiography, which refers to a commitment to understanding each participants' account in rich detail (Smith et al., 2009).

Participants

As IPA is concerned with quality rather than quantity, the project had a small sample of eight participants, facilitating an in-depth detailed analysis of each while keeping the research within manageable bounds (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Smith et al., 2009).

Having a reasonably homogenous purposive sample is critical with IPA (Willig, 2013).

Purposive sampling involves selecting participants according to criteria that ensures they are rich in the information required to address the research aim (Patton, 2015; Willig, 2013).

All participants met the criteria of having altered their working arrangements to meet their responsibilities as caregiving fathers for at least one year within the previous five years,

while living in New Zealand. A caregiving father was defined as a man with primary or joint parenting responsibilities for the caregiving and rearing of a child, or children, under the age of 18. This term was chosen over others, such as *primary caregiver* or *SAHF*, as these are based on traditional gender roles, which do not reflect the realities of the increasing number of couples who share caring and earning responsibilities (Eerola, 2014; Perry, 2017). The requirement for participants to have been in the role for at least one year helped to ensure that they had had enough time to process their experience in order to give the retrospective account IPA necessitates (Sandelowski, 1999). Participant details are outlined in Table 1.

Sampling

Participants were recruited through the researcher's personal contacts, social media platforms and snowball sampling. New Zealand news media articles about male primary caregivers were noted, capturing the names of potential participants. The researcher then attempted to contact these potential participants via social media platforms, such as Facebook and LinkedIn. This involved a brief message introducing themselves and the project, with the participant information sheet (see Appendix A) attached. Snowball sampling involves referrals being made by participants who know others that may be eligible to partake in the research, resulting in a series of chains (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). Snowball sampling is a suitable sampling method when the population-of-interest has low visibility and is difficult to identify (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). As men who have altered their working arrangements to care for their children remain a small and elusive minority, snowball sampling was an appropriate method for this project (Sin et al., 2018). Male primary caregivers often know each other (Lee & Lee, 2018), and recruitment by those who share insider status with potential participants helps to erode barriers that prevent people from participating in research (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). At the end of each interview the researcher asked participants whether they knew anyone else who may be suitable for the study. If they did,

Table 1

Participant Characteristics

Name	Age	Age (years) and sex of children	Years in caregiving father role	Work role(s) while caregiving father	Employment Type	Average hours paid work (weekly)	Location(s)	Spouse's work role	Spouse's average hours paid work (weekly)
Tom	45-49	Son, 7 Daughter, 6	2.5	Clinical engineering technician – current	Independent contractor	30	Whangarei	Clinical nurse specialist	43
				Builder's labourer - past	Independent contractor	25	Auckland		
Richard	40-44	Son, 9 Son, 7	5	Kitchen designer	Employee (working remotely) and self-employed	27.5 – current 12.5 - past	Whangarei	Biosecurity officer	40
Dave	40-44	Son, 2.5 Son, 1.5 Step son, 10	2	Aircraft engineer	Employee	24 – current 0 (parental leave) - past	Auckland	Business executive	40
Wallace	40-44	Son, 6 Son, 4	1.5	IT software developer	Self-employed (working remotely)	16.5	Tauranga	Teacher	40
Jason	45-49	Son, 5 Daughter, 5 Son, 15 (not in care) Son, 12 (not in care) Stepson, 18 (not in care) Stepdaughter, 21 (not in care)	4.5	Screenwriter – current	Self-employed (working remotely) Employee	>40	Tauranga	Auditor	>40
				Sales advocate and trainer - past	Employee	25			
				Auditor - past	Independent contractor	25			
				Website developer - past	Employee	35			
Mike	45-49	Daughter, 9 Son, 8 Son, 8	3	Quantity surveyor – current	Employee	39	Whangarei	Radiographer	40
				Architect designer - past	Independent contractor (working remotely)	25			

				Architect designer – past	Independent contractor	32			
Allen	35-39	Daughter, 7 Daughter, 5	3	Personal assistant - current	Employee	22.5	Wellington	Lawyer	40
				Sales representative - past	Employee	0 (parental leave)			
Terry	40-44	Son, 7	7	Nanny - current	Independent contractor	28	Wellington	Marketing director	45
				Freelance journalist, blogger, author – current	Self-employed (working remotely)	25			
				Media monitor - past	Employee	42.5 24			

the researcher requested that they gain consent from the potential participant(s) to pass on their contact details to them.

The use of purposive sampling meant that it was imperative to conduct a screening process with potential participants to ensure that they met the eligibility criteria (Smith et al., 2009). Once potential participants had read the participant information sheet (see Appendix A) and expressed that they were still interested in participating, a screening phone call or email was conducted to confirm their eligibility. The researcher also outlined essential logistical and ethical information about the project, answered any questions that they had, and arranged a data collection time and place.

Potential sampling limitation.

An anticipated sampling limitation was that participants would be difficult to recruit, as it can often be challenging to recruit men, particularly when the researcher is a woman, the topic is associated with femininity, or requires participants to discuss their personal lives and experiences (Butera, 2006; Lee & Renzetti, 1990). Caregiving continues to be associated with femininity, and women remain the vast majority of those who alter their working

arrangements to care for their children (Hanlon, 2012; Sin et al., 2018). Additionally, participants were requested to discuss their experiences in relation to the personal spheres of home and work with a woman researcher. However, the robust sampling strategy employed meant that this potential sampling limitation was not realised, as recruitment occurred relatively quickly and naturally. Participants demonstrated a strong motivation to participate in the project, emphasising that they valued the research and were pleased to contribute to it.

Data Collection

Data collection involved single face-to-face or Skype interviews, which lasted between 30 and 90 minutes. Seven of the interviews were conducted face-to-face, with one over Skype. Data collection places and times were negotiated and mutually agreed upon between the researcher and participants. While potential meeting locations included participants' homes, public places, or Massey university spaces, all participants opted to be interviewed in their homes. The participant interviewed through Skype was also at home during the interview. Interviews were recorded on the researcher's iPhone 6S using the app Otter Voice Notes (2019), which instantly transcribes audio recordings into written transcripts. Packets of biscuits were brought to face-to-face interviews to share with participants.

Data collection began with rapport-building and housekeeping. Rapport helps to establish trust and make participants feel comfortable, which is of paramount importance in IPA, as participants should feel comfortable enough to take the lead (Smith et al., 2009). Informed consent forms were then signed (see Appendix C).

Semi-structured interviews.

Semi-structured interviews were utilised, ensuring flexibility for the core topics necessary to address the research aim to be covered, while allowing for changes in questions and their sequencing, based on participant responses (Eatough & Smith, 2011; Smith et al.,

2009). As IPA interviews are participant-led, the interview schedule (see Appendix B) guided as opposed to dictated the interviews (Smith et al., 2009). This enabled the researcher to enter participants' life-worlds, as required by IPA (Willig, 2013). The interview schedule was developed around the themes of decision-making in relation to work and care, treatment in the workplace, factors affecting participants' ability to manage their work and caregiving obligations, careers, and understandings of gender roles and masculinity in relation to breadwinning and caregiving.

Diverging from the interview schedule and letting participants take the lead was a challenge for a novice researcher. However, after the first couple of interviews, the researcher grew more comfortable with this and referred to the interview schedule minimally, as many of the questions were answered in the natural flow of the conversation. The researcher used open-ended, non-directive questions to encourage participants to talk at great detail and length about their experiences (Smith et al., 2009; Willig, 2013). Additionally, probes explored interesting avenues brought up by participants in order to delve deeper into their experiences (Eatough & Smith, 2011; Patton, 2015). Probes included, "Do you have any examples?", "How did you feel?", and "How was that with your kids?" Semi-structured interviews facilitated the extraction of rich, detailed accounts of participants' experiences, which were necessary to address the research aim (Smith et al., 2009). When the interview finished, participants were asked whether they would like to be sent a summary of the project findings, and all of them expressed that they would. They were then thanked for their time.

Presence of children.

Interviewing participants in their homes assisted with the researcher's immersion into their lived experiences. Home is the primary place where participants cared for their children, and five of them had also worked from home during their time as caregiving fathers.

Participants' children were present throughout half of the interviews. The children's presence

gave the researcher rich insight into participants' experiences of managing their work and caregiving obligations. As the researcher has not had children, the insights gleaned from entering participants' homes were invaluable for this project. It assisted in the IPA goal of getting to the heart of participants' lived experiences (Smith et al., 2009).

Potential data collection limitation.

There was some concern that the researcher's non-parent status would mean differences between themselves and participants could inhibit the establishment of rapport with participants and their willingness to disclose their experiences in relation to the phenomena-of-interest. Steps taken to mitigate this included beginning each interview with an easy descriptive question about their children, in order to help them become comfortable speaking. Additionally, the researcher adjusted the language used in the interview to that preferred by participants, such as "stay-at-home-dad" instead of "caregiving father" and "mate" instead of "friend." Rapport appeared to build easily, and participants seemed comfortable speaking about their experiences. However, the potential effect that such differences between the researcher and participants had on the research process and findings cannot be discounted.

Analysis

Analysis in IPA is a dynamic, inductive and iterative process involving significant engagement with participants' transcripts (Eatough & Smith, 2011). It entails moving between the parts and the whole in a hermeneutic circle (Smith et al., 2009). As Smith et al. (2009) note, IPA principles and procedures are flexibly applied throughout analysis. These principles include a focus on the sense-making of participants and a commitment to seeing the world from their perspective. Procedures involve shifting between the shared and the particular, as well as the descriptive and interpretative. The outcome of analysis is an account of what the researcher believes the participant is thinking (Smith et al., 2009).

While IPA is a flexible approach, as a novice researcher, Smith et al.'s (2009) analysis guidelines were followed. Each account was analysed individually using hard copies of transcripts, which aligned with the idiographic commitment of IPA (Smith et al., 2009). Initially the researcher immersed themselves in each participants' transcript by repeatedly rereading them (Smith et al., 2009). The audio recording played during their first reading to assist with their immersion and remind them of the interview tone. Subsequently, they open-mindedly made unfocused notes about interesting aspects of participants' accounts in a margin to the right of the transcript (Smith et al., 2009; Willig, 2013). These notes were categorised as either descriptive, linguistic or conceptual using different coloured highlighters (Smith et al., 2009). Afterwards, the researcher worked through these comments and the transcript, noting down emergent themes in a margin to the left of the transcript. The hermeneutic circle was apparent here, as the researcher shifted from a focus on the smaller parts of each account to the whole account in order to enrich their understandings. Subsequently, the researcher chronologically ordered the themes in a list based on where in each participants' account they had arisen (Smith et al., 2009). The way the themes fit together was then mapped out. Afterwards, a table was constructed for each participant, which included the theme names, page numbers where they were located in the transcript, and a few keywords from the transcript (Smith et al., 2009).

When analysing each account, it was important for the researcher to attempt to bracket off any thoughts and reflections from the previous cases (Smith et al., 2009). This enabled them to take each case in its own terms, which aligned with the idiographic commitment of IPA (Smith et al., 2009). To assist with bracketing, the researcher kept a research journal throughout this project, in which they noted steps taken, thoughts and reflections. This helped them to let go of preconceptions and reflections from previous accounts, so that they could focus on each particular case.

After all of the cases were analysed idiographically, the researcher scanned across them for patterns (Smith et al., 2009). This involved constructing a table of the themes identified in each transcript and their accompanying page numbers. The researcher then visually discerned where connections between the themes were, creating clusters of broad themes based on their contents (Willig, 2013). These clusters of themes were subsequently interpreted in relation to the research aim (Smith et al., 2009). Afterwards, a summary table was constructed, which incorporated participant pseudonyms, themes, sub-themes, quotations, and their corresponding page numbers (Willig, 2013). Only themes that captured an aspect of participants' experiences in relation to the phenomena-of-interest were included here, with those that did not being excluded (Willig, 2013). From this, the researcher identified who discussed what themes and their frequency (Smith et al., 2009). The themes were then interpreted in relation to theories. The outcome of this analysis was a master table that captured the essence of the phenomena-of-interest (Willig, 2013). Parts of each participants' account came together to form a new whole in the hermeneutic circle (Smith et al., 2009).

Reflexivity.

As IPA requires the researcher to interpret participants' accounts, the researcher inevitably influences this interpretation, necessitating a reflexive attitude (Willig, 2013). Reflexivity involves the researcher acknowledging that they cannot be objective or exist outside of the subject matter during the research process, and are therefore implicated in data analysis and findings (Willig, 2013). This requires the researcher to both acknowledge their biases and consider how the research context and their responses to the data may influence the research process and findings (Willig, 2013). Reflexivity ensures that both the research process and the researcher's role are continuously reviewed and scrutinised, which helps to prevent the researcher from imposing meaning, and fosters validity (Willig, 2013).

The researcher's pre-existing relationship with the phenomena-of-interest was limited, as they were a 24-year-old woman who had not had children and was not close to any men who were primary caregivers. This meant that bracketing off their preconceptions was perhaps easier than it would be for a researcher with insider status. However, they still had various preconceptions and biases that would have inevitably influenced their interpretation of the data. These are based on their postgraduate industrial/organisational psychology studies, extensive research on the topic, and general life experiences. Therefore, it was critical that they exercised reflexivity throughout the research process. The research journal aforementioned assisted with this, as it encouraged them to continuously reflect on how their personal views and experiences may influence the research.

Validity.

Validity refers to the extent that the project achieves the research aims and explains the phenomena-of-interest (Willig, 2013). While there is wide consensus about how to determine validity in quantitative studies, with qualitative research this is more contentious (Landridge, 2007). The continuous consideration of alternative explanations for assumptions was undertaken by the researcher thoroughly immersing themselves in each account through the repeated rereading of transcripts during analysis to ensure that emerging themes were understood in an accurate context (Willig, 2013). Furthermore, discussions occurred between the researcher and their supervisor about emergent themes and their interpretations of the data. The aim of this was not to make a single definitive analysis, but to check that the analysis was both supported by the data and achieved systematically (Osborn & Smith, 1998). This helped to ensure that a robust, rigorous and transparent analysis process was conducted (Osborn & Smith, 1998). All interviews were conducted in participants' homes. According to Willig (2013), ecological validity occurs when qualitative data collection happens in real life settings that participants are familiar with. This is because participants are

likely to perceive such settings as safe spaces for them to share their experiences in relation to the phenomena-of-interest.

Ethical Considerations

As the study involved human participants, numerous ethical considerations were employed. Participant autonomy was a priority throughout. All participants were given an information sheet detailing appropriate information, including that the interview would be audio recorded, the uses of and process for managing data, how findings would be disseminated, and the importance of participant privacy and confidentiality (see Appendix A). The researcher verbally outlined the contents of the information sheet to ensure participant comprehension before obtaining informed consent. Participants were also given the option to receive a summary of the research findings.

Avoidance of harm was another important ethical consideration. As discrimination, isolation and identity issues are common experiences among men who are primary caregivers (Lee & Lee, 2018; Rochlen et al., 2010), data collection had the potential to raise experiences that could cause emotional distress. Measures taken to minimise these risks included carefully wording interview questions about sensitive topics, such as masculinity, as well as monitoring participant reactions, and adapting the interview accordingly. If the researcher thought it was necessary, participants were asked whether they would like to pause or terminate the interview and were reminded of the helplines on the information sheet (see Appendix A). Participants were also given sufficient time to talk through any issues raised during the interview. As all face-to-face interviews were conducted in participants homes, the researcher's safety was also a concern. To minimise this risk, the researcher informed a family member of the locations and times of each interview. They also text them when they were entering and leaving participants' homes.

Participants' privacy and confidentiality were prioritised in data management. The only people with access to the data were the researcher and their supervisor. Otter Voice Notes (2019), the audio recording and transcription service used, keeps data private and secure, not sharing it with anyone. Audio recording and transcription data were initially accessed on the researcher's password-protected Otter Voice Notes (2019) account. Subsequently, it was stored on the researcher's password-protected MacBook Air laptop and USB stick, that only they had access to. A locked cabinet at the researcher's home, which only they could access, was used to store the USB stick, signed informed consent forms, transcripts, and any other paper-form data created. During transcription, any identifying information was removed, and pseudonyms given. Once the research was complete, the signed informed consent forms were stored by the researcher's supervisor, and will remain so for five years, as per Massey University requirements. The researcher destroyed all other data.

The project was evaluated via peer review and deemed to be low risk. Therefore, it was not reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

Cultural Considerations

Participants from all cultural backgrounds, including Māori, were welcome to participate in this project. The researcher consulted with a Massey University cultural advisor to ensure that they treat people from different cultures with dignity and respect throughout, and thoroughly consider the potential impacts of the research on Māori. The cultural advisor recommended that the researcher form open, communicative relationships with participants (King, personal communication, April 8, 2019). This involves being warm and welcoming, as well as exercising reflexivity and cultural sensitivity with participants. This fosters a relationship where the researcher can be honest about their understandings of the participant's culture and ask for directions on what is culturally appropriate as required, and

the participant feels comfortable directing the researcher on this. However, all participants were either of New Zealand European or British cultural backgrounds, so they were relatively similar to the researcher's own New Zealand European cultural background. Therefore, the researcher was reasonably familiar with the cultural norms, customs and world views of all participants.

Findings

The objective of this research project was to explore the experiences of employed men who have altered their working arrangements to care for their children on an ongoing basis. This study produced two main themes: *The Caregiving Father* and *Work Factors*. These themes and their sub-themes can be observed in Table 2.

Table 2

Themes

Main Themes	Subordinate Themes
Theme 1: The Caregiving Father	Reasons for Role Gender Roles
Theme 2: Work Factors	Workplace Relationships and culture Career Consequences

Theme One: The Caregiving Father

New Zealand couples have traditionally favoured work and care arrangements in which the man was the primary breadwinner and the woman was the primary caregiver (Gray, 1983; Phillips, 1996). Previous factors such as rigid gender role expectations, a wide gender pay gap, and the segregation of women into jobs with poorer pay and progression opportunities than men, would have made such a decision seem financially and socially appropriate (Brookes, 2016; Davies & Frink, 2014; Davies & Jackson, 1993; Statistics New Zealand, 2019b). However, traditional gender roles are eroding (Callister, 2005a; Dermott, 2008; Julian, 1999), having been replaced by the dual-earner model, in which both partners earn an income, as the most common work and care arrangement in New Zealand (Perry,

2017). Against this backdrop of changing work and care arrangements, the first theme *The Caregiving Father* was about participants' experiences of entering and being situated in the role of the primary or joint caregiver of their child or children.

Sub-theme one: Reasons for Role.

Reasons for Role was a strong sub-theme found when participants discussed why they became caregiving fathers, which was a result of a range of interrelated factors associated with financial considerations, preferences, their careers and WLB. Moen and Sweet's (2004) life course perspective is a lens used to examine this sub-theme, as it involves the consideration of the dynamic relationship between work and family roles in tandem, within influential social forces across time.

Many participants reported that because of their spouse's exceptionally high income capacity she was better able to fulfil the primary breadwinning role than they would be. Participants felt fortunate that this afforded their families the luxury of being able to meet their financial obligations on 1.5 incomes, enabling them to lower their working hours to meet care obligations effectively. Therefore, the decision to reduce their working hours as opposed to their spouse's was a rational solution to managing their work and care commitments. For instance, Allen said, "*The reality was that her salary was more than mine, so looking at it from a financial perspective, it made a bit more sense for me to be at home.*"

Similarly, Terry mentioned, "*She earned more money more regularly than I did. So, the decision was really made around that.*"

The higher income capacities of spouses are an essential factor in why men become SAHFs in the U.S. (Chesley, 2011; Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018; Rochlen et al., 2008), Canada (Doucet, 2004), Belgium (Doucet & Merla, 2007), and New Zealand (McPherson, 2006; Schmidt, 2014). This mirrors findings in the present study, which also highlight the impact that the declining gender pay gap is having on work and care

arrangements. In New Zealand, the gender pay gap has declined by over 40% since 1998 to 9.3% in 2019 (Statistics New Zealand, 2019b). As such, an increasing number of women are in relatively better financial positions than their spouses, making it a rational cost-benefits choice to consider arrangements that enable the mother to continue working full-time (Callister & Galtry, 2011).

