I will place the meat on the grill: How self-identified Asian men shape their identity in the context of traditional European masculinity within New Zealand society

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Abstract

New Zealand as a nation has seen an influx of migrants from Asia in the last few decades although many Asians have been part of the New Zealand settlement project for several centuries. Ethnic minority status affords limited ability for Asian men to identify as masculine outside traditional European masculinity accepted in Aotearoa New Zealand society. Due to limited research within New Zealand on Asian masculinity, this research uses a qualitative approach to produce a nuanced understanding of Asian masculinity. Semi-structured interviews based on an ethnographic approach with self-identified Asian ethnicity men were conducted. Social Constructionism formed the epistemological basis of my study. The study aimed to investigate how men within the Asian minority community construct and negotiate their masculinity.

All participants showed a strong inclination of masculinity being associated with responsibility and taking ownership. They discussed 'taking charge' and 'accountability' as something that men do. Support for social justice and helping others was considered masculine and often a moment of pride. Most participants related masculinity with physicality and the physical ability to compete and perform. Participants provided examples of understanding that they were different. Their understanding of uniqueness was from a cultural and racial perspective but also included their masculine identity in some instances. The stories of some participants highlighted experiences of exclusion against Asians within New Zealand society. The participants acknowledged a varying degree of agency as individual actors within their discourse. Some participants suggested that the bicultural understanding of the nation left marginal room for inclusion of the Asian masculine identity into the idea of a "Kiwi". Other participants, however, did not believe that their "unique" position in society was exclusionary and they proudly associated their uniqueness with their identity. Stereotypes against Asians were prevalent and media influence was often limited or negative towards Asian men. All participants emerged with a very nuanced understanding of their position in society and showed intentions of being role models for others. Several participants were supportive of the idea that "othering" is reducing at a rapid pace within Aotearoa New Zealand society. This research presents the experiences of Asian men to assist with this change.

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Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

"I'm still in the process of finding myself. And, you know, do reflections on a regular basis. The challenge of the reflections is, if you do too much of it, it damages your self-esteem. And I think having a level of confidence as a man is actually quite important"

- *Participant 7*

My journey as a Man: A reflexive approach to research

As a young man who moved to Aotearoa New Zealand, I experienced my own understanding of masculinity evolve over the years. From my teenage to late twenties, there have been several milestones shared below that have shaped me as a man. My time in Aotearoa New Zealand, initially as a tertiary student and later as a professional, forms a significant portion of my life journey. My identity as an Asian Indian person within a predominantly western European society has been a contributing factor to my evolving understanding of masculinity.

Historical and cultural influences have a major impact on the particular construction of masculinity within a society. As a result of increasing globalization, I was able to experience more than one culture growing up and so my understanding of masculinity is influenced by several cultures and their evolution over time. I was born in the early nineties in northern India. I was the second child to practicing doctors in their forties, and I soon travelled as a toddler to live in Saudi Arabia where my parents were living and working at the time. The first decade of my life was spent predominantly in Saudi Arabia. I was raised with a strong emphasis on education and taught values of honesty, loyalty and fairness quite early on. The lack of a wider family and a small Indian diaspora in Saudi Arabia meant the influence of my home culture was rather mixed with influence from the culture of my host country. The language of instruction in Primary School was English, so I was raised in a very multicultural environment. My family moved back to India in early 2000s where I completed my middle and high school. The second decade of my life allowed me to engage with my home culture and was significant towards development of my understanding of masculinity within a society where I was part of the ethnic majority. My position of privilege became truly meaningful to me after I relocated to Aotearoa New Zealand. As a minority in New Zealand, my identity as an Asian man became a part of my understanding of masculinity. My understanding of masculinity has been influenced by all these cultural and historical factors.

Research on Asian masculinity within Aotearoa New Zealand, a country with a history of Western European and Asian settlers, is limited. It therefore becomes important to understand the historical and cultural context to understand how gender socialization shapes the construct of masculinity within contemporary Aotearoa. My study uses a qualitative lens to focus on men of Asian ethnicities and their understanding of masculinity. My identity as an Asian Indian man in New Zealand, my background and my understanding of masculinity from the point of view of a minority, allows me to take an insider perspective on masculinity among Asian ethnic minorities and I intend to use a reflexive approach while conducting my research in line with the recommendations of Braun & Clarke (2019).

It becomes especially important as an insider for me to ensure a reflexive approach to research for the credibility of my study. The researcher brings with her/him the knowledge of discourses from outside the research project to really make meaning of any example or piece of discourse; and to make it part of a coherent system (Parker, 1990). “Reflexive” actions should also direct attention back to the self and foster a circular relationship between participant and interviewer rather than distinguish between subject and object and cause and effect. Reflexivity between an interviewer and a participant can be used for the construction of new knowledge. It provides benefits to both the interviewer and the participant through consciously understanding how the story is co-created by them but also requires the researcher to challenge his/her emotional responses to the findings of the research (Probst, 2015). My journey as an Asian minority man and the intention of using a reflexive lens to research ensures that my approach is an active, aware and holistic one throughout the process of planning the research, conducting the interviews, analyzing the data and working on the summary of the findings. A reflexive approach will also ameliorate the establishment of unequal relations between the interviewer and the participants.

Asian Masculinity

"He was very, very well educated compared to a lot of Chinese because he finished high school. He knew how to read and write Chinese, read Chinese philosophy. He never told me what a Chinaman should be like."

- *Participant 2*

Aotearoa New Zealand has had several waves of immigration, the largest being that of Anglo European settlers over the 18th and 19th centuries (Belich, 1986). European colonial settlement has shaped New Zealand into a Western European nation with institutions that are fundamentally of British colonial origin. The British settler explosion came at the expense of assimilation of the Māori into the Anglo European culture and the Treaty of Waitangi being sidelined from the 1840s until the 1960s (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). Māori paid the price for this colonial settlement not only through loss of cultural identity but loss of lives, land, and property. It is in this context that the understanding of minority masculinity becomes intertwined with the historical and the cultural factors in our society. The complex intersections of Indigenous masculinities with race, colonialism and decolonization among other identity markers provide evidence of how a racialized (inferior beings) and gendered (savage men) perception of Indigenous people has been used historically as a justification for access to their lands and their subordination by the white race (Anderson and Innes, 2015). The traditional hegemonic masculinity propagated within western European culture is central to both the white man's feeling of being the "defender" and Indigenous men's actions to resist their subordination (Anderson and Innes, 2015, p. 52).

Since the advent of biculturalism as a commitment by the New Zealand government from the 1980s (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999), there has been continuous efforts to emphasize biculturalism goals and address the Crown actions that violated the spirit of the Treaty. However, there has been continued opposition to this approach by some people from the Anglo European community. In a study to understand the racial and settler imaginaries of British migrants who moved to Aotearoa after the 1960s, themes such as unfair privilege held by the Māori community, the temporality of colonialism as something in the past, and lack of true blood Māori are all identified as common beliefs (Higgins, 2019). Higgins suggests that the last full blood Māori died in the seventies, suggesting a very westernized view of Māori identity. Cultural appropriation has been evident in New Zealand Pākehā literature that depicts Māori constructed through the frame of western European perceptions (Stachurski,

2009). New Zealand literature and film have also portrayed the Indigenous Māori as embodying newly desirable qualities and concepts which further colonize their identity. An example of this is the fictional Pākehā-Māori character 'Baines' in the film *Piano* who is portrayed as a man with a real understanding of the land (in contrast to the character of 'Stewart' who is out of place in the frontier) and one who renounces the coercive relations of exchange between Pākehā and Māori. The movie visualizes a refashioned 'native' and highlights Pākehā-Māori relations to be filling an aesthetic deficiency in the European culture (Hardy, 1995). The movie overshadows the politics of cultural and racial domination and recolonizes indigenous Māori perspective of themselves. At the same time, New Zealand's Anglo European masculine identity, popularized by writers such as Barry Crump, is that of an independent man, alone, cultivating skills of survival and moving to the "bush". This has been indoctrinated through other Pākehā literature. An example can be seen in the character of 'Johnson' in the book *Man Alone* who is shown to be a real masculine Englishman explorer and whose desire to 'climb this magnificent mountain' (Mount Ruapehu) and turn the unsettled land into a settled one sees him getting closer and closer inland to Mount Ruapehu throughout the book (Stachurski, 2009).