Participants often attributed their spouse's larger income capacity to their comparatively higher education level. For example, Jason said, "*Because she's got a doctorate, she can get a lot more money.*"

Likewise, Allen said, "*My wife had finished her legal studies... then we got to a point where she overtook me financially and it was a reason to to consider the situation.*"

Participants' experiences mirrored the association between the completion of higher education and increased earning potential (Becker, 1993; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2017a). Becker (1993) maintains that education is the most important human capital investment, significantly enhancing earnings. According to Statistics New Zealand (2019a), the proportion of women with tertiary education qualifications is now greater than men for most qualifications. Participants decided to become caregiving fathers in the context of social forces, such as eroding traditional gender role ideologies, a shrinking gender pay gap, and the increased presence of women in higher education (Callister, 2005a; Dermott, 2008; Julian, 1999; Moen & Sweet, 2004; Statistics New Zealand, 2019a, 2019b).

In addition to higher income earning, participants also reported that their spouses were more career-oriented than them, and this was an important consideration in decisions around becoming caregiving fathers. This corresponds with previous research showing that men having a more career-oriented spouse is a common factor in the decision to become SAHFs (Doucet, 2004; Doucet & Merla, 2007; Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Rochlen et al., 2010; Rochlen et al., 2008; Schmidt, 2014). Participants often discussed their spouse's career

orientation in terms of personality. Spouses were portrayed as ambitious and driven, gaining considerable fulfillment from their careers. Terry described how, “*Alice had a real desire to be out of the house and working*”

Allen also said, “*She needed to be able to go back to work.*”

Despite spouses’ high career orientation, the majority of these mothers had been the primary caregivers for infants and very young children. This *gateclosing behaviour* around caregiving of very small children may well be due to recovery from birth, breastfeeding commitments, parental leave entitlements, and strong societal views privileging maternal caregiving, especially for younger children (McPherson, 2006; Schmidt, 2014; Schoppe-Sullivan & Altenburger, 2019). However, spouses’ desire to return to the workforce and continue pursuing careers led them to change their gatekeeping style to pushing, as they actively encouraged participants into a caregiving role, so they could opt out of it (Schoppe-Sullivan & Altenburger, 2019). For instance, Jason said, “*Rose said, ‘Well look, I’ll get a job... and you look after the kids.’ So, that’s what we did.*”

Likewise, Dave’s ex-wife encouraged him to use part of her parental leave entitlement after previously suffering from post-natal depression. He said, “*She sort of said, ‘Oh well, you know, you could take some time off.’*”

While the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act (1987) enables mothers to transfer leave entitlements to their spouse, it privileges mothers as the primary leave recipients, legally enshrining their position as gatekeepers of paternal involvement (Callister & Galtry, 2011). This policy is likely influential in shaping care decisions, as the two participants who took parental leave only did so after their spouse suggested they could. Policies grounded in the outmoded model of the male breadwinner and female homemaker continue to influence work-family decisions, perpetuating traditional gender roles (Moen & Sweet, 2004). The majority of participants stated that they only considered entering a

caregiving role after it was brought up by their spouse. This suggests that maternal gatekeeping continues to be highly influential in caregiving decisions, and that men only contemplate entering a caregiving role if their spouse engages in *gateopening behaviour* (Schoppe-Sullivan & Altenburger, 2019).

Although spouses encouraged participants into a caregiving role so they could pursue their career, participants also wanted to support their spouse's career by entering this role. They saw this as a means to relieve her of domestic work that would otherwise shift her focus from her career. Allen said, *"She needed to be able to go back to work and not have that dual pressure quite the same. Yeah. It's not that I've, you know, relieved the load entirely, but that's kind of what I've seen my role as for the last few years is to take that on."*

Mike also stated, *"I was very, very happy to take on that role and let Esme pursue her career."*

In a similar vein, Terry said, *"I thought the most supportive thing I could be doing is allowing Alice to do whatever work she wants to do... If she wanted to be at home and have me work around the clock, I would do that. But she didn't want that. She wanted to work."*

Participants recognised that their support was critical in enabling their spouse to actively partake in the workforce and pursue her career after having children (Hanlon, 2012; Hochschild & Machung, 1990). Despite women's increased participation in the workforce, the unpaid labour of domestic duties continues to be primarily shouldered by women, in a phenomenon dubbed the *second shift* (Hanlon, 2012; Hochschild & Machung, 1990; Wall & Arnold, 2007). This reflects how the outdated cultural template of the breadwinning father and homemaking mother mismatch and contradict current realities, such as the prevalence of the dual-earner model (Moen & Sweet, 2004; Perry, 2017). Contrary to dominant trends, participants in the current study prioritised the woman's career as opposed to the man's to cope with such contradictions (Moen & Sweet, 2004). They recognised that by entering a

caregiving role they could relieve the load of the second shift on their spouse, enabling her to focus on her career, fostering her success in this role (Chesley, 2011). This study highlights the importance of considering partner influences when analysing WLB decisions and experiences (Moen & Sweet, 2004).

Participants also spoke of having a desire for the caregiving role. Although the decision for them to become caregiving fathers was primarily attributable to circumstantial factors such as their spouses' higher income and career-orientation, this desire meant that they were open to the role when the opportunity was presented. For instance, Richard said, *"It came down to circumstances. And then, but in saying that, you know, I feel like I was I feel like I was keen to do it."*

Similarly, Wallace mentioned, *"So, I wanted to do it anyway. And then it also became the sort of obvious solution."*

Additionally, Dave said, *"When it came up, I was like, 'Yeah, that would be really cool.' And especially cause I saw her struggling, whereas I thought I thought that'd be awesome being at home with the kids."*

The desire to become a caregiving father found both in this study and abroad (Chesley, 2011; Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018; Rochlen et al., 2008) indicates a growing trend in which fathering ideals have shifted from breadwinning towards involved fathering (Eerola, 2014). Involved fathers are more nurturant, present and involved in the daily lives and care of their children (Dermott, 2008; Eerola, 2014; Wall & Arnold, 2007). There was consensus among participants that it is increasingly acceptable and common for men to be more involved in their children's lives and adopt caregiving roles. For example, Dave mentioned, *"It's becoming more accepted and more common. And and I think it's gonna be more so the next generations coming through as well."*

Likewise, Richard said, *“I feel like it's getting easier for for the guys to do it all the time. It's becoming more and more normal. I imagine 20 years ago it would have been very strange.”*

Terry also said, *“If anything it's it's 50 or 60 percent men walking around with push chair or walking around with young kids.... and it just feels like it's grown.”*

There was a sense among participants that the increased normalisation of men in caregiving roles meant it was easier for men at present to be located in this role than it would have been for prior generations. Being a caregiving father would have previously entailed defying gender norms, which is associated with penalties, such as being unwanted, disliked and rejected (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). However, in the West, fatherhood norms have shifted to a point where involved fathering is mostly accepted and relatively normative (Eerola, 2014).

Reflecting this shift, participants often contrasted their fathers' minimal involvement with them as children with that of themselves and other fathers of young children. Tom said, *“My father didn't really do much with us as kids, and I said he was more more progressive than most, he was, just because he acknowledged our existence... but nothing like what I do with the kids.”*

Mike also mentioned, *“My dad worked. He was very insistent that my mum looked after the children and stayed at home... Today no, it's it's not an expectation, but ya know, father's wanna be there, ya know? So, there's something has gone on, it's a massive transition”*

As the caregiving father role is an extension of involved fathering, occupying this role is no longer a defiance of gender norms (Dermott, 2008; Solomon, 2014).

However, participants' views that male caregiving is becoming increasingly common and accepted may be influenced by their class. Involved fathering is seen more as a practice

of the middle classes, to which participants in this study belonged to, than for working class men for whom breadwinning ideals are more prevalent (Dermott, 2008; LaRossa, 1988).

Cooper (2002) argues that the middle class and beyond tend to hold more egalitarian views of gender roles. Several participants came from the same affluent suburb in which caregiving fatherhood was particularly common and normalised. Accordingly, participants' decisions to enter a caregiving role may have also been influenced by the communities they were embedded in (Moen & Sweet, 2004).

Some participants further reported that their longing to be involved fathers was incompatible with the demands of previously taxing and inflexible jobs. These rigid work patterns, often as an outcome of long working hours and extensive travel, meant that they felt that they were missing out on their children growing up, resulting in WFC. Some SAHFs in Lee and Lee's (2018) study also reported that WFC was a factor in their decision to enter the role. For many participants, time-based conflict occurred when the demands of their work role resulted in a lack of time for fathering. Allen reported, *"So, I'd literally leave before the kids are out of bed and come back after they were back in bed. So, I was here, but I'd never see them."*

Similarly, Tom said, *"I was doing 60, 70, 80 hours a week... Because I felt I was missing out when I was working long hours, I've I've wanted to go the other way and and and make up for some of that."*

Working longer hours is associated with heightened levels of work-life conflict (Cooklin et al., 2016). One New Zealand study found that fathers with young children worked an average of 47 hours per week (The University of Auckland, 2016a) (compared to the national average of 34 (Statistics New Zealand, 2019c)). Over half of these fathers reported wanting to be more involved in their children's lives, but nearly all felt that the

biggest barrier in achieving this was work commitments (The University of Auckland, 2016b).

Participants who reported experiencing time-based conflict also said that they had experienced strain-based conflict, which occurs when tension or stress from one role mentally distract a person from another role (Casper et al., 2013). Some participants reported being so exhausted from their jobs that they did not have enough energy to spend quality time with their children when they were home. For instance, Allen stated, *“I was struggling to find the balance. I was tryna come back and be a good dad, you know? And and it it's it's hard to have much left over in the tank when when you're doing that.”*

Others said that the stress of their jobs meant that they were unable to be present when at home. For example, Tom said, *“My work was getting so stressful that I was getting heart palpitations. I was coming home dreaming of work and waking up and worrying about work.”*

As the ideal worker norm persists, men's paternal roles are often disregarded at work, because they are erroneously presumed to be free from familial obligations (Burnett et al., 2013; Davies & Frink, 2014). However, the shift towards involved fathering ideals means that men are experiencing conflicting tensions between the ideal worker norm and involved fathering commitments (Humberd et al., 2015; McLaughlin & Muldoon, 2014). This study indicates that there is an irreconcilability between managing normative ideas of an ideal worker and a commitment to involved fathering. For some participants, this irreconcilability was so extreme that their quality of life, psychological and physical health suffered from attempts to juggle these oppositional demands, which are adverse outcomes associated with WFC (Allen et al., 2000; Eby et al., 2005; Nomaguchi et al., 2005). This suggests that difficulties fathers experience reconciling work and care necessitates a choice between their jobs or involved fathering. This highlights how mismatches between outdated cultural

templates, such as the ideal worker norm and current realities (i.e. involved fathering), are highly influential on work-family decisions (Moen & Sweet, 2004). These participants' decisions to leave their jobs partially as a result of WFC contributes to evidence associating WFC with increased turnover (Allen et al., 2000; Eby et al., 2005).

However, not all participants in this study became caregivers primarily due to higher incomes of their spouses, to support their spouses' careers, or because of an irreconcilability between involved fathering aspirations and the ideal worker norm. Conversely, the main reason two participants became caregiving fathers was because they were involuntarily pushed out of the workforce. When asked "*How did you kind of decide to look after the kids?*", Wallace replied "*I got made redundant, that helped.*"

Analogously, Jason left his job after becoming chronically ill. He reported, "*I was always ill, but I still had to pay for the child-care. So, I was like, this this is stupid, because I'm always falling over, I'm I'm always ill.*"

Rather than experiencing tension between the ideal worker norm and involved fathering commitments, these men were committed to fulfilling the ideal worker norm and would have continued to do so given a choice. Other studies have also found that some men would not have become SAHFs if they had not been pushed into it by employment-related factors, such as redundancy (Chesley, 2011; McPherson, 2006). The impact of these participants' involuntary withdrawal from the workforce on their experience in the role of a caregiving father was problematic, and this will be further discussed in the *Gender Roles* sub-theme.

For other participants who already had flexible jobs, it was more of a pragmatic decision to become a caregiving father, as it was easier for them to fit their work around caregiving obligations than for their spouse. These participants were able to continue working while in a caregiving role with minimal disruption to their working arrangements in

comparison to what their spouse would experience. Various studies from abroad have also found a prior location in a flexible role to be a factor in some men's decisions to become SAHFs (Doucet, 2004; Doucet & Merla, 2007; Fischer & Anderson, 2012). Prior to becoming a caregiving father, Richard worked from home for an organisation he had previously worked on-site for, after relocating to another city. He said, *"I was working remotely for my company still in Auckland. So, that seemed to be kind of working out."*

Terry was self-employed and said, *"I'd always done some freelancing... Because I had some income, I don't think there was really much of a conversation about it for us."*

Flexible jobs are associated with greater WLB, which assists people in effectively meeting their caregiving obligations (Statistics New Zealand, 2019e; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). All participants reported experiencing this benefit. Richard said, *"The flexibility's so good that it means I can do things, you know, with the kids and drop them off here, and and just work in the evening if I need to."*

Mike also said, *"Absolute full-time flexibility. And basically, like you say, I am not governed by hours set hours, and I think that's primary."*

Likewise, Dave mentioned, *"I turn up when I want and I leave when I want... It makes it pretty flexible."*

Participants who did not have the advantage of already being situated in flexible working roles soon transitioned into them once entering a caregiving role, seeking the WLB associated with this (Statistics New Zealand, 2019e; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). Some participants sought employee friendly FWAs, including part-time hours, flexitime and remote working (Fleetwood, 2007; Kelly & Kalev, 2006; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). For these participants, FWAs were primary in enabling them to meet their caregiving obligations. Like other research (Andrejic, 2017; Fleetwood, 2007; Luketina et al., 2009; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008), this study points to employee friendly FWAs being effective in promoting

WLB, enhancing employees' ability to manage their work in addition to their familial commitments. Participants experienced work-to-family instrumental enrichment, as the flexibility obtained in their work roles directly enabled them to spend more time in their family roles, enhancing their performance in this role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

Other participants in this study became self-employed in order to meet caregiving responsibilities and successfully achieve WLB. Self-employed participants reported that not only was flexible work paramount to meeting the demands of their caregiving roles, they also talked about gaining autonomy in their work roles. For instance, Wallace mentioned, *"It's still my choice. I can say, 'no, I can't do that.'"*

In a similar vein, Terry said, *"Because mine was fully freelance and my decision, and I could do it at whatever time I wanted."*

Self-employment is associated with greater work autonomy than employment by organisations (Statistics New Zealand, 2019e). Lim (2019) found evidence suggesting that mothers often successfully use self-employment as a strategy to gain greater control over their work to enable them to better manage their domestic obligations. Interestingly, Dawson, Henley and Latrielle's (2009) study found that while women primarily enter self-employment to balance work and family obligations, men do not. In contrast, participants in the current study used self-employment as a strategy to balance their work and family obligations. They discussed how they prioritised their caregiving roles, fitting work around this. This suggests that caregiving fathers may be unique from other men and more similar to women in the reasons they become self-employed.

However, although participants reported enhanced WLB, they also experienced adverse effects associated with flexible work, such as work-day and work-week extensions, as well as a sense of constantly juggling work and home commitments (Zodgekar &

Fursman, 2008). For example, Dave said, *“That's been pretty challenging juggling work and work and kids and everything.”*

Similarly, Terry mentioned, *“I've stayed up till three in the morning working... It's a constant juggle for everyone just just getting through the day.”*

Mike also said, *“It was tough, like you say. You look after the kids, then you work, then you look after the kids again, and then you work again, and it could be late till midnight, and then you're up in the morning and you're doing it again.”*

It is proposed that as men's involvement in caregiving has increased, they now conduct a second shift (Callister, 2005b; Dermott, 2008; Hochschild & Machung, 1990). A common metaphor echoed throughout participants' accounts was *juggling*, illustrating the constant pressure they felt to meet the obligations of both shifts. This pressure was particularly pronounced among participants who worked from home, as they were often required to multitask, thus performing each shift simultaneously (Lim, 2019). Additionally, many participants discussed working at night and through weekends to meet work and care obligations. Thus, their attempts to manage both commitments resulted in workday and workweek extensions, cutting into their sleep and leisure time.

Despite this, many participants still reported that overall they had successfully achieved WLB. Allen said, *“Things are going really well. We've got pretty good balance happening.”*

Mike also mentioned, *“So, we had a good balance. And it just turned out to be an absolute blessing in disguise me working from home.”*

In a similar vein, Terry said, *“You turn up and do your job and then you then you do your parenting, ya know? It it hasn't been, yeah, it hasn't been a problem either way.”*

Participants considered WLB from the perspective of their family units as opposed to themselves individually (Moen & Sweet, 2004). WLB depends on the extent that individuals

experience growth and development in the role or roles that are currently salient to them (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Participants prioritised their family roles over their work roles. In terms of biographical time, their life stage as new parents would have increased the salience of this role (Moen & Sweet, 2004). Thus, growth and development in their family role was particularly important in their perceptions of WLB (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Participants discussed having accomplished good WLB in relation to being able to effectively meet family obligations, such as cooking, cleaning and caregiving. Further, they mentioned that their work flexibility meant they were available when their children were sick, during school holidays, or for special events, such as assemblies and cross countries. Allen said, *“Me being able to to do those pickups and drop offs and come home and cook dinner and do the dishes and do the washing and that, it's just part of what our family needs.”*

Mike also mentioned, *“I would be on hand for any parental activities that go on at school, you know, any assemblies, they could always call me up, I would walk around if one of the children was sick.”*

Participants saw this as having contributed to their children's well-being and development, as well as their strong bonds with their children. For example, Mike said, *“Now it's just getting to that point where, you know, the children have benefited from it.”*

Similarly, Terry mentioned, *“I know that I've got a really, really special bond with Mason from spending so much time with him.”*

Most participants only mentioned growth and development in relation to their work roles when prompted, preferring to focus on their family roles. In line with Kalliath and Brough's (2008) WLB model, this suggests that participants' perceptions of having achieved good WLB were primarily related to their experience of growth and development in their family role, which was most salient to them.

In addition to factors related to participants and their spouses' careers, WLB, and a desire to enter the role, a reluctance to put their children in formal childcare was another important consideration in the decision for them to become caregiving fathers. A common reason for this disinclination was that participants and their spouses held strong values preferencing parental homecare over formal childcare, especially for young children. For example, Terry said, "*We didn't want to just farm our kid off to childcare straight away.*"

Likewise, Richard mentioned, "*We didn't really want to have to, to put them in day care at that young really.*"

These values were grounded in intensive parenting culture, as participants and their spouses believed that having one parent at home was beneficial to their children's outcomes (Lee, Macvarish, & Bristow, 2010; Shirani et al., 2012). The strength of participants' values varied from those who wished to keep their children out of all formal childcare to those who considered part-time day-care appropriate. Previous research highlights the strength of the pressure parents, typically mothers, felt to adhere to intensive parenting norms (Hays, 1996; Lee et al., 2010; Shirani et al., 2012). Interestingly, this study diverges from research suggesting that fathers do not experience the pressures of intensive parenting to the same extent mothers do (Hays, 1996; Shirani et al., 2012). On the contrary, participants appeared to believe that parental homecare was preferable to either the same or a greater extent than their spouse. For instance, Dave's ex-wife was unsupportive of his strong preference for parental homecare. He said, "*She's like, '...the kids are fine in day-care five days a week,' and I was like 'No'... So, even though I was having a lot of pressure and financially it crippled me, I wasn't gonna not go back part-time, ya know, because I knew my kids needed that.*"

Similarly, Tom inferred that he was primarily responsible for the decision to keep his daughter from attending after-school care, saying, "*I didn't really want to put her into long childcare programs.*"

Shifts in fathering ideals towards involvement mean that fathers may be more likely to be actively involved in childcare decisions (Eerola, 2014; Shirani et al., 2012). Resultantly, there could be increasing pressure to conform to intensive parenting norms, particularly if they are in a caregiving role. Intensive parenting culture may be particularly prevalent in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c), especially with younger children (McPherson, 2006; Schmidt, 2014). As previously mentioned, participants belonged to the middle class, which is associated with intensive parenting in addition to involved fathering values (Dermott, 2008; Klett-Davies, 2010; LaRossa, 1988). Accordingly, participants' decision to become caregiving fathers may have also been influenced by the high prevalence of intensive parenting culture in their communities (Moen & Sweet, 2004).

While the primary reason for participants' reluctance to use day-care was parental values, some also indicated that the cost involved was too high relative to their incomes. Therefore, although they would have still been reluctant to use childcare had the costs been lower, the expense meant altering their working arrangements to prevent their children from going into day-care was a rational cost-benefits choice. Jason said, *"All my money was going straight on childcare."*

In a similar vein, Mike mentioned, *"The amount of money we put in for pre-school and after-school for three children. When we worked it all out, I worked that if I started earlier and finished at two o'clock... financially we were 30 dollars better off a week."*

Richard also noted, *"You have to be earning really good money to actually make it worthwhile."*

This highlights how the high cost of childcare is likely to be particularly challenging for New Zealand families, as the OECD (2017b) found that New Zealand couples spend the second highest proportion of their incomes on childcare in the OECD. They calculated that

after childcare funding and subsidies are factored in, dual-earner couples spend an average of 40% of the second earner's income on childcare.

While government funding and subsidies for formal childcare are available, there is a sense that these are insufficient (McPherson, 2006). Furthermore, participants in this study may have been ineligible for these. For children aged between three and five, the government pays for 20 hours per week of early childhood education (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c). The ineligibility of parents with children under three suggests that this policy is grounded in values preferencing parental homecare over childcare for young children, further highlighting the pervasiveness of intensive parenting culture in New Zealand. The majority of participants became caregiving fathers when their children were under three, suggesting that this policy may have influenced this decision.

Additionally, government subsidies for childcare are available for low and middle-income families (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c). However, as previously mentioned, the majority of participants' spouses earned high incomes, which may have prevented access to these. This reflects a phenomenon in which many financially struggling middle-class families receive reduced benefits, because their incomes are above policy thresholds (Kearney, Harris, Jacome, & Parker, 2013). Accordingly, participants may have existed in limbo between earning too much to receive childcare subsidies, but not enough to make day-care financially viable.

In conclusion, participants in the current study became caregiving fathers as a result of an array of interrelated factors influenced by social forces. Such factors included financial considerations, such as their spouse having a higher income capacity, or day-care being too expensive, making the decision a rational cost-benefits choice. Additionally, preferences, such as their spouses' higher career orientation, the desire to both support their spouses' careers and for a larger caregiving role, as well as values regarding parental homecare, were

salient. Factors relating to participants' careers were also influential. For some participants, this related to WFC, leading them to leave their jobs, while others were involuntarily pushed out of the workforce. Some participants already had flexible jobs, making it easier for them to fit their work around their caregiving obligations than for their spouse. Participants without this benefit entered flexible jobs after becoming caregiving fathers. The flexibility in their jobs was primary in enabling participants to successfully accomplish WLB, although they experienced some negative effects associated with flexible work.

Sub-theme two: Gender Roles.

Once participants became caregiving fathers, they navigated their masculinity in relation to their new location in a non-traditional gender role. They experienced complexity and tension in their masculine identities, as well as mixed reactions from others to their roles.

Participants held strong values of gender equality. They believed that men and women should have equal responsibility for fulfilling breadwinning and caregiving roles, and considered themselves interchangeable from their spouse in these roles.

For example, Dave said, *“Gone are the days where it's the female's responsibility to bring up the kids, you know, I think it I think absolutely 50/50 equal split. There's no preference either way.”*

Analogously, Wallace said, *“If you can blend incomes, and therefore, and the flip-side of that is people blending family responsibilities, then it's better for everyone.”*

Tom also said, *“But other fathers who, you know, they never do any cooking or... they don't do much of the housework, and and quite often the, you know, the the female the the partner is is working full time now anyway. So, both are working, yet the mother gets to do all the work when they get home. It's like, well that doesn't seem fair.”*

The current study joins previous research in suggesting that caregiving fathers may be particularly likely to hold values of gender equality (Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Zuo, 2004). Participants saw themselves as holding above average egalitarian views compared with other fathers. Prior research has found that SAHFs held significantly less traditional gender role attitudes than men employed full-time (Fischer & Anderson, 2012). In a similar vein, men with less breadwinning status were more likely to hold values of gender equality than those with higher breadwinning status (Zuo, 2004). Caregiving fathers likely experience a reciprocal relationship between their gender role attitudes and caregiving experiences, in that they may already hold values of gender equality prior to becoming caregiving fathers,

encouraging them into the role (Fischer & Anderson, 2012). Subsequently, their experience of living out non-traditional gender roles likely strengthens these, further aligning their values with their experiences (Fischer & Anderson, 2012).

Through embodying values of equality, participants rejected traditional gender roles in which the man is the dominating head of the household, whose career is supported by a housewife devoted to meeting his personal needs and raising his children (Coltrane, 1996; Davies & Frink, 2014). This is in accordance with the first caring masculinities characteristic, which requires men to be disloyal to traditional masculine norms, such as domination, and instead embrace equality (Elliott, 2016; hooks, 2004; Kittay, 1999). While men are increasingly embracing equality as opposed to domination in their spousal relationships, studies suggest that this may be particularly prevalent among caregiving fathers (Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Julian, 1999; Lee & Lee, 2018; Zuo, 2004). Participants' egalitarian values were also consistent with the caring masculinities perspective that childcare is gender neutral (Elliott, 2016; Lee & Lee, 2018).

Caring masculinities involves the rejection of emotional stoicism (Elliott, 2016; hooks, 2004). Participants demonstrated emotionality, and expressed appreciation for having developed intimate, nurturing bonds with their children through their caregiving role, a benefit associated with men engaging in care work (Kimmel, 2010). Terry said, *"I know that I've got a really really special bond with Mason from spending so much time with him."*

Similarly, Richard mentioned, *"I just feel like I'm really part of the kids' life, you know. Yeah. Which I think you might not if didn't have the opportunity to to be at home with them."*

Allen also said, *"I feel really lucky to have done it... And the idea is that longer-term I'm going to have a great relationship with my daughters."*

Through care work men, can embrace relational, interdependent, emotional and affective qualities of care (Elliott, 2016). A common belief among participants was that their bonds with their children would be weaker had they not been caregiving fathers. Participants in both the present study and Chesley's (2011) study of SAHFs grew to place greater value on their relationships and the quantity of time spent with their children during their time in caregiving roles. Consequently, some participants in this study extended their time in this role. Dave said, *"When I was off work, that that's when I realised, hang on this this is far more important than work. You've got the rest of your life to work. What's going back to work part-time for a year or two?"*

Allen also mentioned, *"So, I think I probably initially thought to myself, I'll do it over this period, and that will be enough... For me, it did change my mind."*

This finding mirrors various other studies, which also found that when in caregiving roles men go through personal changes that enable them to embrace relational and emotional aspects of care (Chesley, 2011; Hanlon, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018).

Further personal changes experienced through participants' caregiving roles were related to their views regarding legitimate work and the provider role. Both the present study and various overseas research about SAHFs found evidence suggesting that being in a caregiving role increased participants' respect for care work (Chesley, 2011; Doucet, 2004; Hanlon, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018). For example, Richard said, *"I've had a lot more a lot more respect for people who stay at home and look after the kids."*

Similarly, Terry mentioned, *"It didn't take too long to to get to this, but the real job if you like, in inverted commas, was looking after the child."*

Likewise, Tom said, *"Childcare is much harder. There's no other job that's as hard looking after kids the whole time."*

Through care work, men recast traditional masculine values into care-oriented ones (Elliott, 2016). Care work has historically been devalued by patriarchal capitalist societies, which only view paid work as legitimate (Fischer & Tronto, 1990). However, caregiving requires various specialised skills, such as flexibility in plans, time commitment and extensive knowledge of daily events (Fischer & Tronto, 1990). Participants increasingly recognised this, reporting that through their time as caregiving fathers, they grew to place greater value on care work. Consequently, they may have recast their values regarding legitimate work to be more inclusive of care work, considering it interchangeable with paid work.

In addition to participants' understandings of legitimate work shifting during their time as caregiving fathers, their perceptions of the provider role may have also altered. While providing for one's family has historically been conceptualised in terms of financial provision (Coltrane, 1996), participants in the present study also viewed performing caregiving and domestic tasks as acts of provision. They considered their caregiving roles to be vital to their families' functioning and success. For instance, Allen said, "*Me being able to do those pickups and drop offs and come home and cook dinner and do the dishes and do the washing and that, it's just part of what our family needs.*"

Analogously, Mike viewed his caregiving role as essential in gaining security for his family in New Zealand. This enabled his wife, whose job their visa depended on, to pursue further study, so that her qualifications were recognised in New Zealand. He said, "*You're helping your partner into something here. So, there was there was a lot involved in that emotionally to make sure that if I do this that's going to secure us for the rest of our days. So, it was very much worth it.*"

Along with Solomon (2014) and Lee and Lee's (2018) research, this study suggests that caregiving fathers may reframe their understandings of the provider role to include

caregiving and domestic tasks. This conceptualisation aligned with participants' experiences in their caregiving roles, enabling them to continue to self-define with the traditionally masculine concept of providing for one's families, in a care-oriented way.

Thus, participants constructed masculine identities in accordance with Elliott's (2016) caring masculinities model. This aligns with Connell's understanding that there are multiple masculinity forms, which mutate according to social contexts (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), as participants adopted caregiving traits without the rejection of masculinity, despite caregiving historically being antithetical with masculinity (Hanlon, 2012; Miller, 2010). The trend in which involved fathering is becoming increasingly normative and accepted facilitated a context in which participants could construct masculinities that incorporate caregiving (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Eerola, 2014). The current study joins a raft of other studies from abroad (Coltrane, 1996; Doucet, 2006; Hanlon, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018; Rochlen et al., 2008) in suggesting that through care work men develop more flexible definitions of masculinity, and construct masculinities that incorporate nurturant and caring traits.

However, there was variation in the extent that participants in both this study and various other studies were comfortable in their masculine identities (Hanlon, 2012; Höfner et al., 2011; Rochlen et al., 2008; Solomon, 2014). Like Höfner et al.'s (2011) study of men on parental leave, this study found that this variability depended on the extent that participants adopted hegemonic views of fathering. Participants with less hegemonic perspectives were relatively comfortable in their caring masculinities and indicated that they had always found following traditional masculinity ideals unimportant and pointless. This was attributed to having free-spirited and independent personality traits, as well as strong maternal and family influences growing up. Allen said, *"My mum was a probably a big influence on me and, you*

know, like the my upbringing. So, it's probably a little little little less macho testosterone-based."

Analogously, Tom mentioned, *"There's something about the males in our family. We're a very matriarchal family... And all the women in the family are very strong. And all the guys are very sensitive, sensitive and and very willing to, or or or wanting to accommodate, and wanting to do everything."*

While they acknowledged that men were judged for not following traditional masculinity ideals, they also reported not caring what others thought of them. For instance, Allen said, *"Other people's opinion opinions of me are not my concern, you know? Like if they want to hold that view, that's fine."*

Terry also said, *"Maybe there's some judgments going on. But, you know, I don't care."*

These participants also said they were proud to role model alternative masculinities through caregiving. For example, Allen said, *"I want it to be the norm from now on that it's acceptable, you know, and I try to try and be an example around that and just carry on."*

Similarly, Terry was pleased to set an example of men caregiving for his son. He said, *"He started talking about how, you know, when he grew up he'd like to look after a baby. He thought that was a really cool thing to do. And I thought I thought that's that's great, you know?"*

However, participants who talked about a more hegemonic understanding of masculinity experienced greater challenges to their masculine identities. While other studies found that caregiving fathers often experience emasculation relating to both their caregiving and breadwinning roles (Chesley, 2011; Doucet, 2004, 2006; Höfner et al., 2011; Solomon, 2014), this study found that feelings of emasculation were primarily in relation to the loss of their breadwinning roles. Challenges to participants' masculinity ranged from a niggling

sense that they should financially contribute to their households, to feeling like they had let their families down by not fulfilling the provider role. For example, Mike said, *“Esme is supporting us all completely, as in paying the bills, the rent and all that and. And I suppose from a bloke's perspective, especially in my eyes, that was a that's that's a tough one. Especially when it was like a year. And you think, ‘Oh, finding it a little bit like I'm being carried now.’”*

Likewise, Richard described having had doubts over whether relinquishing his breadwinning role had been the right decision. He said, *“Am I letting letting everyone down by making, you know, making making my wife go to work while I work part-time and look after the kids and stay at home?”*

Jason's challenges were so extreme that he felt unable to express love to his wife by not fulfilling the provider role. He said, *“Although I show I love that my wife is loved I can't do it to the best of her understanding, because... her particular way is, ‘A man to go out and provide for the family if he loves and cares for them, and if you're not you don't love me.’”*

The feelings of loss around breadwinning may be more problematic among men who become caregiving fathers after being involuntarily pushed out of the workforce than those who willingly opt into the role (Chesley, 2011; Rochlen et al., 2010). As aforementioned in the *Reasons for Role* sub-theme, Wallace and Jason were the only two participants who became caregiving fathers after being unwillingly pushed out of the workforce, and struggled more than other participants with the loss of their breadwinning roles. Wallace said, *“There was a bit of time. There was a bit of getting my head straight too. So, the so the not not not with the leaving work going to parenting, but the fact that this job was a shambles from the get-go.”*

Similarly, Jason said, *“My self-esteem is so low... So, psychologically, you having twins, looking after at home... I've dealt with it very badly.”*

Wallace and Jason were unique from other participants in their reluctance to leave the workforce because of an especially strong desire to fulfil both the breadwinning role and ideal worker norm, which are associated with hegemonic masculinity (Cha & ThÉBaud, 2009; Davies & Frink, 2014). Accordingly, they may have held particularly hegemonic views of masculinity, which could have resulted in psychological penalties associated with not fulfilling the hegemonic masculinity ideal of the provider role (Cha & ThÉBaud, 2009; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Elliott, 2016; Hanlon, 2012; Höfner et al., 2011).

Wallace and Jason's inability to work for a period after becoming caregiving fathers may have contributed to their heightened challenges with the loss of their breadwinning roles. In contrast, the majority of other participants continued to engage in paid work upon entering the role, which is a source of traditional masculinity (Cha & ThÉBaud, 2009; Davies & Frink, 2014). Participants suggested that paid work buffered against feelings of loss around masculinity. For example, Terry and Wallace were entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurship is associated with hegemonic masculinity (Hechavarria & Ingram, 2016). Entrepreneurship is personified by a white middle-class man and is synonymous with the traditional masculine values of maximisation of wealth, aggression, competitiveness and risk-taking (Hechavarria & Ingram, 2016). Both participants implicated that their entrepreneurial identities were compensatory. Terry said, *"My most rewarding thing I'm doing as a a freelancer or as a creative person at the moment is a weekly podcast... In that sense, very easy decision to not worry about, you know, who the breadwinner is."*

Likewise, once back in the workforce, Wallace used paid work to defend his masculinity in social situations. He said, *"I always sort of describe myself as a stay-at-home-dad, but then I say, 'And I've got a few IT gigs happening as well.' And I think, so, like some of that is probably a defensive thing to say."*

Along with Hanlon (2012), this study suggests that paid work is important for caregiving fathers' masculine identities, as it enables them to self-define as earners in addition to carers.

Although some participants in both the current study and Höfner et al.'s (2011) study were relatively comfortable in their distinct masculinities, all were quick to point out that their non-traditional work and care arrangements were only temporary, and that they either had or were planning to increase their paid work to make a greater financial contribution to their households. This involved reverting back into the more traditional masculine role of either dual or primary breadwinner (Coltrane, 1996; Perry, 2017). While participants mainly attributed this to financial considerations and their children's growing independence, the majority also suggested that this was a defensive response to feelings of loss in terms of their breadwinning roles. For example, Mike said, *"I felt it important that I had to get a job to support, to contribute."*

Likewise, Richard said, *"It feels challenged in that way maybe, that before, you know, you felt like you're the husband that went off to work, and Isla's the wife who stayed at home... She's a bit more part-time, I'm a bit more full-time, I guess. Yeah and I guess that's what we're but kind of slow very slowly working towards."*

Caregiving fathers often remain closely connected to traditional masculinity sources, such as paid work, to compensate for challenges to their masculinity from not fulfilling the provider role (Chesley, 2011; Doucet, 2004; Hanlon, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2018).

Hunter et al. (2017) argue that even when caregiving fathers resist hegemonic masculinity by constructing caring masculinities, they must still negotiate with it, resulting in a complex interplay in their masculine identities between hegemonic masculinity and caring masculinities. This study joins Rochlen et al.'s (2008) study of U.S. SAHFs in supporting Hunter et al.'s (2017) argument, as rather than solely adopting caring masculinities,

participants simultaneously rejected and retained different elements of hegemonic masculinity. However, the tension in participants' masculine identities was influenced by the extent that they held hegemonic views of masculinity.

Challenges to participants' masculinities primarily relating to their breadwinning role as opposed to their caregiving role aligns with research suggesting that while hegemonic masculinity is broadening to become more inclusive of caregiving, it remains heavily intertwined with breadwinning (Cha & ThÉBaud, 2009; Eerola, 2014; Hunter et al., 2017). This contradicts earlier research, which suggests that middle-class men may not feel the same social and financial burden to provide for their families as the working class might (Solomon, 2014). The majority of participants felt immense pressure to financially contribute to their families, despite their relative financial security and middle-class status.

However, hegemonic masculinity can be seen as a presently accepted strategy, which mutates according to social and cultural contexts (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Hanlon (2012) argues that although hegemonic masculinity has traditionally been incompatible with caregiving, factors such as involved fathering ideals and the dual-earner norm mean this is ripe for change. This study suggests that that change is occurring, at least among the middle class. As previously mentioned, involved fathering norms and egalitarian values are particularly prevalent among the middle class, fostering a context in which caring masculinities may develop (Cooper, 2002; Dermott, 2008; LaRossa, 1988).

As further evidence that involved fathering is relatively normative and mostly accepted among the middle-class, along with other studies of middle-class caregiving fathers (Rochlen et al., 2008; Solomon, 2014), this study found that people's reactions to participants' caregiving roles were generally positive. Compliance with social norms is associated with acceptance and approval, which is what participants predominantly

experienced (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). For instance, when asked how people reacted to his caregiving role, Wallace replied *“Neutral to positive, yeah. People say, ‘oh cool’ type thing.”*

When asked the same question, Mike replied, *“I think it's been fabulous. I really do. Yep, absolutely. I think that's primarily because of the personality of the person that you are anyway. And that they see you as a decent person, so they know it's fine.”*

However, a common experience echoed among participants also included occasional degrading comments and jokes about their non-traditional gender roles. These digs primarily came from friends, colleagues and acquaintances. Some participants received remarks from people in generations older than them implying that caregiving is women's work. Jason referred to a conversation with a prospective employer. He said, *“I sorta said that I had kids, and that I had to be there at a certain time to to collect them from school... They sort of turned around went, ‘Well, I may as well hire a woman then.’”*

Likewise, Allen discussed how his colleagues sometimes made comments grounded in traditional gender role values. He said, *“They'd probably say that some of the things I'm doing, in their view, would be women's work... Oh, it's just like things like, ‘Oh, you better go and cook dinner.’”*

This illustrates how the extent that involved fathering is normative is socially and culturally located (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). As older generations are more likely to espouse values of traditional gender roles (Cha & ThÉBaud, 2009; Julian, 1999), the perception that caregiving is primarily the woman's responsibility may be particularly prevalent. This resulted in not man enough harassment, which involves derogation towards a person perceived to breach gender roles by being too feminine (Berdahl & Moon, 2013).