Aotearoa New Zealand witnessed a change to immigration policies around the 1970s which ended the unofficial 'white New Zealand' policy to focus more on skills and wealth brought in by the migrants rather than their European origin (Simon-Kumar, 2014). This shift in policy represented a move from race to class migration criteria and led to increased migration from other communities such as the Pacific and the Asian communities. An immigration policy commitment to multiculturalism conflicted with the bicultural commitments of the Treaty of Waitangi. However, this change in policy has overtime, led to significant changes in the ethnic demographics of Aotearoa. Between 2001 and 2013, Pākehā population increased by about 300,000 (9 percent growth) compared to 107,000 for Māori (15 percent growth), 83,000 for Pasifika (24 percent growth) and 270,000 for the Asian communities (49 percent growth). Asian immigration in the recent decades along with births among Asian community both contributed to the changing ethnic composition of our population (Spoonley, 2020).

The shift in immigration policy towards multiculturalism has had significant social and identity consequences for people living in Aotearoa. In New Zealand schools, parents and pupils of visible minority perceive multicultural acceptance to be mostly superficial and imposed by expectations from those in authority (Sobrun-Maharaj, 2002). The complex mix of changes in

immigration policies leading to superficial acceptance of multiculturalism and administrative commitment to constitutional biculturalism based on the Treaty of Waitangi have an impact on the understanding of an Asian man's own identity. Therefore, from an intersectional point of view, ethnicity, class and gender, all influence how Asian men come to understand their masculinity within Aotearoa New Zealand. The historical and cultural factors described above also play a part in shaping the social and economic landscape available for these men to identify as masculine.

The journey of some Asian immigrants' identity struggle as they are first introduced to the cultural and temporal factors within New Zealand has been researched by Omura (2014). In describing the journey of the migrants towards understanding the Treaty of Waitangi, he attempts to reconcile the racial identity challenges that Asian immigrants first encounter in New Zealand. He proposes a four-phase model for their journey: *struggle, learning, internalization* & *enlightenment.* The first stage is when the participants *struggle* with psychological grievances within their narratives due to lack of integration into mainstream society despite their efforts. Through the stages of *learning* about the Treaty, *internalizing* the social issues within Aotearoa New Zealand and becoming *enlightened* about their own identity, Omura describes how the participants experience changes in their understanding of New Zealand's cultural relations, reconsider their 'positive public images of New Zealand as a British Commonwealth nation with cultural and ethnic harmony' and internalize Tikanga Māori. They also become more aware of their own cultural and ethnic identities (Omura, 2014, p225). The first stage of identity struggle brings in the wider question of the socially constructed frameworks offered to Asian minorities within New Zealand. Contrasting the studies below with the clear European identity communicated in New Zealand popular culture as discussed earlier, my research attempts to draw the socially constructed boundaries shaped by the legacy of colonization and gender socialization that Asian men negotiate to understand their identities within New Zealand.

The racial identity struggle has also been highlighted in the study on visible minority Asian students in Aotearoa New Zealand that we discussed previously. While some New Zealand born European students did not reproduce European stereotypes of Asian students, others highlighted "culture" and "ethnicity" as things that referred to Non-Europeans only and identified cultural differences to be cultural deficits. Therefore, visible minority Asian adolescents who were physically and culturally different from the western 'norms' felt

compelled to compensate for this ‘disadvantage’ by over identifying with their ‘Kiwi’ peers (Sobrun-Maharaj, 2002, p375).

Gender identity is another intersection that non-European men struggle with in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand. The process of gender socialization shapes the social understanding and social consciousness of people from the point of view of gender. It is a process of indoctrinating gender bias in social relationship, division of labour and social role acquisition right from childhood. Several groups and organizations such as schools, peer networks, workplaces etc. are shown to normalize attributes related to the gender categories of masculine and feminine within a society (Chattopadhyay, 2018). A study on the experience of migrating academics to Australia and New Zealand described how non-white male academics found it harder than their white counterparts to adjust to their host countries, were less inclined than their white counterparts to feel any privilege of having an international profile and did not feel a pressure to maintain links to their home country’s academic networks compared to their white Anglo counterparts (Sang & Calvard, 2019). The study acknowledged that hegemonic masculinities and masculine privilege operated for senior white UK male participants, through male-dominated homosocial networks, ease of migration experiences and access to resources such as research funding. Another study shows that homosocial interactions become evident beginning from a young age and continue through adulthood (Vogels, 2020). In this study, interactions among adolescents through pariah talk about their girlfriends are utilized to stabilize the ascendancy of hegemonic masculinity in their own lives and ensure overall order of gender hegemony. Therefore, intersectionality of gender and ethnicity provides benefit to some through hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). A hierarchy of masculinities is formed, and it maintains the current gender order that privileges all men over women. It provides greater privilege for those (white, senior, able-bodied) men who can ‘perform their gender roles along hegemonic lines’ (Sang & Calvard, 2019, p1521).

This legacy of colonization and gender socialization carves the boundaries of what is considered masculine for minorities. It becomes especially relevant as sizeable Asian minorities become commonplace in our society and requires a further focus on how Asian masculinity has been constructed in other countries with Western European institutions such as the United States and the United Kingdom. Studies on Asian masculinity within Aotearoa

New Zealand also assist in further painting this picture and help to imagine what shape Asian masculinity may take in the future.

Research Objectives

Due to limited research within Aotearoa New Zealand on Asian masculinity, the purpose of this study is to understand how Asian men construct and negotiate their identity as men within New Zealand. A one-on-one interview approach is employed. Analysis of the men's accounts, in the context of an ethnographic approach to the research, aims to produce a nuanced understanding of how these men experience their masculinity. The current research will contribute to understanding how ethnic minority status impacts the ability for men to identify as masculine outside off the traditional European masculinity widely accepted in New Zealand society. Investigations will focus on how these men are enabled and constrained by broader societal discourses regarding masculinity and the opportunities that are presented to these men. Social Constructionism forms the epistemological basis of this study. This research could also help strengthen the current clinical therapy practices for minority men suffering from anxiety or depression stemming from masculine identity driven issues.

Research Overview

Chapter Two reviews the applicable literature on masculinity theories as well as research studies on Asian minority masculinity within Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad. The reviewed research in this chapter unpacks the relevant social constructionist approaches to understanding masculinity. It also discusses the diversity of masculinity studies about the 'Asian model minority' and the issues that are relevant to their identity. Several studies conducted in the United States and the United Kingdom point to the intersectionality of the Asian masculine identity in the context of race, nationality, class, and gender. The lack of a nuanced understanding of Asian masculinity is critiqued and effort is made to define the direction that the NZ understanding of Asian masculinity may take in the future. In Chapter Three, I discuss the methodology used in the research as well as the research design based on a social constructionist epistemology. The chapter also discusses the recruitment approach, participants, and data collection. The final section of this chapter discusses a

narrative-thematic approach to analysis and reflexive approach to research. Chapter Four analyses the journey of the participants and the standpoints shared by the participants including those of their 'othering' within the cultural and masculine context. The themes covered are "Contribution to Society", "Masculinity is Physical", "Unique Existence", "Lack of Representation/Misrepresentation", "Standing Up", "Physical Differences" and "Experiences of Racism". The last three themes support the first five foundational themes in the context of the 'othering' of the participants. The themes describe the life experiences of the participants and share their journey from a participant-researcher co-creational perspective, i.e.- a narrative thematic approach. The thesis concludes with Chapter Five where I review findings of the research in the context of the research goals.

CHAPTER TWO: The Model Minority

"I guess mostly, um, my masculinity approach has been shaped by my observations of my father. And I guess things that I noticed from him was the ability to be calm in many situations."
- *Jolly*

Masculinity Theories

Several relevant masculinity theories are highlighted through the literature review conducted as part of this research. Elements of these masculinity theories are evident in the discourse utilized by the different participants. This is discussed within the methodology and analysis section of this study. Below is a short summary of these masculinity theories:

- Sex Role Theories

Sex role theories differentiate biological sex and gender (Messner, 1998) and suggest that socio-cultural norms rather than biological characteristics define sex roles (Hammond, 2014). However, unconventional acts such as a non-traditional career are constructed as deviant within this theory (Constantinople, 1973). The male sex role has typically been defined with a negative lens (O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, and Wrightsman, 1986). Gender role conflict due to limitations around gender roles and desire for 'actualization' has been used to explain men's reluctance to seek help for physical, psychological, and other problems (Vogel, Wester, Hammer, & Downing-Matibag, 2014). Role theory allows for quantification through measurements (Kachel, Steffens, & Neidlich, 2016) which strengthens the ability to capture gender, i.e.- brings scientific confidence in the findings on gender within the post positivist paradigm. But continual development of new scales suggests 'gender' instability and this fluidity does not support a static role or role-based theory. This approach also ignores masculinities constructed in alternative ways using contextual factors. Role theory has therefore been criticized as a cognitive approach which oversimplifies behavior as internalized ideology (Edley & Wetherell, 2014; Wetherell & Edley, 2014). It forces sex roles into a "static," "ahistorical" space (Kimmel, 1993, p. 34). Wetherell & Edley (2014) point out a methodological impasse between role theory and discursive approaches: the questionnaires and rating scales upon which role theories rely assume that participants' answers represent

what they 'really think', while ignoring the role of social interaction in constructing gender. The participants express differing levels of support in the sex role theories through the experiences shared by them.

- Gender as performance

Social constructionism theorizes gender as a performance and focuses on gendering processes (Poggio, 2006) and not just describing the results of gendering, as role theories do. West and Zimmerman (1987) proposed the following differences between sex, sex category, and gender. Sex is ascribed at birth according to genitalia. Sex category is based on socially visible evidence (appearance or behavior) that one must belong to either sex. Gender refers to activities that support membership of a sex category (i.e., feminine vs masculine behaviors). Performance of gender in socially constructed ways becomes a reinforcement of gender differences as naturally occurring. One cannot avoid being judged according to the extent to which one rebels against or conforms to gendered norms. Performance is therefore mandatory (Deutsch, 2007). Butler (1990) suggests the body itself is performance. There is no body that exists prior to discourse, and it is this discourse that creates the body itself. For example, biology is a powerful discourse through which physiological differences and the discourse of biological reproduction is used to show that anatomical differences naturally place individuals in one of two categories. The penis becomes erroneously intermixed with the phallus, and becomes the natural basis for male power, and its absence signifying the feminine identity. For Schippers (2007), Western constructions of heterosexual sex still reduce normative sexual practices to penetrating and being penetrated and that relation is consistently constructed as one of taking and dominating. Goffman's analogy of the stage is used to theorize social action as performance by social actors (Brickell, 2005; Huey & Brendt, 2008). Huey and Berndt (2008) suggest that the successful performance of gender is a strategy to gain prestige or acceptance in social life and unsuccessful performances are a cause of ostracism and censure. Some participants in my study expressed the standpoint that physicality and physical performance were exclusively masculine. This theory of masculinity provides a background to those experiences discussed in later chapters.

- Hegemonic Masculinity

Hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) has its roots in the early 1980s as a pro-feminist, systemic approach (Demetriou, 2001) that views gender relations as a system of power dynamics. Gramsci (1971) originally conceptualized hegemony to explain how the ruling class exercises power over the working class through the ability to define a situation, to set the terms in which events are understood, and to formulate ideals (Donaldson, 1993). Hegemony relies on consent rather than overt coercion. Connell's hegemony substitutes 'patriarchy' for the 'ruling class'. Ethnicity, and sexuality also intersect with gender in Connell's theorizing to account for the subordination of some masculinities by others. Underlying hegemonic masculine values of agency, action, the need to prove masculinity, and masculinity as avoidance of femininity have remained relatively stable in traditionally patriarchal socio-cultural systems. Hegemonic masculinity is perpetuated by complicity between the two genders and the patriarchal dividend this produces. Hegemonic masculinity might be considered a set of dominant discourses that the subject draws on, rather than externally constraining the subject. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) suggest that hegemonic masculinity retains its status amongst multiple masculinities as "more socially central, or more associated with authority and social power, than other [masculinities]" and it "presumes the subordination of other masculinities" (p. 846). However, contradictions in how men express masculinity reveal the inadequacy of simplistic conceptualizations of masculinity in older age and suggest that context largely determines masculinity's expression. Wetherell and Edley (2014) also argue that speakers can shift between different modes of masculinity—subordinate, complicit or hegemonic. Hegemonic masculinity forms the core of this research as it attempts to share the experiences of Asian men in the context of traditional Western European hegemonic masculinity in New Zealand society.

- Masculine Capital

The idea that cultural and social capital exists in addition to economic capital was conceptualized by Bourdieu (1986). Gender was excluded from this notion of cultural capital, despite the gendering process being one that creates power imbalances (Laberge, 2016; McCall, 1992). McCall (1992) insisted on attributing gender the same importance as 'class' in Bourdieu's theorizing. As an extension of this idea, Masculine capital (De Visser & McDonnell,

2013) may be accrued through activities deemed masculine (perhaps hegemonic). This capital may then be 'traded' for activities deemed less masculine. So, for instance, homosexual men may 'insure' themselves against being judged as less masculine through demonstrations of socially sanctioned masculine expertise or practice. Non-physical masculine practices might hypothetically take greater prominence in men's lives as they age. For instance, wealth or social status may 'prove' one's control, agency, or power in the absence of the powerful physicality which formerly demonstrated this (Sixsmith & Boneham, 2002). However, judgements regarding what can be legitimately 'traded' are subjective, and vary between contexts (De Visser et al., 2009).

There are examples of all of the above theories of masculinity within the worldviews shared by the participants of this research. The critical approach to determining the space offered to Asian men within New Zealand society analyses their experiences in comparison with the more expansive research space of more prevalent traditional European hegemonic masculinity.

Masculinity and the Model Minority

"So we just learned from the experiences. But there wasn't any special, like, programmes that were held for parents to adjust to the culture, the New Zealand culture like we do nowadays, you know, to educate parents or children. So, we just used to educate ourselves."
- *Participant 4*

Several studies within New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States provide a context for the impact of hegemonic masculinity on the identities of Asian men. It also provides a context for how the constructions of Asian masculinity have changed over the years in the UK and US and how this might be relevant to the Aotearoa New Zealand society in the future.