However, the vast majority of jokes and comments received by participants related to their FWAs. This suggests that although caregiving is relatively normative in most of their social settings, paternal use of FWAs are not. Participants who worked on-site and used

FWAs experienced comments from people in the workplace, inferring that they were lazy and not pulling their weight. For example, Tom said, “*Comments still get made, ‘Oh, yeah, here comes to part-timer.’ And they sort of go, ‘Leaving already?’ You know, I had that this afternoon. ‘That’s not a full day.’*”

The comments Dave received were less light-hearted, implying that his FWAs were detrimental to workplace productivity. He said, “*There’s there’s one or two people that are, you know, there’s some people that I’ve grated with that use it as a thing to go, ‘Oh Dave wasn’t here on Thursday. We couldn’t do this thing,’ that sort of stuff.*”

Two participants who worked remotely also received comments implying that because of this their work was not taken seriously and considered more of a hobby than a job. Richard said, “*You get the odd comment of people. I don’t think they take the working from home seriously, like a proper job... It’s like almost like a hobby.*”

In a similar vein, Mike spoke of comments received when he returned to on-site work after having previously worked from home. He said, “*I’ve had a few jokes... They’re like, ‘Oh, welcome to the real world!... What’s life like now that you’re working again?’ Because they think when you’re staying at home, but they don’t see the midnight finishes or the weekends.*”

The utilisation of FWAs to meet caregiving obligations violates the ideal worker norm, which expects men to be entirely devoted to their employers and not distracted by personal matters, such as family obligations (Davies & Frink, 2014; Williams, 2001). Meeting the normative expectations of the ideal worker necessitates the physical presence of employees in the workplace for between nine and 12 hours per day, as home and work spheres are separated (Davies & Frink, 2014; Williams, 2001). Therefore, FWAs utilised by participants, such as flexitime, part-time hours, and remote working breached this norm. Additionally, while the ideal worker is a masculine norm (Davies & Frink, 2014), use of

FWAs to meet caregiving obligations is a feminine norm, as combining childcare and paid work continues to be framed as an issue for women (Cooklin et al., 2016; Rudman & Mescher, 2013). Hence, men face greater backlash for using FWAs than women (Rudman & Mescher, 2013). Accordingly, the comments and jokes about participants' FWAs may be social penalties for their violation of gender norms (Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Rudman & Mescher, 2013).

However, some participants who worked remotely did not experience comments regarding their flexible jobs. Unlike other participants, these men were entrepreneurs, and their entrepreneurial identities may have compensated for their violation of gender norms and mitigated against social penalties associated with breaching gender norms (Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Hechavarria & Ingram, 2016). Comments made in the workplace and their implications in terms of participants' workplace relationships will be further discussed in the sub-theme *Workplace Relationships and Culture*.

To conclude, after entering caregiving roles, participants experienced complexity and tension in their masculine identities. While they developed caring masculinities, participants still experienced challenges to their masculinities to varying extents depending on the degree they held hegemonic views of masculinity. Interestingly, these challenges were primarily related to the loss of their breadwinning roles as opposed to their caregiving roles. This suggests that while caregiving may be becoming increasingly hegemonic, breadwinning ideals linger. Participants' paid work compensated for feelings of emasculation, as it enabled them to self-define as earners in addition to carers. While participants generally experienced positive reactions to their non-traditional roles, occasional degrading comments and jokes were a common occurrence. Although some of these implied that caregiving is women's work, the majority were related to their FWAs, indicating that while men caregiving is becoming increasingly normative, the ideal worker norm prevails.

Theme Two: Work Factors

Even when framed as gender neutral, FWAs to meet caregiving obligations continue to be perceived as for mothers by organisations and employees, meaning men's paternal roles are often disregarded at work (Burnett et al., 2011; Burnett et al., 2013). Additionally, while self-employment is a common strategy used by women to meet caregiving obligations, this is not the case for men (Dawson et al., 2009; Lim, 2019). This means that men who alter their working arrangements to meet caregiving commitments navigate a complex terrain typically traversed by women (Burnett et al., 2013; Fleetwood, 2007; Vandello et al., 2013). This has significant implications for their WLB decisions and experiences, in addition to their careers (Berdahl & Moon, 2013; Holter, 2007; Humberd et al., 2015; Rousseau, 2005; Rudman & Mescher, 2013). Within this context, the second main theme *Work Factors* played out when participants discussed work characteristics that influenced the management of their work and caregiving responsibilities, and their careers in relation to their caregiving roles. As participants' employers were predominantly represented by managers, the terms *employer* and *manager* will be used interchangeably throughout this theme.

Sub-theme three: Workplace Relationships and Culture.

As previously mentioned in the *Reasons for Role* sub-theme, job flexibility was primary in participants effectively meeting their work and caregiving obligations. However, as employees, participants' access to FWAs and their experiences using them largely depended on their workplace relationships and culture.

Most participants approached their managers about altering their working arrangements to meet their caregiving obligations. Allen and Dave, the two participants who took parental leave, were very aware that men requesting parental leave was not the norm. This resulted in apprehension about their managers' responses to their requests, despite knowing that they were legally obligated to grant them. Allen said, "*Before I took the very*

first amount of parental leave, I was nervous. I didn't know if it was the right thing for me to be doing... They did what they had to do legally."

Likewise, Dave said, *"I thought it'd be a big surprise to my work... I sort of asked him, but I knew by law they've gotta give you the time off."*

These participants' perceptions that parental leave was not the norm for men was reaffirmed by their manager's reactions to their requests. For example, Allen said, *"It was seen as an inconvenience. Like, it wasn't something that was supported."*

Comparatively, Dave said, *"My boss was quite surprised when I said I wanted to go on parental leave. For someone that normally has a lot to say, he was kind of speechless... So, yeah. But he he was good about it."*

Although eligible fathers are entitled to parental leave, this involves violating gender norms, as parental leave is almost always used by mothers (Prichard, 2019, September 11; Schmidt, 2014). Highlighting this, in New Zealand, mothers are significantly more likely to use parental paid parental leave than fathers (Prichard, 2019, September 11). The belief that parental leave is the mother's right and responsibility is a primary reason men do not utilise their parental leave entitlements (Hays, 2017). Allen and Dave's apprehension requesting parental leave reflects their fear of receiving a negative reaction for breaching gender norms.

In addition to requesting parental leave, Allen and Dave, along with other participants, negotiated flexibility i-deals with their employers to effectively meet their caregiving responsibilities (Rousseau, 2005). The majority of participants reported that their organisations did not have FWA policies in place, making i-deals a particularly important WLB coping strategy (Major, Lazun, & Jones, 2013). Similarly, Zodgekar and Fursman (2008) found that specific FWAs are not available to between 10 and 53% of New Zealand employees. Participants often attributed the unavailability of FWA policies to their organisation's small size. For example, Allen said, *"It's informal. They're a they're a*

relatively small business, I guess you'd say. And they're developing a lot of the H.R. side of their business... I think a lot of a lot of businesses probably don't have the policies in place at the moment"

Likewise, when asked whether there were any organisational policies that had helped Richard to meet his caregiving obligations, he replied, *"There's I mean I mean no real. It was it was it was a small company anyway. So, it basically like, you know, the boss and some a few employees."*

This reflects the high prevalence of SMEs in New Zealand (Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment, 2017), which are more likely to have informal than formal FWAs (Dex & Scheibl, 2002). The Employment Relations (Flexible Working Arrangements) Amendment Act (2007) legitimises employees' right to request flexibility i-deals from their employers and employers' obligation to consider them, encouraging negotiation. Unlike when requesting parental leave, participants were relatively comfortable approaching their managers about FWAs. For instance, Mike said, *"I had no problems with approaching them... If they have an understanding, then I believe there's there's no reason why they couldn't. Otherwise probably perceive themselves as a horrible person... It's like, 'I'm struggling here, but I can still do the job. So, why not just let me try it?'"*

In a similar vein Terry was upfront with his employer about his desire to maintain his position as team leader while working flexibly. He said, *"So, I did go to them with the, 'Hey, what are the chances of job sharing, being a manager, like being a team leader?'"*

Allen also mentioned, *"We sat down and talked. And, you know, I guess my experience had changed what I wanted. So, I just wanted to see what was available and what they'd be willing to do."*

Participants' confidence negotiating FWAs may be because initiating workplace negotiations is a masculine norm (Bowles et al., 2007), which could have been compensatory

for FWAs to meet caregiving obligations being a feminine norm (Rudman & Mescher, 2013). Participants' motivation to conform to gender norms likely encouraged both their confidence in negotiations as well as their assertive and demanding negotiation styles (Bowles et al., 2007; Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Comparatively, there was no negotiation involved in requesting parental leave, because as aforementioned, employers are legally obligated to grant these. Further, men requesting parental leave may be in greater breach of gender norms than with FWAs, because societal views privileging maternal caregiving are particularly strong for infants (McPherson, 2006; Schmidt, 2014). This study diverges from Zodgekar and Fursman's (2008) study of New Zealand families, which found that fears of negative employer reactions and requests being declined were significant barriers to employees negotiating flexibility i-deals. However, their study explored men and women's experiences, and as workplace negotiation violates feminine norms (Bowles et al., 2007), these barriers may be greater for women flexibility-seekers than men.

Participants who successfully constructed ex-post i-deals, which occur after employment, discussed how their status as valuable employees gave them leverage in negotiations, as their employers were willing to make concessions to retain them (Rousseau et al., 2006). This often related to a scarcity of participants' skills in the workplace. For example, Richard said, *"There's no one else doing the same job as me there, so if there was, maybe it would be different. But, cause I'm the only one doing it it's just it's just is how it is."*

Likewise, Dave mentioned, *"I said I wanted to come back part-time. And I, yeah, I guess it was a bit of an out of the ordinary thing. But the thing in my favour was while before I left engineers were leaving, and while I was gone, they were losing one to two engineers a a month. And there was only 20 in our hangar. So, it was getting pretty scarce. So, that three days a week was better than nothing. So, they were fine with that."*

Comparatively, two participants were varyingly unsuccessful in their ex-post i-deal negotiations. Unlike those who successfully negotiated i-deals on their terms, these participants did not mention having leverage as valuable employees. Furthermore, Terry's role was easily replaced, suggesting his position was relatively dispensable. Although Terry's employer rejected his request to maintain his managerial role while job sharing, they thoroughly considered it and offered an alternative arrangement. He was satisfied with the decision, saying, *"They went away and had had some chats about it. And then they called me into a meeting. And they delivered the news really well, and they had very good reasons for explaining... They were fully open to me staying there, but I would have to move down to just being a member of the team. And then they switched me to another team, so that I didn't have, you know, so that I didn't have people I used to tell what to do working alongside me."*

Conversely, Allen did not believe his manager had seriously considered his request and was dissatisfied with their response. He said, *"I did try talking to my boss about finding some flexibility from there. He wouldn't even entertain it. So, it was basically, 'You either come back full-time or there's no other role.'"*

The discrepancies between Allen and Terry's satisfaction with their respective employer's decisions, despite the rejection of their i-deal requests, can be understood through *organisational justice theory* (Greenberg, 1987). Terry considered the process to be procedurally just, as his employer had seriously considered the viability of his request, and when unable to fulfil it suggested an alternative option that would enable Terry to work flexibly, while taking precautionary steps to ensure the maintenance of his dignity (Greenberg & Folger, 1983). Furthermore, despite it not being on his preferred terms, Terry constructed an i-deal, making the decision reasonably high in terms of distributive justice (Greenberg, 1987; Landy & Conte, 2016). Terry's employer's decision was also interactionally just, as the reasons for the decision were explained in a respectful manner

(Bies & Moag, 1986). In contrast, Allen's experience was unjust, as his employer dismissed his request before considering it, gave him no alternative options or adequate explanations, and exercised minimal sensitivity in his interactions (Bies & Moag, 1986; Greenberg, 1987; Greenberg & Folger, 1983; Landy & Conte, 2016).

Most participants held multiple jobs during their time as caregiving fathers, reflecting a trend towards increased contingency in employment relationships (Hall et al., 2018; Landy & Conte, 2016). This involved negotiating ex-ante flexibility i-deals, which occur prior to employment (Rousseau et al., 2006). Like participants who successfully negotiated ex-post i-deals, the majority of those with ex-ante i-deals also had leverage, as their prospective employers were highly interested in hiring them. For instance, Mike's manager had been struggling to fill his position for three months before meeting Mike and considering him an ideal fit for the role. He said, *"I passed the interview and the test process, and they they knew they wanted me there and then, which was great. It was a bonus. So, I was able to come back to them, and they were open and amicable."*

While Tom was a contractor as opposed to an employee, he said, *"They were short-staffed. They'd lost a contractor that they had earlier in the year. 'Would I come and work for them as a contractor?'"*

This highlights how successful negotiation of ex-ante i-deals often occur in tight labour markets where skills are in high demand but short supply, as this increases prospective employees' bargaining power (Rousseau et al., 2006).

This study joins various other studies from New Zealand (Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008) and abroad (Golden, 2008; Hornung et al., 2008; Rousseau, 2005) in suggesting i-deals are often negotiated in the context of an employer offering a valuable employee or prospective employee something not generally available to other workers in the hope it will attract, retain, develop or motivate them. For example, Golden (2008) found

evidence suggesting that employers use FWAs as a tool to reward valuable employees more so than to support employees with family demands. Similarly, in Zodgekar and Fursman's (2008) study, approximately two-thirds of respondents agreed that employees who were more valuable or senior in organisations were more likely to be granted FWAs.

Employees with high human capital have greater power in i-deal negotiations, because it is increasingly recognised as vital in organisations' competitive positioning (Ho & Tekleab, 2016; Rousseau et al., 2006). Managers of participants requesting ex-post i-deals would have had knowledge of their human capital from previous performance and contributions to organisational effectiveness (Ho & Tekleab, 2016). Likewise, prospective managers of those who negotiated ex-ante i-deals would have had this information from sources such as resumes and referees. The majority of participants indicated that their high levels of human capital in a context of human capital scarcity encouraged them to request FWAs. This supports Rousseau's (2005) claim that employees are more likely to negotiate i-deals when they believe they are valued by their employers, as this fosters a more symmetrical employment relationship.

In addition to having high human capital, participants often described having strong personal relationships with their managers or prospective managers, which increased their leverage in FWA negotiations. Participants who negotiated ex-post i-deals had high-quality well-established relationships with their managers. For instance, when asked about his negotiation experience, Richard said, *"I'd been there for seven years, eight years, maybe, previously to. So, you know, it was a really well-established relationship."*

When asked the same question, Terry said, *"I was lucky. I knew my boss quite well... It was definitely a happy sort of coincidence that we were friends."*

A common pattern among participants with ex-ante i-deals was being approached by people in their social network offering jobs with flexibility i-deals. For example, Allen said,

“I've just had my one-year work anniversary for working for my my mate. So, I he he's been really good to me, because he basically said to me, ‘Look, whatever hours you'd like to do, we can make work for you.’”

Tom also said, *“My cousin who works at the hospital said... ‘Would I come and work for them as a contractor, double the money that he's on?... You can do whatever hours you want.’”*

This contradicts Rousseau et al.'s (2006) claim that ex-post i-deals usually occur within high-quality employment relationships, while ex-ante i-deals are more likely to be transactional. On the contrary, the majority of participants who constructed i-deals had strong relationships with their managers irrespective of the negotiation timing. This likely reflects the high prevalence of SMEs in New Zealand (Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment, 2017), which are particularly likely to use informal recruitment strategies, such as through personal networks or word-of-mouth (Barber et al., 1999).

Whether individual agreements can be considered legitimate i-deals may be undermined if the i-deal is based on friendship and lacks the characteristic of being mutually beneficial to both the employer and employee (Rousseau, 2005; Rousseau et al., 2006). Although, close employment relationships increase the likelihood of i-deal construction (Rousseau et al., 2006). The majority of participants' i-deals were based on their productive value to their managers, as well as their strong relationships with them. Accordingly, in addition to participants' human capital, their social capital also contributed to their leverage in negotiations (Coleman, 1988; Ho & Tekleab, 2016). Those who formed ex-ante i-deals through personal networks had such high social capital that they were approached by employers or employer delegates with exceedingly accommodating flexibility i-deals.

Uhl-Bien et al. (2000) propose that LMX is a form of social capital that exists between employers and employees, as it captures social exchange within employment

relationships (Cashman et al., 1976; Ho & Tekleab, 2016). Employees with high-LMX relationships are deeply trusted and have high latitude to negotiate their interests and needs, giving them in-group status (Cashman et al., 1976; Landy & Conte, 2016). Accordingly, their employers are more responsive to their flexibility needs than to their out-group counterparts (Ho & Tekleab, 2016). Along with Hornung et al. (2010) and Ho and Teklab (2016), this study indicates that employees with high-LMX relationships are more likely to successfully negotiate i-deals than those with low-LMX relationships. Similarly, Andrejic (2017) found evidence suggesting that New Zealand employees considered more trustworthy and dependable by their employers have greater access to FWAs.

In addition to the quality of participants' employment relationships, another important factor in their effective management of work and care obligations was their managers' support for employee WLB to meet family needs. The majority of participants reported that during their time as caregiving fathers, their managers were highly supportive of employee WLB. For example, Richard said, *"It's very very much his personality, I suppose, was the, and he was always very very good... He was very supportive of it."*

In a similar vein, Mike said, *"They understand family. They were they're family people themselves. And it's just lovely to be in a company where you actually realise they're genuine... Anytime my children have a problem, if there's a sickness or anything else they've got no problems with me upping in the car and off I go."*

Allen also mentioned, *"I think it it comes down almost to the individual boss you've got... They're really good with, you know, if there's cross countries, or they have a field trip or something. So, they're really flexible with that. So, like take a few hours off here, take a few hours off there. And it it just works."*

A strong pattern across participants' accounts was the attribution of their manager's level of support to whether they were involved fathers themselves. Tom had previously

contracted to a builder who was also a caregiving father. He said, *“I was working with the builder. He had young kids a very similar age and was doing a similar thing, working his hours around the kids.... So, because he was doing that he understood.”*

Likewise, Terry described noticing his manager’s increased support for employees’ caregiving obligations after taking on parental responsibilities. He said, *“He basically overnight became, ya know, involved with someone who had a kid, and he basically owned the idea that he was a stepdad, which was great. And and he became even more understanding... And I just noticed, I just totally clocked this extra, you know, he was never bad, he was really good, I thought, but I did notice he sudden, again, you know, he suddenly he could speak to it himself.”*

Conversely, Allen’s ex-manager did not have young children and was unsupportive of employees’ caregiving commitments. He said, *“The particular boss I had then, he he was older and had had kids, but I think he'd forgotten what small kids were like... And there wasn't really that support, you know, like it was more, ‘You just need to get the job done. No excuses.’”*

Both this study and Zodgekar and Fursman’s (2008) New Zealand study found evidence suggesting employees perceive managers with children to be more supportive of FWAs than those without. As aforementioned in the *Gender Roles* sub-theme, while in a caregiving role participants recast their values regarding legitimate work to be more inclusive of care work, as they increasingly recognised the extensive skills, effort and commitment involved (Elliott, 2016; Fischer & Tronto, 1990). Participants believed their managers experienced a similar shift during their time as involved fathers, enhancing their support of employee use of FWAs to meet caregiving responsibilities. For example, in the extract above, Terry refers to how like himself, his manager developed an increased appreciation for care work once in an active paternal role. However, as Allen’s extract illustrates, participants

thought managers' empathy for working parents could diminish once less involved in caregiving. This study joins Chesley (2011) and Zodgekar and Fursman's (2008) in suggesting that active caregiving may cause men in managerial roles to view parents more favourably.