Constructions of Asian American masculinity have changed significantly within the United States in the last two centuries (Chua and Fujino, 1999). Racially discriminatory immigration policies and media images have helped regulate the formation of Asian American masculinities. Historically, Asian male laborers could enter the United States while the entrance of Asian women was restricted, thus producing a highly skewed sex ratio among Asian minorities. The men were constructed by the white majority as perpetual outsiders and considered to be treacherous, dirty and criminals. They were constantly monitored but simultaneously emasculated in popular opinion through the nature of the work that some of the laborers were employed to do (for example as domestic help). They were constructed within popular opinion as either sex-starved or submissive. With the industrialization of Japan post the second war and the industrialization of South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan known as the Asian Economic Miracle, the Asian man came to be known as self-dependent, economically successful and politically accepting (Chua & Fujino, 1999). In addition to this, the migrant Chinese and Indian minorities who moved up the socio-economic ladder within the United States contributed to changing how Asian Americans came to be perceived within popular culture. Class became an important factor in the intersectionality of identity influencing how Asian men came to be perceived within the United States. The Asian American man started to be constructed in society as one who is a good family man, is economically independent and his image is used to minimize the effects of racism and blame other racial minority men for their position on the economic ladder. In doing so, the actual issues pertaining to Asian masculinity such as racism, sexual stereotyping and economic exploitation were discounted.

More recently, Asian American students in college have had their identity drawn through the lens of hegemonic masculinity (Shek, 2006). White men were more likely to be selected as group leaders within college organizations, followed by white women with typically masculine behaviors (e.g., assertiveness). Conversely, Asian American men were least likely to be selected as group leaders even on campuses where they constituted a significant percentage of the student population (Cheng, 1996). Asian American men who were objectively more qualified than their white counterparts based on their background and experience were not chosen as leaders because they were perceived "as having a mixture of masculine and feminine traits." Chua and Fujino's (1999) study suggest that many Asian Americans hold the view that a man's identity can have elements of masculinity and femininity and these elements are not in opposition. However, within Asian communities, not all subgroups have had the same portrayal of racial and gender identity characteristics. Several South East Asian communities have been portrayed, on the contrary, to be linked with violence and delinquency. The overall change in the perception of Asian American communities overtime has had lasting influence on the communities themselves.

The profound impact of socially excluding the Asian communities within United States can be seen among the different Asian subgroups and how the identity markers of gender, race and class vary among these subgroups. Many South East Asian Americans have been significantly affected by racial and ethnic exclusion based on language, culture, immigration status, and socioeconomic status (Teranishi, 2004). This has had a profound impact on South East Asian American students facing hardships related to poverty, discrimination, language, and cultural clashes between home and school environments. A study by Lee (2006) evaluated the intersection of social class, ethnicity, and gender, and how these influenced students' academic and social experiences. Asians were not only viewed as high-achieving academic performers across school settings but often falsely believed to be financially well-off. This study showed differences in educational attainment and achievement across Asian American subgroups that appeared to be related to social class. Ethnic Asian subgroups with high rates of poverty typically experienced low rates of educational attainment. Another study on South East Asian American adolescent males from lower socio-economic classes has examined how violence was used by the adolescents as a tool to construct their gender and racial identities (Chong, 2008). In the case of these adolescents, a crime such as robbery was a means of

survival, both in terms of proving their manhood and taking care of their family. The same young men however also engaged in community activism and expressed a desire to protect their neighborhoods from hostile and discriminatory behavior by others. Such studies evidence the nuances present within Asian American masculine identity rather than just the two extremes, 'outcast' or 'model minority', that the Asian minority men have been labelled with in the United States. These nuances among Asian subgroups and the dichotomizing of stereotypes based on race relations are further discussed below.

Research on British Asian masculinities has in recent past remained influenced by the British race-relations discourse, raising competing ideas such as: the masculinities of rioting, deprived, under educated young South Asian Muslim men –emphasizing patriarchy and aggression, and the masculine identity of excessive drinking and male bonding among liberal Asian Indian men portrayed through scenes of nightclubs in popular media. To continue these dichotomized stereotypes, the complex and multi-faceted nature of Asian masculinity has been sidelined (Kalra, 2009). This race-relation discourse is influenced by the colonial past. During the British colonization of India, the British identified the Punjabis and Pathans to be of the 'martial races' and hence becoming a central part of the British Indian army. The 'bookish', intellectual Bengalis' portrayal relegated them to the running of the civil service and developing aspects of civil society within British India. The attributes of intelligence, technical capabilities and physical prowess as a combination was only reserved for the Englishmen (Kalra, 2009).

This dichotomy is also presented in the form of gendered stereotyping. As discussed earlier, some subgroups of Asian men have been portrayed as good family men, while others have been depicted to be sexual predators. In a recent study, researchers analyzed how British media of varied political orientations represented grooming cases that involved South Asian Pakistani offenders. The study showed that the media responses constructed child sexual exploitation as a cultural problem ignoring the wider issue of violence against women and ascribing blame to British multiculturalism, while creating an image of South Asian men being folk devils (Gill & Harrison, 2015). This intersectionality of race and gender has also been evident in Internet dating patterns in the United States as well. Race has been shown to be one of the main selection criteria for white internet daters. White individuals expressed racial preferences more commonly than religious or educational preferences. White men were

more likely than white women to be open to dating non-whites in the United States. White men who stated racial preferences were more likely than white women to exclude blacks as possible dates, while white women were much more likely to exclude Asians. Both White men and women were highly exclusionary towards Asian Indians and Middle Easterners (Felaciano, Robnett & Komaie, 2009). Gendered cultural stereotypes therefore inform how groups shape racial preferences for heterosexual relationships.

The studies reviewed from the United States and the United Kingdom show how the perception of Asian men has changed within these countries over time. The studies also show the dichotomizing stereotypes often ascribed to Asian men as well as how nuanced challenges within Asian subgroups are overlooked to present a black and white portrayal of Asian men. These studies become especially relevant within the context of New Zealand therefore that has seen a somewhat similar tangent in change of the perception of Asian masculinity recently.

The identity of New Zealanders of Chinese descent and how it has evolved since the 1860s has a detailed history (Ip and Pang, 2005). The authors refer to three phases of Asian collective identity among society in New Zealand: ostracization during 1860s-1940s under the unwritten White New Zealand policy, acceptance as the model minority during 1950s-1980s, and multiple identities since 1980s as China increasingly became an influential nation in world affairs. As discussed in Chapter 1, during this latter phase New Zealand aligned its immigration policies with a globalized approach among Western European nations to invite skilled migrants over race preference. The focus was on immigrants that could invest in the country through capital or skill (Ip & Pang, 2005). This has been in line with a strategy to develop a globalized economy and to allow financial capital flow into New Zealand. Asian migrants who moved to New Zealand brought with them financial capital and technical skill. However, this period has also seen the perception of a growing “Yellow Peril” exploited by political parties and popular media. In present times, there is a continuation of an ambiguous relationship of New Zealanders with the Asian identity where the transnational status and financial prowess ascribed to Asian migrants are welcome, but other aspects of identity such as differing social and moral values are often not welcomed (Ip & Pang, 2005). Biculturalism within New Zealand means equal partnership. However, claiming nativity to Aotearoa New Zealand as non-Māori cannot be done with reference to the Treaty, because under the Treaty

framework, Pākehā are classified within the same group as newer migrants (Omura, 2014). A zero-sum mentality might influence the view of nativity and contest notions of belongingness, which is what has been the case in recent and past popular debate. It is in this context that the so called 'model minority' label associated with Asian masculinity becomes especially important as this is used in contrast with the masculinity of the Māori community to subvert the bicultural character of New Zealand while ensuring the continuity of the hegemonic masculinity prevalent in New Zealand society.

Due to the lack of extensive research about the identity of Asian men within New Zealand, there is a need to understand the nuances of gender identity among Asian minorities in-depth. A one-on-one interview approach allows for analysis of the men's accounts using an ethnographic approach to the research. It aims to produce a nuanced understanding of how these men experience their masculinity. The current research will contribute to understanding how ethnic minority status impacts the ability for men to identify as masculine outside the traditional European masculinity accepted in New Zealand society. The focus is therefore on the context and the experiential understanding of how Asian men construct and negotiate their identity.

CHAPTER THREE: Methodology

Social Constructionism

A social constructionist view does not espouse a specific definition for itself due to the inherent realism imbued in the idea of a single "truthful" definition (Potter, 1996). Instead some key assumptions for a social constructionist approach (Burr, 2015, p. 2-5) and how these apply to my research are discussed below.

'A critical stance towards taken for granted knowledge' – *This means that objective, unbiased observation does not automatically lead to knowledge. Knowledge is created through social interactions via the various actors and the subject positions and agency allowed to them within the social power structures. Consider how the New Zealand society constructs and constrains Asian masculinity and influences its general perception. Examples discussed in earlier chapters, such as, media influence to portray South Asian minorities as sole perpetrators of child sexual abuse in the UK, highlight the possibility of viewing racialized masculinity in a critical light. It is in this context that this research gives the participants space to create what would be knowledge through sharing their experiential reality.*

'Historical and cultural specificity' – *Universal principles do not exist; as the ways in which we understand the world are historically and culturally relative. Consider the historical and cultural background of Aotearoa New Zealand as a nation based on the Treaty which was sidelined for the transformation of New Zealand into a predominantly Western European society. When viewed in the context of an immigration policy that privileged skills over race in recent decades, it highlights the specific cultural and historical worldview in which this research is being undertaken. Consider how the gender, racial and class-based nuances of identity that influence Asian masculinity in the UK and the US may or may not be relevant to New Zealand society.*

'Knowledge is sustained by social processes' – *The social processes and interactions amongst people create what we call knowledge and shape our existence. Consider the challenges faced by Asian minorities in NZ, such as the study about visible minority students overcompensating for their perceived cultural differences with mainstream European norms. Such practices are*

sustained in everyday conversations within schools and other institutions and the current discriminatory perception about certain cultures is furthered in society through these participating agents.

'Knowledge and social action go together' – *Finally; the current social construction of knowledge brings with it a change in the social structure through social action. Consider how this study, using a qualitative approach to discuss the experiences of Asian men, constitutes social action that could further influence future understanding of race and gender within New Zealand.*

This social constructionist approach of my research means that objective, unbiased observation does not lead to knowledge. Universal principles do not exist as the ways in which we understand the world are historically and culturally relative. People engage in social processes and interactions to create "knowledge". As a vital and shared means of social interaction, language becomes more than just a medium to express oneself. Language is the site of the creation of knowledge. And identities are also constructed through language (Tuffin, 2005). The understanding of Asian masculinity within Aotearoa New Zealand is therefore constructed in relation to New Zealand's history and culture, using language. Within social constructionism, language forms a key component that determines how our society is shaped. Since language and thought are inseparable, they allow us to categorize our experiences and give it meaning. Burr suggests that language produces our holistic experience but there is nothing inherent in the categories we form to give shape to our experiences. The categories created by societies are relatively arbitrary. Once a meaning is attached to these categories; they remain relatively stable unless social action threatens to change their definitions. For example, we collectively give meaning to a word by acting as part of a community that uses the word in a specific way (Burr, 2015). Finally, the current social construction of knowledge brings with it a change in the social structure through social action. For example, with the idea of globalization and economic development as a pretext, the implementation of multicultural immigration policies in New Zealand led to change in demographics of the country and in turn the perceptions of racialized masculinity among minorities and the wider society. Within my research, knowledge of the nuances of Asian masculinity within New Zealand allows for social action to interview Asian men. This action

would in turn lead to change in discourse about their identity and further inform collective knowledge about this phenomenon.

In the process of collective knowledge construction, the concept of discourse becomes relevant. “Discourse” refers to an instance of situated language use. It also incorporates social practice. In this sense discourses are “practices which form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1972, p.49). Discourse is a way of representing a phenomenon in a certain light through text and other social mediums. Our arguments for the phenomenon of hegemonic masculinity are part of a discourse. Although the words, phrases etc. within an argument can be used in different discourses contributing to a different narrative; the discourse overall pushes for viewing the phenomenon in a certain light. The discourse also carries with it the potential social actions that can follow. Dominant hierarchies often have the privilege to inform these discourses due to the power imbalance present in every society (Foucault, 1972). However, the current and future understanding of the world is constantly contained by the cultural and historical conditions of the society in consideration. Social action within our society ultimately determines what shape the understanding of ‘Asianness’ and masculinity takes in the future.

In this context therefore, we cannot ignore the normative and cultural prescriptions that we have come to relate to identity groups such as gender, class or race within New Zealand culture. However, there is nothing inherent in these groupings that they must be divided up in a specific way. Identity within a social constructionist paradigm is intersectional and from a particular standpoint (Else-Quest, 2016). Else-Quest uses a standpoint epistemology wherein knowledge is constructed from a particular standpoint i.e. physical location, history and culture. This allows the recognition of privilege and power within the different categories of identity. My research approaches the experiences of the participants in this light to create knowledge about Asian masculinity and explore the narratives they relate to their identity creation within Aotearoa New Zealand, from their standpoint.

Methodology

From an intersectional point of view, the focus of social constructionist philosophy on identity creation within human interactions emphasizes the importance for the participants to have the space to voice their own understanding of Asian masculinity. Social constructionism

requires analysis of text and other forms of communication to identify what social practices support a specific discourse and the social structures that allow for these discourses to exist. It also looks at what subject positions are created and allowed to the different subjects in society. For example, Whetherell (1996) analyses an interview reported in 1987 of a white man talking about immigration policies. She describes the talk as constructing a category of immigrants as undesirable and legitimizing racist practices. The analysis focused on the constructions of "useless immigrants" and the positions made available to them and to "white men" via this discourse. It looked at the disempowerment that this discourse leads to for those "outsiders" and the possibility of actions made available to "outsiders" and "insiders".

Interactions between myself and the participants would allow for knowledge to be co-created by the participants and myself. The method of analysis in my research utilizes the transcription of the interviews conducted. A qualitative research method draws upon the knowledge and lived experiences of the participants and allows them the space to voice their expressions of identity. Their experiences are therefore given the space to create discourses of their own and take subject positions that ascribe the level of agency and blame to self and others through their own standpoints. The transcription allows for this interpretation of meaning to take place. The principle of reflexivity is utilized in conducting this research and for the co-construction of the data (participants' stories) that will be interpreted by myself, the researcher. It provides benefits to both the interviewer and the participant through consciously understanding how the story is cocreated by their social interaction. Thematic Analysis is used on transcribed interview conversations to "systematically identify, organize, and offer insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p57). The flexibility of thematic analysis in qualitative research allows this study to use an experiential lens for data coding. The analysis therefore becomes a bottom-up approach and is driven by the stories shared by the participants[1]. What this means is that the codes and themes are derived from the content of the stories themselves so what is generated by the researcher during analysis reflects the content of the stories as interpreted by the researcher. A narrative approach to thematic analysis then utilizes the overall themes to narrate the stories of the participants in constructing and negotiating their masculinity (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

[1] Since this approach is not as detailed as conversation analysis, this does not include physical markers such as pauses, inflection, body language etc. within the transcriptions.