Along with various studies from New Zealand (Andrejic, 2017; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008) and abroad (Allen, 2001; Holter, 2007; Humberd et al., 2015; Miller, 2010), this study indicates that managerial support is critical in men's reconciliation of work and care commitments. As managers often act on behalf of employers, they gatekeep FWAs (Rousseau et al., 2006). This study joins Thompson et al. (1999) and Zodgekar and Fursman (2008) in suggesting that the extent managers encourage employees' WLB and use of FWAs to meet caregiving obligations is highly influential on their WLB decisions and experiences. The importance of backing from managers may be heightened for participants in this study by the prevalence of ad-hoc FWAs, which are less sustainable than formal FWA policies (Humberd et al., 2015). Managerial support for WLB to meet family commitments is a characteristic of supportive work-family organisational cultures (Thompson et al., 1999).

In addition to managers, organisational norms concerning FWAs were also salient in participants' WLB choices and experiences. For example, Tom said, *"They're all very flexible. They they they come and go, as long as they've done their eight hours in the day, nobody cares when they do it... So, most of them who work there, or at least 50% have kids that they work there. So, the work culture in that team is really good, and they're very supportive of of whatever hours work in, you know."*

In a similar vein, Dave described how when his organisation transitioned to shift work, the increased normativity of flexible hours was beneficial. He said, *"We used to just be Monday to Friday. But before I went away on parental leave, they'd just changed it to, optional, to do four-on four-off 11-hour days... That was quite a shift, because suddenly*

there's all these people there, so it's less noticeable if you're only there three days a week.... And so, cause we're paid by the hour, and that shift pattern, it means they're pretty flexible."

Mike also said, *"The company I work with now are purely family-orientated... I've got a a child-priority company that I work now."*

Family-supportive organisational norms are another characteristic of work-family organisational cultures (Thompson et al., 1999). Norms surrounding work flexibility influence both employees' decisions to request FWAs and colleague responses to their use (Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019; Thompson et al., 1999). As many organisational norms continue to be built on the ideal worker norm and a high face-time orientation, flexible working employees are often penalised for violating these (Davies & Frink, 2014; Shockley & Allen, 2010; Vandello et al., 2013). For instance, Andrejic (2017) found that in organisational cultures with long working hour and presenteeism norms, flexibly working parents often experience strain and feel perceived as uncommitted and underperforming. However, most participants in the present study indicated that such norms were relatively weak in their organisations, as prioritising family over work was normalised. Tom and Dave's extracts highlight how flexibility policies help to legitimise the use of FWAs, contributing to the embedment flexibility in organisational cultures (Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019; Humberd et al., 2015). As further evidence of the presence of family-supportive organisational norms, participants reported that their colleagues were generally supportive of their FWAs. For instance, Jason said, *"They've all been supportive."*

Likewise, Richard said, *"So colleagues, they seem fine with it. But, as I say, it's a small, small thing. So, we have a really good relationship."*

Dave also said, *"Most of them are pretty good."*

However, as previously mentioned in the *Gender Roles* sub-theme, the majority of participants who worked on-site received occasional degrading comments and jokes from

some colleagues, predominantly relating to their FWAs. Most of these participants described such comments and jokes as light-hearted and inoffensive. They generally reacted by ignoring them, laughing them off, or reciprocating with their own belittling remarks towards the comment-makers. For example, Tom said, *“Comments still get made, ‘Oh, yeah, here comes the part-timer.’ And it’s, I still get that even now, and I laugh it off. It doesn’t worry me. And they sort of go, ‘Leaving already?’ You know, I had that this afternoon. ‘That’s not a full day.’ And I’m sort of like, ‘Yep, us part-timers.’”*

Similarly, Allen said, *“There’s a little bit of I’d probably say like gentle ribbing, I guess. But it’s water off a duck’s back to me... It’s their just their way of bonding, their way of having fun, you know? And I guess I understand where it’s coming from, so it doesn’t worry me too much. Like, yeah, I just find something to give give them a serve over.”*

Comparatively, Dave perceived the comments he received as malicious, stemming from jealousy as opposed to light-hearted banter. He said, *“So-and-so was like, ‘Oh well this isn’t really working, is it?’ ... Some of that was pretty frustrating. But but, I expected there would be a bit of, yeah, coming back working part-time, there’d be a bit of, I don’t know if resentment’s the right word, but jealousy, you know? Everyone would love to work three days a week.”*

This study joins various other studies (Berdahl & Moon, 2013; Holter, 2007; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008) in finding that men who alter their working arrangements to care for their children often receive subdued discrimination and degrading remarks from colleagues. For example, Holter’s (2007) study of men’s work and care reconciliation found that men are often mocked by their colleagues when they spend increased amounts of time at home to meet caregiving commitments. Similarly, Berdahl and Moon’s (2013) study of middle class employees found that caregiving fathers received higher levels of maltreatment and harassment than both traditional fathers and childless men. Mistreatment in the

workplace is often a punishment for violating norms, suggesting that the organisational norms of participants who worked on-site were somewhat embedded in the ideal worker norm and a high face-time orientation, meaning they were not entirely family-friendly (Berdahl & Moon, 2013; Davies & Frink, 2014; Shockley & Allen, 2010; Vandello et al., 2013).

However, another reason for this mistreatment could be that the i-deals participants constructed fostered perceptions of inequality, and feelings of envy and resentment among colleagues, which are common challenges with i-deals (Rousseau, 2005). This is highlighted in Dave's extract above, as he perceived his mistreatment to stem from the belief that he was getting preferential treatment. Envy among colleagues is mitigated by factors such as minimal comparability, interdependence and interactions between the i-dealer and colleagues, as well as variation among employment agreements (Hornung et al., 2008; Rousseau, 2005). This may explain why participants who worked remotely did not experience mistreatment from colleagues, while those who worked onsite in similar, interdependent roles to their colleagues did.

Most participants' tendency to dismiss the degrading comments and jokes as playful banter, and to often respond by ignoring, joining in or reciprocating these, suggests that such digs may be normative in their organisational cultures. The majority of participants received demeaning remarks from men within male-dominated organisations. Hence, hegemonic masculinity norms, such as aggression, toughness and stoicism were likely particularly prevalent in their organisational cultures (Connell, 2005; Hanlon, 2012; hooks, 2004). Accordingly, not man enough harassment among colleagues for the failure to live up to hegemonic masculine ideals may have been readily used by men in participants' organisations to assert their masculine dominance (Berdahl & Moon, 2013; Connell, 2005; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). As few men enact hegemonic masculinity in its entirety

(Connell, 2005; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), it would have been relatively easy for participants to find something to reciprocate the degrading comments and jokes about. The masculine norm of stoicism likely explains participants' stoic rather than emotional responses to the digs (Cialdini & Trost, 1998; hooks, 2004).

In addition to organisational norms, participants also discussed their beliefs regarding the impact of FWAs on career advancement in their organisations. There was a sense among many participants that their use of FWAs resulted in stalled progression in their organisations. For instance, Allen said, *"There's probably not development opportunities right now. Now I just need to do what I basically as required every every day."*

Likewise, Richard said, *"It's definitely meant that during the past past five years I've kind of just, I've been doing this thing, and that's what I've been doing. And that's, yeah, I've not even thought of doing anything anything else."*

However, contradicting this, many participants also described either having advanced within their organisations or having future opportunities for development. Dave said, *"I even actually got a promotion... From a work perspective that was that was pretty cool of them to give me a foreman role only three days a week."*

Richard also mentioned, *"They're looking to maybe move, open a branch open a branch in Whangarei, which so, I might maybe I'll get involved in that."*

Similarly, Allen said, *"Long-term I think there will be opportunities within the business. And it hasn't necessarily been spelled out as such, but we've had discussions, which it might be that longer term I'd buy into the business."*

Beliefs regarding career outcomes from FWA use is the third dimension of work-family cultures (Thompson et al., 1999). A downside to i-deals occurs when they place employees at odds organisational norms and criteria for measuring performance (Rousseau, 2005). While participants' beliefs concerning the impact of their FWAs on their career

advancement were mixed, overall there were progression opportunities available. This suggests that their use of FWAs did not significantly impair their performance evaluations, indicating that their organisations primarily measured performance objectively through results, as opposed to subjectively and in line with norms surrounding the ideal worker and a high facetime orientation (McNaughton & O'Brien, 1999; Rousseau, 2005; Shockley & Allen, 2010; Thompson et al., 1999; Williams, 2001). It also indicates that their performance expectations were prorated in accordance with alterations in their work times, locations and hours from the i-deal (Rousseau, 2005). This study varies from Perlow's (1997) study, which found that employees with flexibility i-deals received sub-standard performance evaluations. Conversely, it aligns with Hornung et al.'s (2008) study, which found that flexibility i-deals did not impact expectations of employee performance. The effect of participants' caregiving obligations on their career progression will be further discussed in the *Career Consequences* sub-theme.

Altogether, while in caregiving roles, participants' organisations generally had supportive work-family cultures, which acknowledged employees' parental roles, promoted tolerance and flexibility for family needs, and fostered an environment where the prioritisation of caregiving obligations over work was not antithetical with career advancement (Allen, 2001; Lapierre et al., 2008; Thompson et al., 1999). As aforementioned in the *Reasons for Role* sub-theme, the majority of participants reported achieving good WLB. It is likely that as employees, participants' supportive work-family cultures contributed to this, as such cultures are associated with diminished work-life conflict and increased use of FWAs (Allen, 2001; Lapierre et al., 2008; Thompson et al., 1999). Along with various other studies from New Zealand (Andrejic, 2017; McNaughton & O'Brien, 1999; Varuhas et al., 2007; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008) and abroad (Allen, 2001; Holter, 2007; Huffman et al.,

2014; McLaughlin & Muldoon, 2014), this study suggests that family-supportive organisational cultures are critical in employee WLB decisions and experiences.

To conclude, as employees, participants' ability to work flexibly, and their experiences utilising FWAs to meet caregiving obligations, were influenced by their workplace relationships and culture. Participants attempted to negotiate flexibility i-deals, their success largely dependent on the extent that they were valued by their managers. Conversely, managers were legally obligated to grant parental leave requests. Managerial support was critical in participants' reconciliation of their work and care commitments. Their managers were generally supportive of WLB to meet caregiving commitments, although this level of support varied according to whether they were actively involved fathers. The extent flexibility was embedded in organisational norms was also important, with many participants indicating that flexibility was normalised in their workplaces, despite experiencing subdued discrimination predominantly relating to their FWAs. While participants' beliefs regarding the impact of FWAs on their career progression were mixed, advancement opportunities were available, indicating FWA use was not antithetical with progression. This suggests that while in caregiving roles, participants' organisations generally had supportive work-family cultures.

Sub-theme four: Career Consequences.

A common belief among participants was that employers are obliged to reasonably accommodate employees' family obligations. Participants in both this study and Holter's (2007) study felt that in response to employees' growing demand for flexibility, employers were increasingly understanding and supportive of employee use of FWAs to meet caregiving obligations. Allen said, *"I think they're moving towards where they need to be. They're seeing examples, and and and to some degree employees are demanding that flexibility more, and they're understanding the value that they bring to an organisation and that, you know, flexibility's not unreasonable."*

Likewise, Mike said, *"Today's society I I think there's a lot of give and take and a lot of acceptability around it, and that extends into the workplace. And I think it's wonderful that you get into a position of work where there is an understanding like that. And if there is a boss that doesn't and it it infringes on your family life through a circumstance you can't help, then I think that's not the right job for you."*

This mirrors the trend in which employees are increasingly demanding flexibility in the workplace, as they are less willing to sacrifice family commitments for their careers than previously (Hall, 2002; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). This suggests that *psychological contracts*, or perceptions of reciprocal duties between organisations and individuals, now frequently include the expectation for employers to accommodate employees' caregiving obligations (Rousseau, 1989).

As previously mentioned in the *Workplace Relationships and Culture* sub-theme, while in caregiving roles, participants' employers were generally supportive of employee WLB. However, when they were not, participants promptly resigned. Both Jason and Mike left their jobs after their employers altered their positions to be inconsistent with their caregiving obligations. Mike said, *"They approached me near enough the towards the end of*

10 months and just saying, 'Look, we need to have someone full-time' ... It was wrong. And they portrayed themselves as being family-orientated, but the reality was the reality was they they were not willing to give or take... It's just just disrespectful is what it was. So, I was quite happy to walk away from that."

Jason also mentioned, *"They'd created a position that wasn't suitable for my life... Yes, I could have done it, but then I couldn't of, because my wife's not always here, you see?"*

Organisational life is now synonymous with constant change, and employees are increasingly taking charge of their careers and jumping from job to job in what Hall (2002) dubs *protean careers* (Hall et al., 2018). Accordingly, long-term commitment between employers and employees is now a rarity, with employees more willing to leave organisations where they perceive their employer to have breached the psychological contract (Hall, 2002; Rousseau, 1995). Likewise, when participants believed their employers had breached the psychological contract by not reasonably accommodating their caregiving obligations, they soon left in search of jobs with more supportive employers.

Most participants who changed jobs while in a caregiving role did not believe they had experienced hiring discrimination due to their caregiving obligations, unemployment spells, or histories of part-time work. The majority of them found new jobs relatively quickly and effortlessly. Reflecting this experience, Mike said that fathers, *"Should take that first five years and put as much into their family kids as they possibly can. Because it's easy for them to go back to work once they've reached the five, six years of age, because, and then pursue it."*

While Wallace had not attempted to find a job since becoming a caregiving father, he predicted, *"If I was a stay-at-home-dad for a couple of years ... and then went back into that market, it have absolutely no, oh well, I'll be surprised if it had any impact at all."*

Comparatively, Terry thought his time as a caregiving father may have somewhat enhanced his job prospects, despite previously questioning whether this had hindered them, as he found it difficult to re-enter the workforce. He said, *“If you go for a job and you don't get it there is a slight demoralisation, and you do worry, ‘Have I,’ you know, ‘Am I not being considered, because I haven't, I don't have an active track record of work, I've had five years out of not working?’ And the discussions I had, I had a couple of interviews where I got down to sort of final couple of people and stuff. You know, I thought largely it was pretty it'd was probably seen as pretty positive that I'd been a stay-at-home-dad, and that I could draw on experiences from that.”*

The majority of participants in this study believed that their caregiving roles, periods of unemployment and part-time work did not affect their job prospects. However, other research indicates that compared with continuously employed men, men who have had unemployment spells or worked part-time have less employment opportunities, as part-time work signals less commitment, and unemployment lower competence (Pedulla, 2016). Furthermore, job applicants who opt out of the workforce for family reasons were found to be significantly less likely to be hired than both continuously employed applicants and those who have lost their jobs, as opting out indicates reduced commitment, with such penalties particularly harsh for men (Weisshaar, 2018).

Contrary to human capital depreciation theory, this study suggests that employers do not perceive employee skills and abilities to deteriorate during unemployment spells (Becker, 1993; Mincer & Ofek, 1982). Participants did not believe that prospective employers considered job applicants with histories of unemployment due to caregiving commitments to be less desirable than their continuously employed counterparts (Crittenden, 2001; Mincer & Ofek, 1982; Weisshaar, 2018). However, it may be that prospective employers considered the capital created through care work to be compensatory for that perceived to have depreciated

during periods of unemployment (Crittenden, 2001). While traditional economic thinking disregards the capital generated through caregiving (Crittenden, 2001), this study suggests that men with caregiving responsibilities may be increasingly considered an asset to employers as opposed to a burden (Brandth, 2012). Perhaps human capital is being reconceptualised as employers increasingly acknowledge the skills and abilities gained through caregiving (Brandth, 2012; Crittenden, 2001). This is significant, as it suggests that the ideal worker norm may also be morphing to be more inclusive of caregiving (Brandth, 2012).

Participants recognised the capital they developed through care-work and how this contributed to their work performance. A common pattern echoed throughout participants' accounts was of having developed both patience and a broader perspective through caregiving. Tom said, *"Puts things in a different perspective. You learn to keep your cool a lot more. Like at work I'd get really pissed off with dumb people and people doing dumb things. And now you just sigh and go, 'Oh well, you're just like my children. Oh well.' You know, so you just sort of accept it a bit more."*

Likewise, Allen said, *"There's lots of tests of patience, a lot, as you can see. You know, like it's sometimes just about taking a step back and tryna do some higher-level thinking."*

Dave also said, *"You just have to learn patience. You, until until you're a parent with kids nothing can describe it. You know, it is a whole different level of, yeah, responsibility."*

Some participants also formed better time-management skills while in a caregiving role. In job interviews Terry gave examples of how he had developed multitasking skills from managing his work and caregiving obligations. He said, *"Because I was pretty actively writing for a lot of it, I had deadlines to meet. And so, you know, I could talk about, I guess, working quickly, and oh and, you know, finding opportunities to work, and working quickly,*

learning new sort of efficiencies for. I I was literally timing when he would go down for a sleep, and then I would pump out as much work as I could.”

Analogously, Jason said, *“And timing, and like, ya know, getting things out on time, getting them to do things on time. My timekeeping is impeccable... Always has always has been. It's gone up a gear now.”*

Both Allen and Dave had held managerial positions. They discussed how skills in areas such as leadership, organisation, patience and communication transfer between caregiving and managerial roles. Allen said, *“So, a lot of parenting is impulsive, and you get a lot of emotive reactions. You know, so it's it's about remembering that you're the adult, you know, and I've got to try and be the example for them and, you know, to a degree that's what you need to apply as as a manager, you know you know, is is to be the example, and don't just say it, actually do it. You know, that that's probably a big one, is is being a mentor or or being understanding that you're you're their guide.”*

Dave also said, *“Conflict resolution... That sort of responsibility and organisational, and and having to having to think, you know, you you do research on how to deal with kids and situations. And a lot of that actually transfers through to work. The adults that are acting like kids sometimes need boundaries and everything else.”*

This study joins Brandth (2012) in finding caregiving fathers often conceptualise caregiving as a new form of capital they can bring to the workplace. Men frequently develop transferable skills through care work, such as patience, flexibility, tolerance, communication, conflict resolution, managing challenging behaviours, and the ability to view situations from a different perspective (Brandth, 2012; Chesley, 2011; Coltrane, 1996; Doucet & Merla, 2007). Participants experienced family-to-work instrumental enrichment, as the skills and perspectives developed in their family role had a direct positive impact on their work role, which resulted in, or was anticipated to result in, greater work performance (Casper et al.,

2013; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Flexibly working parents in Andrejic's (2017) New Zealand study also discussed how some skills are transferable between work and life domains.

It may be that skills formed through care work are particularly relevant for managerial roles. Skills and abilities developed through caregiving have been found to improve managerial performance (Brandth, 2012). As previously mentioned in the *Workplace Relationships and Culture* sub-theme, participants perceived managers who were involved fathers to be more supportive of employee WLB to meet caregiving obligations. Perhaps this perception partially stemmed from care work having enhanced their managers' skills in communication, tolerance, and the ability to view situations from a different perspective.

Despite the majority of participants believing they had not been discriminated against in hiring, there was a sense among most of them that their career progression had stalled as a result of their caregiving roles.

Richard said, *"It's just been a kind of a holding pattern really, that this is this is how we work at this time."*

Terry also said, *"It probably stalled things for me for a bit."*

In a similar vein, Allen said, *"I've stepped back quite a long way in some of the tasks that I'm doing. So, there's probably not development opportunities right now."*

One reason some participants felt their career advancement had slowed was that they had transitioned into jobs perceived to be more flexible to effectively meet their caregiving commitments. Many felt that this had entailed a backwards step in terms of their career progression. For example, Allen transitioned from a significant managerial role to that of a personal assistant after becoming a caregiving father. He said, *"It's not what I was doing previously. And I guess I'm somewhat realistic about finding a job that will work around*

what I need with hours and, you know, balancing the family and. Yeah, so I guess I'm a bit more flexible because of that."