Narrative Thematic Analysis as an approach is critical in its orientation and constructionist in its theoretical framework, examining how the world is put together (i.e., constructed) and the ideas and assumptions that inform the data gathered (Braun & Clarke, 2012). From a constructionist perspective, meaning and experience are socially produced and reproduced, rather than inhering within individuals (Burr, 1995). Therefore, thematic analysis conducted within a constructionist framework cannot and does not seek to focus on motivation or individual psychologies, but instead seeks to theorize the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts of masculinity that are provided within this research. In this sense, narrative thematic analysis at the latent level is well placed for this research as this goes beyond the semantic (surface level) content of the stories, and starts to identify and examine the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations/ideologies that are theorized as shaping or informing the semantic content of the stories (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Ethical Considerations & Reflexivity

Social constructionism argues that the ways in which we understand the world are historically and culturally relative (Burr, 2015). The constructions of the agency, accountability and blame assigned to minority Asian men within their narratives and the social power relations within society inform the subject positions of the participants. These subject positions construct and shape the framework available for the participants to create their identity within society. It is therefore very important to take into consideration any ethical concerns that maybe applicable to these participants in my research and ensure that a reflexive approach addresses these concerns throughout the research. In addition, the interaction between the researcher and the participant allows for the creation of the narrative, which is therefore a joint production between the interviewer and the interviewee. Hence the researcher has an insider position within this complementary relationship and carries with him or her the burden of ensuring that this relationship is not impacted by any power that the researcher may hold over the interviewee (Hyden, 2014).

Reflexivity improves the rigor and trustworthiness of a qualitative study. A key aspect of reflexive research is identifying how a discourse is related to the researcher (Parker, 1990). It is also imperative to consider how one writes about research practices in a qualitative study

(Ballinger, 2000). I intend on utilizing important strategies such as asking myself difficult questions (for example - Why am I finding something difficult to comprehend?), writing a research diary that documents my mental states during the research and how this could impact my interpretation of an event, presenting my work to different audiences and requesting feedback to fully understand an issue or concern, and, finally reflecting on unexpected findings to ensure this reflexive approach within my research.

This research attempts to utilize a teller focused interview approach which is oriented towards narration. To support and facilitate narratives, the teller focused interview is based on a dialectical way of thinking about the relationship between the researcher and the interviewee (Hyden, 2014). The emphasis is on allowing the participants to continue in their own way until they indicate they have finished their answer. The semi structured interview proposed within this research therefore allows the participants to tell their story. This teller focused approach is central to my research.

Ethical considerations were addressed using a reflexive qualitative approach to research. Emphasis was on ensuring that the research did not risk harming the participants in any way, emotionally or culturally. While their diversity was recognized, their privacy and autonomy were also considered. The research also acknowledged the Treaty of Waitangi principles in line with the bicultural commitment to Māori as per the treaty. Participants who self-identify as Asians, but may also identify as Māori, were to be included in this research. The principles of Manaakitanga (made to feel welcome) and Whanaungatanga (close connection with participants) were incorporated into the interview process for all participants. Māori share the experience of resisting European masculinity with Asian participants and there was consultation with Pita King as my Māori advisor to this end. This approach was actively included into the research by the researcher to connect with the participants as individuals with a different identity but shared experiences. These ethical considerations have been discussed in their relevant sections below in more detail.

Interview Design

The interviews were semi-structured and included a series of questions. Participants were invited to share the stories of their own experiences. Broad, open ended, clarifying questions allowed the participants to describe their experiences in detail. I designed a schedule of

questions to guide the interview (Appendix D) and used these questions as flexibly as possible in conducting each interview. The questions guided the areas of exploration, but the order of questioning was dependent on issues as they arose and determined by the participant. This schedule consisted of several research questions to cover the central issues of Asian and masculine identity. Interviews were conducted face to face to establish rapport and trust between the researcher and the participant and to ensure the quality of data collected with careful consideration of context. Emphasis was on following the principles of Manaakitanga and Whanaungatanga in conducting the interviews. Moreover, the social interaction of a face to face interview offered contextual data such as emotion, cues from voice pitch and non-verbal body language which assisted with the interpretation of the participants' stories and reflexive commentary on the researcher's contribution to co-construction as well.

Recruitment Strategy

Adult men who self-identified as Asian were recruited through direct approach by the researcher in everyday encounters, through trusted intermediaries of the researcher, purposeful snowballing technique by the first few participants as well as advertising to recruit participants on the Facebook group "Asians in New Zealand". Social media advertising was a recruitment strategy that was not originally proposed but a special request was sent to the Ethics committee to use this approach due to lack of participants recruited in the first month of recruitment using the other methods. Information sheets (Appendix A) were distributed to all suitable individuals who met the research criteria and were willing to volunteer to take part in the research. No recruitment was done within my direct family or friendship networks. Consent forms with my contact details were distributed for signing prior to participation, and potential participants were asked to contact me directly if they had any questions.

Ethical considerations relating to the recruitment of the Asian minority participants and their ethnicities have also been addressed in the research. The researcher's insider position as an Asian man enabled the understanding of the need for cultural sensitivity and respect for participants. Cultural consultation with cultural and research advisors at Massey was conducted to ensure acceptable cultural practices prior to the research commencing. Benefits of the research would trickle back to the minority communities and included giving participants an opportunity to voice their experiences as Asian minority men. This would promote respect for participants' standpoints. It was also hoped that the research would

contribute to a better understanding of Asian masculinity within New Zealand and could further strengthen current clinical therapy practices for minority men suffering from anxiety or depression.

Participants

Seven participants were recruited for the research. Two participants were recruited through direct contact. One was approached by the researcher at the time of a physiotherapy appointment attended by the researcher and another was a casual contact of the researcher at a public protest in Auckland. Both were presented with the opportunity to participate and accepted the proposal. One participant was recruited through a trusted intermediary and one participant was recruited using the snowballing approach. Three participants were recruited through online advertisement on the "Asians in New Zealand" Facebook group. The identity of each participant was kept confidential while allowing for the trusted intermediaries and initial participants to assist in identifying further participants. I arranged in-person meetings with each participant prior to interviews being conducted, to discuss the purpose/procedures of the project, and obtain written informed consent. Informed consent forms (Appendix B) and Transcript Release forms (Appendix C) were submitted with Dr Mandy Morgan for approval by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (SOB 20/39).

The project was conducted within the Auckland region. Interviews took place in private discussion rooms at formal or informal locations such as a public library meeting rooms, work offices and participants' private homes. These locations were chosen for their accessibility to participants and their suitability for making both participants and I feel safe, comfortable, and at ease during the interview. None of the interviews ended up being via internet video link even though this was proposed for in the research proposal in case COVID 19 government rules mandated this.

Confidentiality was also protected during transcription. Participants' names and identifying details were not transferred to the transcripts or notes. As requested by one participant, information about their work, job position and partner's information were omitted from transcription. Pseudonyms were used during the process of transcription and participants had the option of choosing their own pseudonym. A numbering approach was used to identify Participants (for example – Participant 1, Participant 2 etc.) throughout the research

thesis as they did not prefer to choose a pseudonym for themselves. The pseudonyms used during the transcription process were not used anywhere other than the transcripts. The exception to this was Participant 5 who chose to use the pseudonym 'Jolly'. Normative information of the participants has been provided further below in this chapter of the thesis. The interview data will only be used for any potential publications in a de-identified form, with all names and other personal details changed. Participant autonomy was respected by making the participants aware of the experiential approach to be utilized in the research. The project's aims and procedures were also discussed with the participants prior to and after the interviews taking place. Participants' consent was required prior to the beginning of the research and they were free to opt out of the study any time before signing the transcript release form. All interviews started with a background about the research and allowed for any questions that the participant had. The interviews were semi structured, and the participants led the interview with only prompts from the researcher to ensure questions relevant to the research were covered. This was an important tool in ensuring the power balance between the researcher and the participants. Finally, the participants who were interested in discussing the summary of the analysis, were approached in person or a summary of analysis sent via email to get feedback from the participants and inform the reflexive approach to research.

A total of seven self-identified Asian men were interviewed. Six participants were in their 20s and 30s. One participant was in his 60s. Five Participants were of East Asian descent (Taiwanese descent, Hong Kong descent, Mainland Chinese descent & Northern Chinese descent). Two participants were of South Asian descent (Punjabi Indian descent). There were no participants of other South Asian descent (Pakistani, Marathi Indian, Bangladeshi etc), South East Asian descent (Cambodian, Vietnamese, Thai etc) or other East Asian descent (Japanese or Korean). No participant was from a marginal socio-economic background and all participants were or had been professionals/semi-professionals. Three participants had young children, one participant had adult children and three participants were in a relationship but did not have any children. Two participants were born and raised in New Zealand, three participants had migrated with their families to New Zealand at a young age (under 10 years old) and were raised in New Zealand and two participants had migrated to New Zealand in their teens. Although a diverse range of participants were recruited for this study (no participants were students), there are still challenges around no participant

belonging to some nationalities/geographical Asian identities or holding alternate class identities. This is recognized as a limitation and future research in this space should represent other participants whose worldviews may not have been shared within this research.

Data Management & transcription

Digital recordings were created and kept on a password-protected device and online within a password-protected cloud. Once transcribed, these recordings were destroyed. Consent forms were stored securely in a locked filing cabinet with Massey University and will be destroyed after five years. De-identified transcripts were stored separately.

Analysing the Data

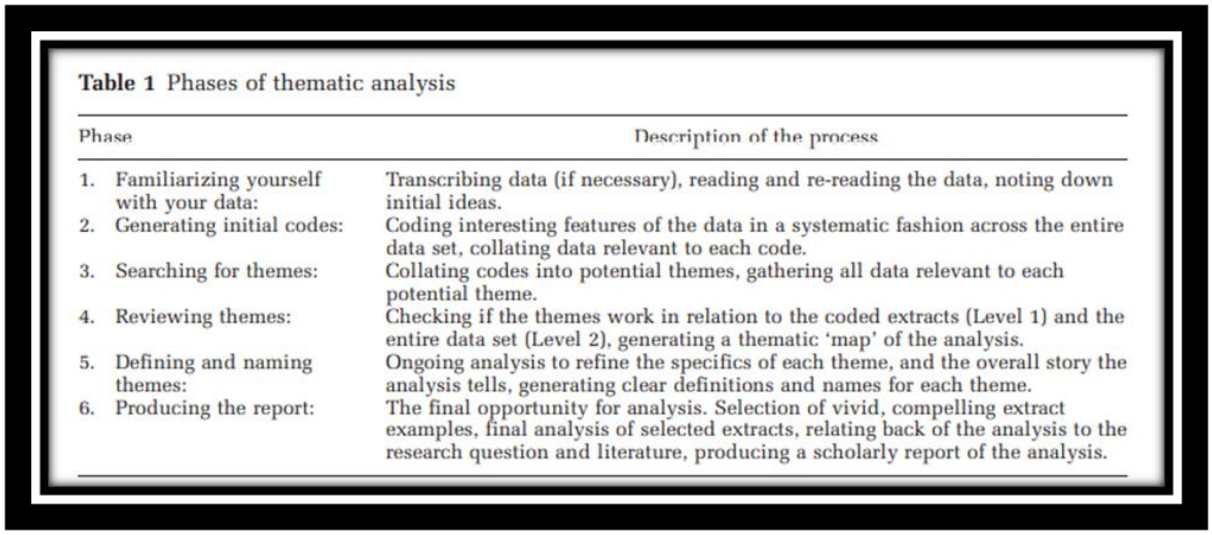

Table 1 Phases of thematic analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

There are several phases to the narrative thematic analysis approach/method followed as described by Braun & Clarke (2012). The table of themes below shows the color-coded list of themes that have been shortlisted as discussed within Phase 4. The color codes match the codes identified from the contributions of each of the participants in Phase 2 to each of these themes. Some of the themes were foundational to the participants identity formation and others supported these foundational themes. This table helps form a complete picture of how the methodology of analysis transforms the research data into a summary of foundational and supporting themes that express the agency, accountability and blame assigned to the participants within Aotearoa New Zealand society. Further below the table is a brief summary of how I applied this analytical approach to my data set.

Themes/Participants	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Cultural influences on Masculinity							
Contribution to Society (ownership, responsibility, family, helping others succeed)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Masculinity is Physical (competitiveness and pushing the boundaries)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Unique Existence (cultural othering, uniquely different from Kiwi norms, mixed values)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lack of Representation (limited reference to Asians in media, lack of role models in everyday life)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Standing Up for everyone: Relation to 'Othering' (equality, "right the wrongs")	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Physical Differences: Relation to 'Othering' (race, height, language impact on vocalization etc)	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Racism: Relation to 'Othering' (experiences of racial discrimination)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Phase 1 – 'Familiarizing yourself with the data': *to become intimately familiar with the participants' stories and its content and to notice things that would be relevant to the research question. All semi structured interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. I re-read the transcripts multiple times to really grasp the data as the researcher. Deeply familiarizing myself with the data meant addressing the difficult tasks of understanding aspects of the data I was uncomfortable with (due to a difference in worldviews) or not entirely sure about (due to the semi structured nature of the interview and the direction the interview may have taken). The transcriptions of the interviews included putting punctuation marks in places as best interpreted by me while listening to the audio recordings. These punctuations helped to create the co-constructed meanings of the interviews as seen in the data extracts shared in the next chapter of this thesis. During phase one, I made notes/comments regarding potential points of interest.*

Phase 2 – 'Generating Initial Codes': *to generate codes (succinct and shorthand for something the researcher understands from the transcribed interviews) for the entire set of stories presented by the participants. Coding is the process followed to organise the data into meaningful units in the context of the research topic. I attended to all the data within the seven transcripts by giving equal attention to each. This required coding each transcript*

independently before finding overall commonalities across the data set with the purpose of establishing relevant observations/worldviews that address the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The output was a list of codes for each transcript. Examples of initial codes summarized under Phase 2 have been provided under Appendix E within this thesis. These examples have been colour coded to show how they relate to the colour coded themes listed in the table of themes above. Details of how the themes were generated is discussed under Phase 3. I visited and revisited/regenerated the codes during this entire process.

Phase 3 – 'Searching for themes': *themes generate something important about the participants' stories in relation to the research question. This phase was focused on creating a thematic map outlining all the potential themes relevant to the research question. These themes are at the latent level as this goes beyond the semantic (surface level) content of the stories. Phase 3 identified and examined the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations/ideologies that were theorized as shaping or informing the semantic content of the participants' stories. Notes from Phase 1 as well as initial codes from Phase 2 informed my approach to bringing together data into groups to identify potential themes. Several codes aligned with multiple themes, however for the purposes of this analysis I used the approach of colour coding the 'initial codes' exclusively to one group in order to bring them together with other initial codes that associated with the same theme. I also reviewed the transcripts once again to address any challenges I faced when grouping the codes into potential themes.*

Phase 4 – 'Reviewing potential themes': *a recursive process of reviewing themes in relation to the coded themes and the overall stories. Themes may be joined or split apart or removed altogether within this Phase. Phase 4 included a more thorough review of the themes that were emerging. I asked myself questions such as 'Which codes best contributed to which theme?' and 'What was the depth of the data that informed these themes?' For example, initial codes relating to physical ability and taking ownership often overlapped. Additionally, the context of a transcribed conversation would often inform the context in which the participant mentioned something identified within an initial code. This would then inform which theme the code may relate to better. The main themes that were generated from interpreting the participants' stories related to 'taking ownership', 'relation between masculinity and physical ability', 'multicultural/mixed values', 'doing what is right/socially*

just', 'identifying physical differences between Asian and Western European men', 'lack of/misrepresentation within public discourse acknowledging the Asian community' and 'examples of racial discrimination that were shared'. After reviewing these themes, I also recognized that several participants shared worldviews that placed them differently in relation to issues of agency and accountability in ascribing meanings to some of the themes that were emerging. For example, the participants whose worldviews were more informed by a New Zealand upbringing differed from the participants who grew up in multiple countries in the context of agency of identifying as masculine. The data also allowed the participants to share their worldviews around cultural influences (what is Asian vs what is Kiwi from a cultural standpoint) and their varied worldviews overlay all the themes that were generated out of this research.