Similarly, Jason was searching for a forklift driving job in a warehouse, because he felt the rigid, long working-hour culture of the sales industry, in which he was previously employed, was irreconcilable with his caregiving role. He said, *"A lot of the jobs that I would normally go for I can't go for, because the jobs that I would go for are bloke's jobs, you know, they're salesmen. They go out on the road and live in bloody motels and. And we can't do that, cause we got two kids here all the time... So, that's limited what I can do."*

New Zealand parents' perceptions regarding the suitability and availability of FWAs in different occupations and industries are highly influential in their career decisions (Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). However, jobs chosen for their flexibility frequently result in underutilisation of skills and underemployment (Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008). Andrejic (2017) also found that some flexibly working New Zealand parents felt their careers had suffered as a result of their prioritisation of WLB. A few also mentioned having shifted to industries or occupations that were more supportive of WLB.

However, although most participants believed their career progression had stalled because of their caregiving roles, many also discussed how advancement opportunities were available for them. Richard said, *"They're looking to maybe move, open a branch open a branch in Whangarei, which, so I might maybe I'll get involved in that."*

Allen also mentioned, *"They put me through a course last week, a one-day course, which probably cost the business about 500 dollars... Long-term I think there will be opportunities within the business. And it hasn't necessarily been spelled out as such, but we've had discussions, which it might be that longer term I'd buy into the business."*

Likewise, Dave said, *"I even actually got a promotion... From a work perspective that was that was pretty cool of them to give me a foreman role only three days a week."*

This study suggests that caregiving fathers are not penalised in terms of career progression opportunities. Bear and Glick (2017) also found that caregiving fathers received the same amount of training opportunities as both breadwinning fathers and those whose family status was undisclosed, while caregiving mothers were penalised. In a similar vein, Munsch (2016) found that although participants who sought FWAs were penalised, those who made such requests to meet childcare obligations were evaluated more positively than those who did not. Further, men who requested to work remotely were assessed more favourably than comparable women.

However, this study contradicts the ideal worker norm, in which men are expected to remain highly devoted to work after having children (Williams, 2001). Those who digress from this are thought to be relegated to a daddy track, in which they are perceived to be less committed to their careers and are often overlooked for advancement opportunities (Acker, 1990; Coltrane, 1996; Hanlon, 2012; Williams, 2001). Various U.S. studies have supported this theory, suggesting that employees, particularly men, who miss work as a result of WFC (Butler & Scattebo, 2004), or request parental leave (Allen & Russel, 1999; Rudman & Mescher, 2013; Wayne & Cordeiro, 2003) or FWAs (Vandello et al., 2013) face career progression penalties. One reason men experience harsher penalties than women is because while both genders face flexibility stigma, men also experience femininity stigma from not behaving in a gender normative way (Rudman & Mescher, 2013; Williams, 2001). However, this study found no evidence of a daddy track, flexibility stigma or femininity stigma, suggesting that men who alter their working arrangements to care for their children do not necessarily hinder their career advancement (Acker, 1990; Williams, 2001).

Perhaps discrepancies between this study and the various U.S. studies (Allen & Russel, 1999; Butler & Scattebo, 2004; Pedulla, 2016; Rudman & Mescher, 2013; Vandello et al., 2013; Wayne & Cordeiro, 2003; Weisshaar, 2018) that found evidence suggesting

caregiving fathers experience discrimination in hiring and development opportunities are related to cultural differences. A social progress index developed by Porter et al. (2017) ranked New Zealand as *very high* in terms of social progress, compared to the *high* ranking of the U.S. Notably, New Zealand overperformed on the measures of “Personal Rights, Personal Freedom and Choice, and Tolerance and Inclusion” (p. 26). It may be that because New Zealand has a more socially progressive culture than the U.S., employers are generally more open, tolerant and accepting of employees and prospective employees’ diverse work histories and family roles, mitigating against employment discrimination.

Additionally, participants may have benefited from a *fatherhood bonus*, which is a phenomenon in which fathers are more likely to be hired, earn more, and receive more career progression opportunities than childless men (Bear & Glick, 2017; Correll et al., 2007; Hodges & Budig, 2010; Lundberg & Rose, 2000; Weisshaar, 2018). Studies indicate that fathers are more likeable and considered warmer and less hostile than childless men (Correll et al., 2007; Hodges & Budig, 2010; Lundberg & Rose, 2000). Furthermore, fatherhood may signal desirable employment characteristics, such as loyalty and dependability (Hodges & Budig, 2010). Perhaps the fatherhood bonus is higher for men associated with hegemonic masculinity characteristics (Hodges & Budig, 2010). Hence, as participants embodied the hegemonic masculinity characteristics of appearing white, being of middle-class and (in most cases) married, this may have been compensatory for their violations of the ideal worker norm and masculine gender norms (Davies & Frink, 2014; Rudman & Mescher, 2013; Weisshaar, 2018). This could have mitigated against hiring and progression penalties, explaining why most participants had not experienced employment discrimination for their non-traditional work histories and family roles.

Taking advantage of available progression opportunities generally required participants to relinquish their flexibility to varying extents, which some participants were

reluctant to do while their children were young. For example, Richard said, *“Maybe I’ll get involved in that, and start doing less remote work and more work here and getting out the house a bit more maybe. But yeah, I’m not sure it’s just it’s so the flexibility’s so good... It’s hard to do that when you have to go and see people, or it sort of means you have that have to do that nine-to-five hours.”*

Similarly, Allen said, *“Him and his wife sort of see themselves in the business for around the next five years and then after that they’ll be wanting to step away. So, I think certainly in the next sorta five years there’s a lot of flexibility there for me, but when they step away something needs to come in to fill that void.”*

Analogously, when Dave applied for a higher position in his organisation, he was asked whether he would consider reverting to full-time hours. While he declined, he reduced his flexibility by promising his availability on his days off to increase his chances of being selected for the role. He said, *“One of the questions, you know, was, ‘Are you gonna go,’ you know, ‘Would you,’ when I went to the interview, ‘Would you go back full-time for this position?’ But I went in there very clear and said, you know, and I said, ‘No, I intend to stay part-time, but I entirely think I can do this job for this and this and reasons. I’ll be I’ll be available on the Thursday, Friday if need be towards the end of projects.’ I said, ‘I’ve I’ve got the kids in day care. I can put them in day care if I need to. So, I can do five-hour five-day weeks.’”*

Interestingly, this study suggests that men using FWAs to meet caregiving commitments exist in a paradox, as while they are not discriminated against in career progression opportunities, taking advantage of these necessitates the relinquishment of their flexibility to some extent. Various other New Zealand studies (Andrejic, 2017; Hays, 2017; McPherson, 2006; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008) have also found evidence indicating that employers often perceive FWAs to be incompatible with positions higher up organisational

hierarchies, as flexibility is considered contradictory with effective performance in these roles.

Participants' reluctance to take advantage of progression opportunities largely stemmed from the prioritisation of their caregiving role above career advancement. This mirrors the trend in which employees are increasingly favouring family commitments and WLB above career progression (Hall, 2002). For example, Mike was passionate about the importance of men prioritising their families over their careers, especially when children are young. He said, *"Dads in general should analyse their financial situation, and if they've got young ones, I'm serious, I don't care about their career paths, they should take that first five years and put as much into their family, kids as they possibly can."*

Similarly, Wallace said, *"My role as a caregiving father's come first, and then whatever windows there are outside that is being available for work."*

Likewise, Terry said, *"The real job if you like, in inverted commas, was looking after the child. It was obviously it was obviously not a chore. I don't wanna put job on it, as it was just a thing to do, or that it was a chore, but there was the focus, and that work was to fit in around that."*

According to Moen and Sweet's (2004) life course perspective, notions of careers extend beyond individuals' occupations into other life areas such as their families, meaning that people may progress through their family lives as they do in their occupational careers. Participants were primarily focused on their family careers as opposed to their occupational careers (Moen & Sweet, 2004). As previously mentioned in the *Reasons for Role* sub-theme, participants had experienced growth and development in their family roles, and had successfully achieved WLB (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Their perceptions of career progression in their family roles were related to the belief that through care-work they had contributed to their children's well-being and development, as well as formed strong bonds

with them (Hall, 2002). For instance, Mike said, *“Now it's just getting to that point where, you know, the children have benefited from it.”*

Terry also mentioned, *“I know that I've got a really, really special bond with Mason from spending so much time with him.”*

Likewise, Allen said, *“The idea is that longer-term I'm going to have a great relationship with my daughters. And, you know, the investment and time that I've put in and will will pay off. Hopefully we'll get a couple of decent kids out of it.”*

It may well be that participants thought that taking advantage of career advancement opportunities would hamper their WLB, as flexibility is associated with greater WLB (Statistics New Zealand, 2019e; Zodgekar & Fursman, 2008) and less WFC (Hornung et al., 2008). Accordingly, progression in their family careers could have also been impeded by a reduction in job flexibility, which they were reluctant to do, as this role was most salient to them (Kalliath & Brough, 2008; Moen & Sweet, 2004).

Although, as aforementioned in *the Gender Roles* sub-theme, most participants either already had or planned to increase their hours in paid work. A primary factor in this was their children becoming increasingly independent, requiring less care. Mike had recently returned to full-time work. He said, *“I think what we have instilled in them in that first eight years has been a massive benefit to them, for having both of us at home for at least at least 40 percent of the of the working week.”*

In a similar vein, Terry was planning to return to full-time work. He said, *“He's of an age now where like, if he has to be in after school care every day, I I I I I don't see that as a bad thing.”*

Likewise, when discussing the potential to take on greater responsibilities at work in the future, Allen said, *“Your family needs different things at different times. And in five years*

our situation will be quite different to what it is now. You know, they'll be 10 and 12, so different stage for them. And and they'll need a different level of support as well."

This is consistent with Schmidt (2014) and McPherson's (2006) studies of New Zealand parents, which also found evidence suggesting that pressures of intensive parenting culture weaken as children age. Accordingly, parents of older children may feel less pressure to invest considerable time and energy in them (Shirani et al., 2012; Wall, 2005). Hence, the salience of participants' family careers may have been gradually diminishing, as that of their occupational careers increased, encouraging them to devote more time to paid work (Moen & Sweet, 2004).

In addition to having family careers, most participants also discussed how their caregiving roles enabled them to pursue career avenues they would not have had the opportunity or inclination to had they been in full-time breadwinning roles. This is because the enhanced WLB and reduced financial pressure resulting from their caregiving roles enabled them to live out career passions and interests without the monetary and time constraints they would have otherwise had. For some participants, these career avenues were voluntary in nature. Richard said, *"It's given me the opportunity to coach their football team. So, cause, you know, I cause I have time I can make like a afternoon free a week to go and coach them. So, that's been that's been a real positive for me. Like I managed to grow the football the sorta local football club to. I first did it, but then we had four, five kids, and now we've got like 95 kids."*

Likewise, Allen co-managed a SAHFs support group. He said, *"Myself and another dad probably I guess you'd say I guess you'd say took over the responsibility for the organising of it... We tried take it back to that supporting stay-at-home-dads, giving them something just to get out of the house each week, you know?"*

Analogously, some participants' caregiving roles enabled them to explore alternative career paths relating to paid work. For instance, Wallace said, *"In terms of being a stay-at-home-dad... that's given me the chance to, with less pressure than normal, try and develop a few skills that I can then start applying when I've got the more time. So, it's given me like a free swing at trying a few things. So, yeah. And that's been, it's been really important for me too. Where if it wasn't for that, I'd be trying to make as much money as I could out of the same stuff I knew."*

Likewise, multiple career opportunities had cropped up for Terry as a result of his caregiving role. He had written articles related to his experience as a caregiving father, which he found so fulfilling that he had considered writing a book about parenting in the future. He said, *"Some other opportunities have come up as a result. I mean I some of the best writing that I've done in the last few years was writing about parenting... There's ideas have come up about sort of book projects, and things around parenting and stuff."*

Terry had also gotten a job as a nanny for an infant with down syndrome and believed he would never have gone into this role had he not been a caregiving father. This job was so rewarding for him that he had contemplated completing a nannying course and finding work caring for other children. He said, *"I've really enjoyed looking after this little baby, Hunter. I've really really fallen into it. And, you know, I I guess I guess because he's been so his development's been so compromised, it's it feels like a nice gesture to be involved in his development. So, there's that aspect. It's incredibly rewarding work... I mean it's funny, it's a short-term thing for me, and and and yet a little part of me goes, 'Oh, it'd be quite cool to do this more often and longer.'"*

Most participants demonstrated a protean career orientation, as they were "self-directed and values driven" in their careers (Hall, 2002; Hall et al., 2018, p. 130). They sought psychological success in their work rather than objective success within an

organisation (Hall, 2002). These participants experienced career success in a myriad of subjectively determined ways, such as growing the local football club, offering other SAHFs a support system, developing meaningful skills, and positively impacting other people's lives.

This study contributes to research pointing to the outdated nature of traditional career models of vertical mobility within a single organisational hierarchy, which measures success by objective outcomes (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2002; Moen, 2005; O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005). It reflects how employment is increasingly synonymous with constant change, requiring individuals to exercise a greater degree of autonomy and adaptability in their careers, which involves continuous learning, skill development and frequent identity changes (Hall, 2002). This study joins a raft of studies (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2002; Moen, 2005; Moen & Sweet, 2004; O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005) in suggesting there is a need to acknowledge individuals' self-direction in their careers, the role of social forces in shaping these, and that career success can be subjectively determined.

In conclusion, participants believed that employers were obligated to make reasonable accommodations for employees' caregiving commitments, and if they failed to do so, participants promptly resigned. Contrary to numerous other studies, this study did not find evidence suggesting caregiving fathers are penalised in hiring and career advancement opportunities because of their non-traditional work histories and family roles. Potential reasons advanced include that employers are increasingly recognising the capital created through caregiving, New Zealand is particularly socially progressive, and participants benefited from a fatherhood bonus. However, this study indicates that men who work flexibly to meet caregiving obligations experience a paradox, as while they are not discriminated against in development opportunities, taking advantage of these entails relinquishing some flexibility. As participants were reluctant to do so while their children were young, many knowingly stalled their occupational career progression, choosing to focus on their family

careers. Participants' caregiving roles enabled them to pursue alternative career avenues through care-work, voluntary work and paid work, in which they experienced psychological success. This study contributes to research suggesting that careers are self-directed, influenced by social forces, and that career success is subjectively determined.

Conclusion

From the outset of this study, it was evident that men's experiences at the work-family interface have been severely neglected, especially in comparison to women.

Considering an increasing number of employed men are in either joint or primary caregiving roles, it is important to gain an in-depth, detailed understanding of what these experiences involve.

Fathers entered caregiving roles as a result of a range of interrelated factors associated with financial considerations, preferences, their careers, and WLB. These factors, and accordingly their decisions, were influenced by a raft of social forces, such as the declining gender pay gap, the erosion of traditional gender roles, socio-economic status, incompatible norms, policies, intensive parenting culture, and the cost of childcare.

Job flexibility was paramount in caregiving fathers' abilities to meet their caregiving commitments and successfully achieve WLB. Although, participants, particularly those who worked from home, experienced some negative effects associated with flexibility. This highlights how the contemporary realities of many couples sharing caring and earning tasks necessitates employers to be flexible regarding employees' family obligations and consider ways to mitigate negative impacts associated with this, particularly for remote working employees.

Once located in a caregiving role, men experienced a complex interplay in their masculine identities. While caring masculinities were constructed, they still experienced challenges to their masculinities to varying extents according to the degree they held hegemonic views of masculinity. Furthermore, although people's reactions to their non-traditional roles were generally positive, they received occasional degrading remarks. Contrary to other research, this study found that challenges to men's masculinities primarily occur in relation to breadwinning, and stigma experiences are predominantly associated with

their FWAs, as opposed to their caregiving roles. This suggests that while hegemonic masculinity and fathering norms are broadening to be more inclusive of caregiving, breadwinning expectations and the ideal worker norm continue to be heavily intertwined with masculinity. This illustrates how men today are experiencing conflicting fathering expectations.

Caregiving fathers also discussed relational work characteristics that influenced the management of their work and caregiving commitments, and their careers in relation to their caregiving roles. An important factor in fathers' experiences negotiating flexibility i-deals was the extent their employers valued them both professionally and personally. This indicates that employees wishing to negotiate flexibility i-deals would benefit from fostering a quality relationship with their employer.

The majority of men's workplaces had strong work-family organisational cultures, and this was highly contributory to their WLB decisions and experiences. Their employers were mostly supportive, which many partially attributed to whether they were involved fathers themselves. Furthermore, prioritising work above family appeared to be relatively, although not entirely, normative in their organisations, and their use of FWAs did not seem to detrimentally impact their performance evaluations. Employees with caregiving obligations should seek out organisations with such cultures, and employers should endeavour to actively foster these.

This study suggests that fathers with caregiving obligations expect their employers to reasonably accommodate these commitments, and when they do not, fathers have little qualms about moving to a job where they will. It would be advantageous for employers to take this into account when developing policies at the work-family interface and responding to employees' family needs. In contrast with previous research, this study did not find evidence that caregiving fathers receive discrimination in hiring and advancement

opportunities because of their caregiving roles, unemployment spells, or FWAs. However, taking advantage of progression opportunities and working in jobs higher up the organisational hierarchy necessitated the relinquishment of their flexibility to some extent. Men were reluctant to do so while their children were young, as they were focused on their family careers, and career passions. This suggests that there is a need to acknowledge individuals' self-direction in their careers, the role of social forces in shaping these, and that career success can be subjectively determined.

Participants developed an array of skills through caregiving that transfer to work. Hence, employers should consider this when making hiring and promotional decisions, as opposed to viewing caregiving as wasted time, which has been the case with traditional economic thinking. Employers may already be recognising the human capital created through care-work. This is significant, as it indicates that the ideal worker norm may be being reconceptualised to be more inclusive of caregiving.

Limitations

Despite this study producing valuable insight into the experiences of employed caregiving fathers, it is not without limitations. Participants in this study were highly homogenous, as they all appeared white and of the middle class. Additionally, all participants were partnered at the time of the interview, and only one had been single during his time as a caregiving father. Spousal factors were highly influential in participants' decisions and experiences in caregiving roles. Participants' relatively privileged position in society may have contributed to their reasonably positive experiences in a caregiving role. It would have been constructive to have had access to men of more diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, in addition to relationship statuses.

As is standard in qualitative research, this study had a small sample size of non-representative participants, and thus findings are not generalisable. However, this research

aimed to offer rich insight into the experiences of employed caregiving fathers, which it achieved.

Directions for Future Research

This study has highlighted several avenues where future research would be constructive. In support of the life course perspective, men's perceptions of their careers extended beyond their occupations to their families. This study suggests that the salience of men's career priorities vary according to factors such as their status as parents of young children. A longitudinal study of men's career experiences as they transition between life stages would be productive, giving a more nuanced understanding of how their career priorities and experiences change across the lifespan.

Caregiving fathers may be unique from most fathers and more akin to mothers in some ways. For instance, unlike other research that found men do not experience intensive parenting culture to the same extent as mothers, this study found evidence indicating that caregiving fathers experience this to at least the same degree. Furthermore, men in this study used self-employment as a WLB strategy, despite other research finding that only mothers use self-employment for this purpose. It would be useful to examine whether there are significant differences between fathers who are in caregiving roles and those who are not, in relation to factors such as intensive parenting culture and WLB strategies.

This study further found that a barrier to caregiving fathers progressing in their careers or occupying roles higher up organisational hierarchies is that employers consider such roles to be incompatible with flexibility. It would be valuable to explore the experiences of both caregiving fathers in roles higher up the hierarchy and their employers, to determine whether this pervasive belief is supported by empirical evidence.

A significant finding highlighted in this study was that caregiving fathers were not penalised in hiring or progression opportunities. This suggests that employers may be

increasingly recognising capital created through caregiving and its application at work. It also indicates that the ideal worker norm is being reconceptualised to be more inclusive of caregiving. Hence, a future study exploring employers' perceptions of employees and prospective employees with non-standard employment histories due to meeting caregiving obligations would be constructive.

Altogether, the experiences of the men in this study can be summarised by Terry's quote, "It's been worth it." There were challenges, such as performance of a second shift, feelings of loss over their breadwinning roles, occasional degrading remarks about their non-traditional roles, and an inability to progress in their occupational careers without relinquishing their flexibility to some extent. However, these were far outweighed by their positive experiences, including building strong relationships with their children, successfully achieving WLB, supporting their spouses' careers, and pursuing career passions they would otherwise not have had the opportunity to. These relatively positive experiences may well be influenced by shifts in fathering norms towards involvement and the study being conducted within a highly socially progressive country. This has implications for men who have concerns about entering caregiving roles because of fears of adverse outcomes, as it suggests that such outcomes may be reasonably marginal and exceeded by the positive.

References

- Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender and Society*, 4(2), 139-158. doi:10.1177/089124390004002002
- Allen, L., & Russel, J. (1999). Parental leave of absences: Some not so family-friendly implications. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 29(1), 166-191. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15591816>
- Allen, T. D. (2001). Family-supportive work environments: The role of organizational perceptions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 58(3), 414-435. Retrieved from <https://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-vocational-behavior>
- Allen, T. D., Herst, D. E. L., Bruck, C. S., & Sutton, M. (2000). Consequences associated with work-to-family conflict: A review and agenda for future research. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 5(2), 278-308. doi:10.1037/1076-8998.5.2.278
- Andrejic, N. (2017). *Navigating the tensions of flexible work: An exploration of the individual strategies employed by flexibly working parents*. (Master's thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand). Retrieved from <http://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/handle/10063/6421>
- Arthur, M. B., & Rousseau, D. M. (1996). *The boundaryless career: A new employment principle for a new organizational era*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Ásdís, A. A., Guðný, B. E., & Ingólfur, V. G. (2013). Equal rights to paid parental leave and caring fathers- the case of Iceland. *Stjórnmal og Stjórnsýsla*, 9(2), 323-344. doi:10.13177/irpa.a.2013.9.2.4
- Barber, A. E., Wesson, M. J., Roberson, Q. M., & Taylor, M. S. (1999). A tale of two job markets: Organizational size and its effects on hiring practices and job search behavior. *Personnel Psychology*, 52(4), 841-867. doi:10.1111/j.1744-6570.1999.tb00182.x

- Bayazit, Z. E., & Bayazit, M. (2019). How do flexible work arrangements alleviate work-family-conflict? The roles of flexibility i-deals and family-supportive cultures. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 30(3), 405-435.
doi:10.1080/09585192.2017.1278615
- Bear, J. B., & Glick, P. (2017). Breadwinner bonus and caregiver penalty in workplace rewards for men and women. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 8(7), 780-788. doi:10.1177/1948550616683016
- Becker, G. S. (1993). *Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education* (3rd ed.). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Berdahl, J. L., & Moon, S. H. (2013). Workplace mistreatment of middle class workers based on sex, parenthood, and caregiving. *Journal of Social Issues*, 69(2), 341-366.
doi:10.1111/josi.12018
- Biernacki, P., & Waldorf, D. (1981). Snowball sampling: Problems and techniques of chain referral sampling. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 10(2), 141-163.
doi:10.1177/004912418101000205
- Bies, R. J., & Moag, J. F. (1986). Interactional justice: Communication criteria of fairness. In R. J. Lewicki, B. H. Sheppard, & M. H. Bazerman (Eds.), *Research on negotiations in organizations* (pp. 43-55). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Biggerstaff, D., & Thompson, A. R. (2008). Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): A qualitative methodology of choice in healthcare research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 5(3), 214-224. doi:10.1080/14780880802314304
- Bowles, H. R., Babcock, L., & Lai, L. (2007). Social incentives for gender differences in the propensity to initiate negotiations: Sometimes it does hurt to ask. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 103(1), 84-103.
doi:10.1016/j.obhdp.2006.09.001

- Brandth, B. (2012). Emotional dimensions of fathering and work-family boundaries. In E. Jeanes & P. McDonald (Eds.), *Men, wage work and family* (pp. 114-128). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Brookes, B. (2016). *A history of New Zealand women*. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books Ltd.
- Burnett, S. B., Gatrell, C., Cooper, C., & Sparrow, P. (2011). Fatherhood and flexible working: A contradiction in terms? In S. Kaiser, M. J. Ringlsetter, D. R. Eikhof, & M. P. E. Cunha (Eds.), *Creating balance? International perspectives on the work-life integration of professionals* (pp. 157-171). Heidelberg, NY: Springer.
- Burnett, S. B., Gatrell, C. J., Cooper, C. L., & Sparrow, P. (2013). Fathers at work: A ghost in the organizational machine. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 20(6), 632-646.
doi:10.1111/gwao.12000
- Butera, K. J. (2006). Manhunt: The challenge of enticing men to participate in a study on friendship. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(6), 1262-1282. doi:10.1177/1077800406288634
- Butler, A. B., & Scattebo, A. (2004). What is acceptable for women may not be for men: The effect of family conflicts with work on job-performance ratings. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77, 553-564.
doi:10.1348/0963179042596478
- Callister, P. (1994). Families and patterns of work: Paid and unpaid parental leave in two parent families. *Labour, Employment and Work in New Zealand*, 3, 128-135.
doi:10.26686/lew.v0i0.920
- Callister, P. (2005a). *The changing gender distribution of paid and unpaid work in New Zealand* (Working Paper No. 05/07). Retrieved from <https://treasury.govt.nz/publications/wp/changing-gender-distribution-paid-and-unpaid-work-new-zealand-wp-05-07-html>

- Callister, P. (2005b). *New Zealand fathers: Overworked, undervalued and overseas?* Paper presented at the NZ Men's Issues Summit, Christchurch, New Zealand.
- Callister, P., & Galtry, J. (2011). Paid parental leave policy: A response to Maureen Baker. *Policy Quarterly*, 7(4), 69-71. doi:10.26686/pq.v7i4.4400
- Cardwell, H. (2018, January 20). 'Thumbs up' for the stay-at-home ads. *Radio New Zealand*. Retrieved from <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/political/348507/thumbs-up-for-the-stay-at-home-dads>
- Cashman, J., Dansereau, F., Graen, G., & Haga, W. J. (1976). Organizational understructure and leadership: A longitudinal investigation of the managerial role-making process. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 15(2), 278-296. doi:10.1016/0030-5073(76)90042-8
- Casper, W. J., De Hauw, S., & Wayne, J. H. (2013). Concepts and measures in the work-family interface: Implications for work-family integration. In D. A. Major & R. J. Burke (Eds.), *Handbook of work-life integration among professionals: Challenges and opportunities* (pp. 35-57). Cheltenham, U.K: Edward Elgar.
- Cha, Y., & ThÉBaud, S. (2009). Labor markets, breadwinning, and beliefs: How economic context shapes men's gender ideology. *Gender and Society*, 23(2), 215-243. doi:10.1177/0891243208330448
- Chesley, N. (2011). Stay-at-home fathers and breadwinning mothers: Gender, couple dynamics, and social change. *Gender and Society*, 25(5), 642-644. doi:10.1177/0891243211417433
- Cialdini, R. B., & Trost, M. R. (1998). Social influence: Social norms, conformity and compliance. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (4th ed., pp. 151-192). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

- Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, 95-120. Retrieved from <https://sociology.uchicago.edu/content/american-journal-sociology>
- Coltrane, S. (1996). *Family man: Fatherhood, housework, and gender equity*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Connell, R. (1987). *Gender & power*. Oxford, England: Polity Press.
- Connell, R. (2000). *The men and the boys*. Sydney, Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Connell, R. (2005). *Masculinities* (2nd ed.). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Connell, R., & Messerschmidt, J. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender and Society*, 19(6), 829-859. doi:10.1177/0891243205278639
- Cooklin, A. R., Westrupp, E. M., Strazdins, L., Giallo, R., Martin, A., & Nicholson, J. M. (2016). Fathers at work: Work–family conflict, work–family enrichment and parenting in an Australian cohort. *Journal of Family Issues*, 37(11), 1611-1635. doi:10.1177/0192513X14553054
- Cooper, M. (2002). Being the “go-to guy”. In N. Gerstel, D. Clawson, & R. Zussman (Eds.), *Families at work: Expanding the boundaries* (pp. 5-31). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Correll, J., Benard, S., & Paik, I. (2007). Getting a job: Is there a motherhood penalty? *American Journal of Sociology*, 112(5), 1297-1338. doi:10.1086/511799
- Crittenden, A. (2001). *The price of motherhood: Why the most important job in the world is still the least valued*. New York, NY: Metropolitan Books.
- Davies, A. R., & Frink, B. D. (2014). The origins of the ideal worker: The separation of work and home in the United States from the market revolution to 1950. *Work and Occupations*, 41(1), 18-39. doi:10.1177/0730888413515893

- Davies, L., & Jackson, N. (1993). *Women's labour force participation in New Zealand: The past 100 years*. Wellington, New Zealand: The Agency.
- Dawson, C., Henley, A., & Latreille, P. L. (2009). *Why do individuals choose self-employment?* (Discussion Paper No. 3974). Retrieved from <http://ftp.iza.org/dp3974.pdf>
- Denison, D. R. (1996). What is the difference between organizational culture and organizational climate? A native's point of view on a decade of paradigm wars. *Academy of Management Review*, 21(3), 619-654.
doi:10.5465/AMR.1996.9702100310
- Dermott, E. (2008). *Intimate fatherhood: A sociological analysis*. London, England: Routledge.
- Dex, S., & Scheibl, F. (2002). *SMEs and flexible working arrangements*. Bristol, U.K: The Policy Press.
- Doucet, A. (2004). "It's almost like I have a job, but I don't get paid": Fathers at home reconfiguring work, care and masculinity. *Fathering: A Journal of Theory, Research, and Practice about Men as Fathers*, 2(3), 277-303. Retrieved from <http://www.journaltoocs.hw.ac.uk/index.php?action=browse&subAction=pub&publisherID=649&journalID=4471&pageb=1>
- Doucet, A. (2006). *Do men mother?: Fathering, care, and domestic responsibility*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Doucet, A., & Merla, L. (2007). Stay-at-home fathering: A strategy for balancing work and home in Canadian and Belgian families. *Community, Work & Family*, 10(4), 455-473.
doi:10.1080/13668800701575101

- Eatough, V., & Smith, J. A. (2011). Interpretive phenomenological analysis. In C. Willig & W. Stainton-Rogers (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (pp. 193-211). London, England: SAGE Publications
- Eby, L. T., Casper, W. J., Lockwood, A., Bordeaux, C., & Brinley, A. (2005). Work and family research in IO/OB: Content analysis and review of the literature (1980-2002). *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *66*, 124-197. Retrieved from <https://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-vocational-behavior>
- Employment Relations Amendment Act, No. 61. (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2014/0061/latest/DLM5160206.html>
- Employment Relations (Flexible Working Arrangements) Amendment Act, No. 105. (2007). Retrieved from <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2007/0105/latest/DLM1034656.html>
- Eerola, P. (2014). Nurturing, breadwinning, and upbringing: Paternal responsibilities by Finnish men in early fatherhood. *Community, Work & Family*, *17*(3), 308-324. doi:10.1080/13668803.2014.933774
- Elliott, K. (2016). Caring masculinities: Theorizing an emerging concept. *Men and masculinities*, *19*(3), 240-259. doi:10.1177/1097184X15576203
- Fischer, B., & Tronto, J. (1990). Towards a feminist theory of caring. In E. K. Abel & M. K. Nelson (Eds.), *Circles of care: Work and identity in women's lives*. Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Fischer, J., & Anderson, V. N. (2012). Gender role attitudes and characteristics of stay-at-home and employed fathers. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, *13*(1), 16-31. doi:10.1037/a0024359
- Fleetwood, S. (2007). Why work-life balance now? *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *18*(3), 387-400. doi:10.1080/09585190601167441

- Golden, L. (2008). Limited access: Disparities in flexible work schedules and work-at-home. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 29(1), 86. doi:10.1007/s10834-007-9090-7
- Gray, A. (1983). *The Jones men*. Wellington, New Zealand: A. H. and A. W. Reed.
- Greenberg, J. (1987). A taxonomy of organizational justice theories. *Academy of Management Review*, 12(1), 9-22. doi:10.5465/AMR.1987.4306437
- Greenberg, J., & Folger, R. (1983). Procedural justice, participation, and the fair process effect in groups and organizations. In P. B. Paulus (Ed.), *Basic group processes* (pp. 235-256). New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.
- Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). Sources of conflict between work and family roles. *Academy of Management Review*, 10, 76-88. doi:10.5465/AMR.1985.4277352
- Greenhaus, J. H., Callanan, G. A., & Godshalk, V. M. (2010). *Career management* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, LA: Sage Publications.
- Greenhaus, J. H., & Powell, G. N. (2006). When work and family are allies: A theory of work-family enrichment. *Academy of Management Review*, 31(1), 72-92. doi:10.5465/AMR.2006.19379625
- Hall, D. T. (2002). *Careers in and out of organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Hall, D. T., Yip, J., & Doiron, K. (2018). Protean careers at work: Self-direction and values orientation in psychological success. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 5, 129-156. doi:10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-032117-104631
- Hanlon, N. (2012). *Masculinities, care and equality: Identity and nurture in men's lives*. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hays. (2017). *De-gendering gender diversity: Improving female representation in the workforce*. Retrieved from

https://www.hays.net.nz/cs/groups/hays_common/@au/@candidate/documents/webassets/hays_2006344.pdf

- Hays, S. (1996). *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Hechavarria, D. M., & Ingram, A. E. (2016). The entrepreneurial gender divide: Hegemonic masculinity, emphasized femininity and organizational forms. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, 8(3), 242-281. doi:10.1108/IJGE-09-2014-0029
- Ho, V. T., & Tekleab, A. (2016). A model of idiosyncratic deal-making and attitudinal outcomes. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 31(3), 642-656. doi:10.1108/JMP-12-2014-0369
- Hochschild, A., & Machung, A. (1990). *The second shift: Working parents and the revolution at home*. London, England: Piatkus.
- Hodges, M. J., & Budig, M. J. (2010). Who gets the daddy bonus? Organizational hegemonic masculinity and the impact of fatherhood on earnings. *Gender and Society*, 24(6), 717-745. doi:10.1177/0891243210386729
- Höfner, C., Schadler, C., & Richter, R. (2011). When men become fathers: Men's identity at the transition to parenthood. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 42(5), 669-686. doi:10.3138/jcfs.42.5.669
- Holter, Ø. G. (2007). Men's work and family reconciliation in Europe. *Men and masculinities*, 9(4), 425-456. doi:10.1177/1097184X06287794
- hooks, b. (2004). *The will to change: Men, masculinity, and love*. New York, NY: Atria Books.
- Hornung, S., Rousseau, D. M., & Glaser, J. (2008). Creating flexible work arrangements through idiosyncratic deals. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(3), 655-664. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.93.3.655

- Hornung, S., Rousseau, D. M., Glaser, J., Angerer, P., & Weigl, M. (2010). Beyond top-down and bottom-up work redesign: Customizing job content through idiosyncratic deals. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 31*, 187-215. doi:10.1002/job.625
- Huffman, A., Olson, K. J., O'Gara, T. C., King, E., Stone, D., & Tetrick, L. E. (2014). Gender role beliefs and fathers' work-family conflict. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 29*(7), 774-793. doi:10.1108/JMP-11-2012-0372
- Humberd, B., Ladge, J., & Harrington, B. (2015). The 'new' dad: Navigating fathering identity within organizational contexts. *Journal of Business & Psychology, 30*(2), 249-266. doi:10.1007/s10869-014-9361-x
- Hunter, S. C., Riggs, D. W., & Augoustinos, M. (2017). Hegemonic masculinity versus a caring masculinity: Implications for understanding primary caregiving fathers. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 11*(3), 1-9. doi:10.1111/spc3.12307
- Husserl, E. (1982). *Ideas pertaining to a pure phenomenology and to a phenomenological philosophy*. The Hague, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.
- Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Amendment Act, No. 6. (1936). Retrieved from http://www.nzlii.org/nz/legis/hist_act/icaaaa19361ev1936n6563/
- Julian, R. (1999). *Fathering in the new millennium: Fathers Who Care: Partners in Parenting*. Wellington, New Zealand: Office of the Commissioner for Children.
- Kalliath, T., & Brough, P. (2008). Work-life balance: A review of the meaning of the balance construct. *Journal of Management & Organization, 14*, 323-327. doi:10.1017/s1833367200003308
- Kearney, M., Harris, B., Jacome, E., & Parker, L. (2013). *A dozen facts about America's struggling lower-middle class*. Retrieved from https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/THP_12LowIncomeFacts_Final-1.pdf

- Kelly, E. L., & Kalev, A. (2006). Managing flexible work arrangements in US organizations: Formalized discretion or 'a right to ask'. *Socio-Economic Review*, 4(3), 379-416.
doi:10.1093/ser/mwl001
- Kimmel, M. (2010). *Misframing Men: The politics of contemporary masculinities*. New Brunswick, Canada: Rutgers University Press.
- Kittay, E. F. (1999). *Love's labor: Essays on women, equality, and dependency*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Klett-Davies, M. (2010). *Is parenting a class issue?* London, England: Family & Parenting Institute.
- Knoester, C., & Eggebeen, D. J. (2006). The effects of the transition to parenthood and subsequent children on men's well-being and social participation. *Journal of Family Issues*, 27(11), 1532-1560. doi:10.1177/0192513X06290802
- Landridge, D. (2007). *Phenomenological psychology: Theory, research and method*. Essex, England: Pearson Education Limited.
- Landy, F. J., & Conte, J. M. (2016). *Work in the 21st century: An introduction to industrial and organizational psychology* (5th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Lapierre, L. M., Spector, P. E., Allen, T. D., Poelmans, S., Cooper, C. L., O'Driscoll, M. P., . . . Kinnunen, U. (2008). Family-supportive organization perceptions, multiple dimensions of work-family conflict, and employee satisfaction: A test of model across five samples. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 73(1), 92-106.
doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2008.02.001
- Larkin, M., Watts, S., & Clifton, E. (2006). Giving voice and making sense in interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 102-120.
doi:10.1191/1478088706qp062oa

- LaRossa, R. (1988). Fatherhood and social change. *Family Relations*, 37(4), 451-457.
doi:10.2307/584119
- Lee, C., & Owens, G. (2002). Men, work and gender. *Australian Psychologist*, 37(1), 13-19.
doi:10.1080/00050060210001706626
- Lee, E., Macvarish, J., & Bristow, J. (2010). Risk, health and parenting culture. *Health, Risk & Society*, 12(4), 293-300. doi:10.1080/13698571003789732
- Lee, J., & Lee, S. (2018). Caring is masculine: Stay-at-home fathers and masculine identity. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 19(1), 47-58. doi:10.1037/men0000079
- Lee, R., & Renzetti, C. (1990). The problems of researching sensitive topics: An overview and introduction. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 33(5), 510-528.
doi:10.1177/0002764290033005002
- Lim, K. (2019). Do American mothers use self-employment as a flexible work alternative? *Review of Economics of the Household*, 17(3), 805-842. doi:10.1007/s11150-018-9426-0
- Luketina, F., Davidson, C., & Palmer, P. (2009). *Supporting Kiwi dads: Roles and needs of New Zealand fathers*. Wellington, New Zealand: Families Commission.
- Lundberg, S., & Rose, E. (2000). Parenthood and the earnings of married men and women. *Labour Economics*, 7(6), 689-710. doi:10.1016/S0927-5371(00)00020-8
- Major, D. A., Lazun, H. M., & Jones, M. P. (2013). New directions in work-family coping research. In S. Poelmans, J. Greenhaus, & M. Maestro (Eds.), *Expanding the boundaries of work-family research: A vision for the future* (pp. 193-211). New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.
- McLaughlin, K., & Muldoon, O. (2014). Father identity, involvement and work-family balance: An in-depth interview study. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 24, 439-452. doi:10.1002/casp.2183

- McNaughton, T., & O'Brien, J. (1999). Fathers at work - Families keep out: The need for culture change in New Zealand workplaces. In S. Birks & P. Callister (Eds.), *Perspectives on fathering*. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Centre for Public Policy Evaluation, College of Business, Massey University.
- McPherson, M. J. (2006). *New Zealand cultural norms of parenting and childcare and how these relate to labour force participation decisions and requirements: Reports of qualitative interviews with 40 mothers* (No. 14/06). Wellington, New Zealand: Families Commission. Retrieved from <https://thehub.sia.govt.nz/resources/new-zealand-cultural-norms-of-parenting-and-childcare-and-how-these-relate-to-labour-force-participation-decisions-and-requirements/>
- Mercer, D., Russell, E., & Arnold, K. A. (2014). Flexible working arrangements in healthcare: A comparison between managers of shift workers and 9-to-5 employees. *44*(7/8), 411-416. doi:10.1097/NNA.0000000000000091
- Miller, T. (2010). *Making sense of fatherhood: Gender, caring and work*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Mincer, J., & Ofek, H. (1982). Interrupted work careers: Depreciation and restoration of human capital. *Journal of Human Resources*, *17*(1), 3-24. doi:10.2307/145520
- Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment. (2017). *Small businesses in New Zealand*. Retrieved from <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/assets/30e852cf56/small-business-factsheet-2017.pdf>
- Ministry of Social Development. (2004). *New Zealand families today: A briefing for the Families Commission*. Retrieved from <https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/research/nz-families-today/nz-families-today.pdf>

Moen, P. (2005). Beyond the career mystique: "Time in," "time out," and "second acts".

Sociological Forum, 20(2), 189-208. Retrieved from

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15737861>

Moen, P., & Sweet, S. (2004). From 'work-family' to 'flexible careers': A life course reframing. *Community, Work & Family*, 7(2), 209-226.

doi:10.1080/1366880042000245489

Moran, D. (2000). *Introduction to phenomenology*. London, England: Routledge.

Munsch, C. L. (2016). Flexible work, flexible penalties: The effect of gender, childcare, and type of request on the flexibility bias. *Social Forces*, 94(4), 1567-1591.

doi:10.1093/sf/sov122

Naz, G. (2010). Usage of parental leave by fathers in Norway. *International Journal of*

Sociology and Social Policy, 30(5/6), 313-325. doi:10.1108/01443331011054262

Nomaguchi, K. M., Milkie, M. A., & Bianchi, S. B. (2005). Time strains and psychological well-being: Do dual-earner mothers and fathers differ? *Journal of Family Issues*,

26(6), 756-792. doi:10.1177/0192513x05277524

O'Neil, D. A., & Bilimoria, D. (2005). Women's career development phases: Idealism, endurance, and reinvention. *Career Development International*, 10(3), 168-189.

doi:10.1108/13620430510598300

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2017a). *Benefits of university education remain high but vary widely across fields of study*. Retrieved from

<https://www.oecd.org/newsroom/benefits-of-university-education-remain-high-but-vary-widely-across-fields-of-study.htm>

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2017b). *Net costs of childcare*.

Retrieved from https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/economic-policy-reforms-2017/net-costs-of-childcare_growth-2017-graph178-en#page1

- Osborn, M., & Smith, J. A. (1998). The personal experience of chronic benign lower back pain: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. . *British Journal of Health Psychology*, 3, 65-83. doi:10.1111/j.2044-8287.1998.tb00556.x
- Otter Voice Notes. (2019). *Help centre: Frequently asked questions*. Retrieved from <https://otter.ai/help>
- Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act, No. 129. (1987). Retrieved from <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1987/0129/latest/DLM120104.html>
- Parental Leave and Employment Protection Amendment Act, No. 45. (2017). Retrieved from <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2017/0045/latest/DLM7480807.html>
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, LA: SAGE Publications.
- Pedulla, D. S. (2016). Penalized or protected? Gender and the consequences of nonstandard and mismatched employment histories. *American Sociological Review*, 81(2), 262-289. doi:10.1177/0003122416630982
- Perlow, L. A. (1997). *Finding time: How corporations, individuals, and families can benefit from new work practices*. Ithaca, NY: ILR Press.
- Perrigino, M. B., Dunford, B. B., Troup, M., Boss, R. W., & Boss, D. S. (2019). Work-family culture within hospitals: An interdepartmental analysis of employee engagement and retention. *Health Care Management Review*, 44(4), 296-305. doi:10.1097/HMR.0000000000000190
- Perry, B. (2017). *Household incomes in New Zealand: Trends in indicators of inequality and hardship 1982 to 2016*. Retrieved from <https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/monitoring/household-income-report/2017/2017-incomes-report-wed-19-july-2017.pdf>

Phillips, J. (1996). *A man's country?: The image of the pakeha male, A history* (Rev. ed.).

Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin Books Ltd.

Pietkiewicz, I., & Smith, J. A. (2014). A practical guide to using interpretive

phenomenological analysis in qualitative research psychology. *Czasopismo*

Psychologiczne, 20(1), 7-14. doi:10.14691/CPJ.20.1.7

Porter, M. E., Stern, S., & Green, M. (2017). *Social Progress Index 2017*. Retrieved from

<https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/co/Documents/about-deloitte/Social-Progress-Index-2017.pdf>

Prichard, M. (2019, September 11). Maternity [Blog post]. Retrieved from

<https://www.globalwomen.org.nz/gender-pay-gap/maternity/>

Ravenswood, K. (2008). The role of the state in family-friendly policy: An analysis of

Labour-led government policy. *New Zealand Journal of Employment Relations*,

33(3), 34-44. Retrieved from <https://www.nzjournal.org>

Rochlen, A., McKelley, R., & Whittaker, T. (2010). Stay-at-home fathers' reasons for

entering the role and stigma experiences: A preliminary report. *Psychology of Men &*

Masculinity, 11(4), 279-285. doi:10.1037/a0017774

Rochlen, A., Suizzo, M., McKelley, R., & Scaringi, V. (2008). 'I'm just providing for my

family': A qualitative study of stay-at-home fathers. *Psychology of Men &*

Masculinity, 9(4), 193-206. doi:10.1037/a0012510

Rousseau, D. M. (1989). Psychological and implied contracts in organizations. *Employee*

Responsibilities & Rights Journal, 2(2), 121-139. doi:10.1007/BF01384942

Rousseau, D. M. (1995). *Psychological contracts in organizations: Understanding written*

and unwritten agreements. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Rousseau, D. M. (2005). *I-deals: Idiosyncratic deals employees bargain for themselves*.

London, U.K: Routledge.

- Rousseau, D. M., Ho, V. T., & Greenberg, J. (2006). I-deals: Idiosyncratic terms in employment relationships. *Academy of Management Review*, 31(4), 977-994. doi:10.5465/AMR.2006.22527470
- Rudman, L. A., & Mescher, K. (2013). Penalizing men who request a family leave: Is flexibility stigma a femininity stigma? *Journal of Social Issues*, 69(2), 322-340. doi:10.1111/josi.12017
- Sandelowski, M. (1999). Focus on qualitative methods: Time and qualitative research. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 22(1), 79-87. doi:10.1002/(SICI)1098-240X(199902)22:1<79::AID-NUR9>3.0.CO;2-3
- Schmidt, J. (2014). Primary care decision making among first-time parents in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Women's Studies Journal*, 28(1), 18-35. Retrieved from <http://www.wsanz.org.nz/journal.htm>
- Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J., & Altenburger, L. E. (2019). Parental gatekeeping. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting: Being and becoming a parent* (pp. 167-198). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Shirani, F., Henwood, K., & Coltart, C. (2012). Meeting the challenges of intensive parenting culture: Gender, risk management and the moral parent. *Sociology*, 46(1), 25-40. doi:10.1177/0038038511416169
- Shirley, I. (1999). "In the name of the father": Men, fatherhood and public policy. In S. Birks & P. Callister (Eds.), *Perspectives on fathering*. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Massey University.
- Shockley, K. M., & Allen, T. D. (2010). Investigating the missing link in flexible work arrangement utilization: An individual difference perspective. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 76(1), 131-142. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2009.07.002

- Sidle, S. D. (2011). Career track or mommy track: How do women decide? *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 25(2), 77-79. Retrieved from <http://aom.org/Publications/AMP/Academy-of-Management-Perspectives.aspx>
doi:10.5465/AMP.2011.61020804
- Sin, I., Dasgupta, K., & Pacheo, G. (2018). *Parenthood and labour market outcomes*. Retrieved from <https://women.govt.nz/documents/parenthood-and-labour-market-outcomes>
- Smith, J. A., Larkin, M. H., & Flowers, P. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*. London, England: SAGE Publications.
- Solomon, C. R. (2014). "After months of it, you just want to punch someone in the face": Stay-at-home fathers and masculine identities. *Michigan Family Review*, 18(1), 23-38.
doi:10.3998/mfr.4919087.0018.103
- Statistics New Zealand. (2018a). *Employment highest ever for women*. Retrieved from <https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/employment-highest-ever-for-women>
- Statistics New Zealand. (2018b). *Gender pay gap is second-smallest*. Retrieved from <https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/gender-pay-gap-is-second-smallest>
- Statistics New Zealand. (2018c). *Over half of children in formal care there due to parents' work arrangements*. Retrieved from <https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/over-half-of-children-in-formal-care-there-due-to-parents-work-arrangements>
- Statistics New Zealand. (2019a). *2013 Census QuickStats about education and training*. Retrieved from <http://archive.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/qstats-education-training/highest-qualification.aspx>
- Statistics New Zealand. (2019b). *Gender pay gap unchanged since 2017*. Retrieved from <https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/gender-pay-gap-unchanged-since-2017>

- Statistics New Zealand. (2019c). *Household Labour Force Survey*. Retrieved from <http://archive.stats.govt.nz/infoshare/SelectVariables.aspx?pxID=85ca9fe7-9683-4f10-83b1-7d1f907f3b61>
- Statistics New Zealand. (2019d). *Most Kiwis find good balance between work and home*. Retrieved from <https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/most-kiwis-find-good-balance-between-work-and-home>
- Statistics New Zealand. (2019e). *Survey of working life: 2018*. Retrieved from <https://www.stats.govt.nz/reports/survey-of-working-life-2018>
- The University of Auckland. (2016a). *Key findings: Dads and work*. Retrieved from <https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/growingup/research-findings-impact/Key%20Findings%20Dads%20and%20work.pdf>
- The University of Auckland. (2016b). *Who are today's dads? Fathers and co-parents of children in the Growing Up in New Zealand study*. Retrieved from <https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/growingup/research-findings-impact/Who%20are%20today's%20dads.pdf>
- Thompson, A. R., Beauvais, L. L., & Lyness, K. S. (1999). When work-family benefits are not enough: The influence of work-family culture on benefit utilization, organizational attachment and work-family conflict. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 54(3), 392-415. doi:10.1006/jvbe.1998.1681
- Uhl-Bien, M., Graen, G., & Scandura, T. A. (2000). Implications of leader-member exchange (LMX) for strategic human resource management systems: Relationships as social capital for competitive advantage. *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, 18, 137-185. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/journal/0742-7301_Research_in_Personnel_and_Human_Resources_Management

- Vandello, J. A., Hettinger, V. E., Bosson, J. K., & Siddiqi, J. (2013). When equal isn't really equal: The masculine dilemma of seeking work flexibility. *Journal of Social Issues*, 69(2), 303-321. doi:10.1111/josi.12016
- Varuhas, J., Fursman, L., & Jacobsen, V. (2007). *Work and family balance: An economic view* (Working Paper No. 03/26). Retrieved from <https://treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-01/twp03-26.pdf>
- Wall, G. (2005). Childhood and child rearing. In M. Baker (Ed.), *Families: Changing trends in Canada* (pp. 163-180). Toronto, Canada: McGraw Hill Ryerson.
- Wall, G., & Arnold, S. (2007). How involved is involved fathering?: An exploration of the contemporary culture of fatherhood. *Gender and Society*, 21(4), 508-527. doi:10.1177/0891243207304973
- Wayne, J. H., & Cordeiro, B. L. (2003). Who is a good organizational citizen? Social perception of male and female employees who use family leave. *Sex Roles*, 49(5-6), 233-246. doi:10.1023/a:1024600323316
- Weisshaar, K. (2018). From opt out to blocked out: The challenges for labor market re-entry after family-related employment lapses. *American Sociological Review*, 83(1), 34-60. doi:10.1177/0003122417752355
- Williams, J. (2001). *Unbending gender: Why family and work conflict and what to do about it*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology* (3rd ed.). Berkshire, England: McGraw Hill Education.
- Zodgekar, N., & Fursman, L. (2008). *Give and take: Families' perceptions and experiences of flexible work in New Zealand* (No. 4/08). Retrieved from <https://thehub.sia.govt.nz/resources/give-and-take-families-perceptions-and-experiences-of-flexible-work-in-new-zealand/>

Zuo, J. (2004). Shifting the breadwinning boundary - The role of men's breadwinner status and their gender ideologies. *Journal of Family Issues*, 25(6), 811-832.

doi:10.1177/0192513X03259144

Appendices

Appendix A

Information Sheet

The experiences of employed caregiving fathers

Information Sheet

Who is conducting this research project?

My name is Danielle Bethune. I am currently completing a Master of Arts majoring in psychology at Massey University, and am conducting this project to fulfil the requirements of this. The project supervisor is Dr Veronica Hopner from the School of Psychology.

What is project about?

This project aims to explore the experiences of employed caregiving fathers in New Zealand. Currently little is known about this topic in a New Zealand context. This research would contribute towards a richer understanding of what the experiences of Kiwi caregiving fathers are like. This could help policy and decision-makers at organisational and governmental levels better support employed caregiving fathers in New Zealand.

Who can take part?

I am inviting employed caregiving fathers to participate in this project.

You may be eligible to participate if you:

- Have altered your working arrangements in order to meet your responsibilities as a caregiving father, for at least one year within the previous five years, while living in New Zealand.
 - A caregiving father is defined as someone who has primary or joint parenting responsibilities for the caregiving and rearing of a child, or children, under the age of 18.
 - Fathers include anyone fulfilling the role of a father (e.g. biological fathers, stepfathers, foster care fathers, etc).
 - Examples of ways working arrangements may have been altered include reduced working hours, flexible working hours, working from home, self-employment, etc.
- Speak fluent English

This project will involve a small sample of between five and eight participants to enable me to gain a rich understanding of each participant's experience. These participants will be recruited through snowball sampling, which will involve participants referring other potential participants that they know to me.

You will be given a \$20 voucher for The Warehouse to say thanks for your time.

What will happen?

If you decide to accept the invitation to participate in this research, it will involve a reasonably casual 1-1.5 hour-long face-to-face or Skype interview about your experiences. The interview will be audio-recorded. It will

be conducted at a time and place that suits you, such as at your home, or in a private meeting room, like those at public libraries or one of the Massey University campuses.

At the beginning of the interview you will be asked to fill out a consent form. After this, I will ask you some general demographic questions before we get into that about your experiences. Areas of your experiences that will be explored include decision-making around work and care, treatment in the workplace, factors impacting your ability to manage your work and caregiving obligations, careers, and understandings of gender roles and masculinity in relation to breadwinning and caregiving. At the end of the interview you will be asked if you know any other men who may be eligible to participate in the research. If you do, then I will ask you if you would like to pass on this information sheet to them. However, you are under no obligation to do so. You will also be asked whether you would like to be emailed a summary of the project findings when the project finishes.

How will the information be handled?

The information gathered from the interviews will be analysed to find themes in participants' experiences. Findings will be published in my master's thesis, and potentially an academic journal. You will also be emailed a summary of the project findings if you opt to.

All participant information will be carefully managed to ensure that privacy and confidentiality is maintained. The interview audio recording will be typed up in written form. During this process you will be given a pseudonym (fake name), and any other identifying information (such as the names of family members, employers, colleagues, etc) will either be changed or removed. There will be no identifying information in any reports or publications. Audio recordings, transcriptions and any other associated information will be securely stored, with only myself and my supervisor having access to these. The information obtained will only be used for the purposes of this project. When the project finishes, all data will be destroyed, except for signed informed consent forms, which will be kept by the supervisor for five years, as per Massey University requirements.

What are your rights as a participant?

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation.

If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study up to three weeks after the interview;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview

Project contacts

If you are interested in participating in this project or have any questions, please feel free to contact me (Danielle Bethune) using the email or phone details provided below. You may also use the details below to contact myself or my supervisor any time throughout the research if you have any questions, concerns, or wish to provide feedback.

Researcher: Danielle Bethune

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Supervisor: Veronica Hopner

Email: v.hopner@massey.ac.nz

Phone: (09) 414 0800 ext. 43101

School of Psychology, Massey University

Low risk notification

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named in this document are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director (Research Ethics), email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

If you need support, feel free to contact

- Lifeline – 0800 543 354
- Samaritans – 0800 726 666
- Depression Helpline – 0800 111 757
- Anxiety phone line – 0800 269 4389
- 1737, need to talk? – Call or text 1737

Appendix B

Interview Schedule

Demographic Questions:

- Can you please tell me a bit about your children?
- What age group do you fit into out of under 25, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49...?
- How long have you been a caregiving father who is also in paid work?
- What is your paid job?
- How many hours do you spend in paid work on an average week?
- Do you have a spouse?
- If yes:
 - What is your spouse's paid job?
 - How many hours does your spouse spend in paid work on an average week?

Main Questions:

- How did you make the decision to become a caregiving father?
- How did that decision impact your work?
- How did people in your workplace first react to your decision?
- To what extent do you think that you have been seen or treated differently by people you work with because of your role as a caregiving father?
- To what extent do you think that your role as a caregiving father has impacted your career?
- Have you developed any skills as a caregiving father that have transferred to your paid work? If so, please describe them.
- Are there any work-related factors that have helped you to manage your role as a caregiving father who is also in paid work? If so, please describe them.
- Are there any work-related factors that have made it more difficult for you to manage your role as a caregiving father who is also in paid work? If so, please describe them.
- To what extent do you think that society's understandings of men's roles are changing?
- To what extent do you think that your views about of men's roles influenced your decision to become a caregiving father?
- Have these views changed since being a caregiving father? If so, in what ways?
- Have you had any experiences where you have felt like your masculinity has been challenged in relation to your role as a caregiving father, or the loss of your breadwinning role? If so, please elaborate.
- Would you like to add anything that hasn't been covered?

Housekeeping Questions:

- Do you know of any other men who may be suitable for this study? If so, would you be able to get consent from them to pass on their contact details to me?
- Would you like to be sent a summary of the research project findings?

Appendix C
Informed Consent Form

The experiences of employed caregiving fathers

Participant Consent Form – Individual

I have read, or have had read to me in my first language, and I understand the Information Sheet attached. I have had the details of the study explained to me, any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study up to three weeks after the interview.

1. I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.
2. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Declaration by Participant:

I _____ hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix D
Abbreviations

Table 3

Abbreviations

Term	Abbreviation
Flexible working arrangements	FWAs
Idiosyncratic deal	I-deal
Interpretative phenomenological analysis	IPA
Leader-member exchange	LMX
Stay-at-home fathers	SAHFs
Work-family conflict	WFC
Work-life balance	WLB