Phase 5 – 'Defining and naming themes': *the analytic narrative should inform the reader about why an extract is interesting. Following this approach allowed to appropriately define and name the themes identified. A narrative can then be driven off the overall themes that have been generated. During Phase 5, I named and defined the seven themes. I also considered how each of these themes addressed the research question and enabled the narrative to build on these themes and provide a shared story of Asian men's experiences of masculine identity in Aotearoa New Zealand. The table of themes identifies the summary of the themes that were categorised along with a short summary of meanings. The themes highlighted in grey were the supporting themes and influenced the key foundational themes (highlighted in white).*

Phase 6 – 'Producing the report': *focus is on generating a useful output, i.e. – a report, thesis etc. (Braun & Clarke, 2012). All phases of the research have now been completed and the thematic analysis of the research is available to read in the following chapter.*

CHAPTER FOUR: Analysis

"Internal, the scholarly and the character personality traits that are more internal, that pertain to masculinity and the external, which are like your physical traits, physical abilities, and what people can see outright. Yeah. So, I like to think about masculinity in those two senses."

- *Jolly*

Several themes were identified in the context of the research question. The background of the participants was quite diverse, and the ethnographic approach of using semi-structured interviews led each of the interviews' in a unique direction. As the researcher, I used a handful of questions to direct the interview as and when required. The interviews and the transcriptions form an individual standpoint of the participant and shed light on the subject positions offered to each of the participants individually in the co-constructive process of interviewing. A reflexive approach to addressing each of the men's worldviews and subject positions has helped me in analysing the discourses utilized by the participants. It has allowed me to determine some of the major themes that were generated from the data set. These themes are like a string of pearls in a necklace and the pearls are connected to each other through the string. Each theme therefore has an interrelationship with the other themes. These themes help us in understanding the nuances of how Asian men identify as masculine outside traditional European masculinity accepted within Aotearoa New Zealand society. These themes inform how social power relations within our society impact the constructions of the agency, accountability and blame assigned to minority Asian men within their personal narratives. A detailed discussion of each of these themes and their nuances is included in this Chapter. While some themes are more foundational, other themes support one or more of these foundations further. The participants also convey their standpoints around the cultural identity of being an 'Asian' and being a 'Kiwi', enabling me to reflexively narrate participants' standpoints and how they associate with each of the themes. Furthermore, this chapter also explores the reflexive dilemmas that I faced as a researcher and how I contributed to the research as a co-creator alongside the participants. I also discuss the limitations of the research that became evident to me from my reflections. This Chapter provides suggestions to address these limitations for future researchers. The final section of this Chapter discusses the overall narrative that is informed by these themes. In the context of the 'string of pearls within the necklace' metaphor, this section shows us the full picture of the necklace in its entirety.

Thematic Analysis

❖ Contribution to Society

Wong (2021) discusses the moral dilemma around the increasing importance of the idea of 'able-responsible' men within China. These are the men who can create wealth and shoulder responsibilities of their parents, families, and society. Several factors in society influence and drive these men to live up to this standard. In the post 1980s capitalist era, wealth creation became a prime quality for men to possess within China. When capitalism encouraged wealth generation through any means over strong moral principles of honesty, the importance of providing for the family became a major part of identity for men in order to ensure cohesion within China's changing society. While 'ability' became associated with wealth generation, 'responsibility' was associated with being someone who fulfils their obligations of being a father, a son, a boyfriend/husband, and a loyal countryman to his fatherland. Laoire (2005) suggested in her study on young male farmers in different regions of Ireland that a similar theme was generated out of the cultural environment in Ireland at the time. In this study, farming masculinities were bound up with a sense of cultural and familial responsibility. This responsibility was attached to maintaining the family farm and in turn to the farmer's masculine identity. Huey and Berndt (2008) suggested within the theory of 'Gender as performance' that the successful performance of gender is a strategy to gain prestige or acceptance in social life. Studies from China and Ireland support the argument that social environment impacts the way men view their masculinity.

My study shows various subject positions taken by the participants in the current New Zealand environment that support their ideas of responsibility and contribution towards family and society as being central to masculinity. They suggest a sense of 'ownership' and 'responsibility' not only towards familial life but also towards society at large. I highlight in my research words such as 'responsibility', 'ownership', 'taking charge' and 'providing' that are often used by the participants. This sense of responsibility is manifested by all the participants of varying worldviews. Their subject positions in society and the rights, duties and obligations that come with these subject positions are discussed below using transcript extracts. These data extracts support the discourse that contain these subject

positions. They demonstrate how the participants do 'able-responsible' men as a performance of their masculinity.

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Amrinder: That's really interesting. So, would you say that hard work then is what you would be identifying as…. what it means to you to be a man? like, what would you say it means to you to be a man? …

Participant 1: Yeah, it could be hard work, and could be a lot of other aspects also in life, like, I take all the responsibilities of my life. And I have, I have to make sure, like, I'm the main source of providing and contributing to my family and, my like, you know, within my circle, so like, I'm the, basically the engine. I take the responsibility. Others also doing their part. I'm not saying they're not doing enough kind of thing, but I take all of that load on myself. So, I'm the one.

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Participant 1 positions himself as central to a family life through the use of the word 'engine' in the context of 'the engine that drives the train'. The participant does his performance of masculinity through the act of being the 'driving machine' for the family, one that generates wealth in line with the idea of an 'able-responsible' man. Just like the engine is key to a moving train, his existence as an engine portrays that his family train would not move without him. His association with a machine rather than an affective human figure such as a gardener or a caretaker, also emphasizes how there is no room for failure or error. He compares the journey of family life with that of a moving train. An engine and its carriages serve the purpose of moving people or freight and a train that isn't moving is of no use. It is in this context that describing himself and his family as part of a machine becomes a very masculine image which is associated with technology and culture within Western masculinity. It is something that can also be considered as almost an outcome of the sheer grit and intent of human beings (traditionally men) to tame nature and its vast distances. It is therefore a metaphor for the hard work of the participant helping the family to be well provided for. He does not claim exclusively to be the sole contributor to familial life, but he expresses his sense of 'ownership' and 'accountability'. While a freight or passenger train cannot exist without carriages, a moving train is not possible without the engine. Using this

metaphor, he takes the position of the head of the family just as an engine belongs at the front or the back of a train. This expresses his rights to centrality as an individual who performs the masculine identity of an 'able-responsible' man. It is this centrality as a contributor to the family that becomes a form of duty that he must perform for the family without fail. Although this becomes more relevant in the context that his partner is pregnant and is not working right now, several stories shared by him emphasize his sense of responsibility towards his family even when his partner was in the workforce. Participant 1 had migrated to New Zealand in his teens.

Below is a data excerpt from another participant sharing his standpoint around 'providing' and 'responsibility'. His construction of responsibility being masculine is quite deep seated and comes through in several conversations throughout the interview. The participant emphasizes his role as the protector and his sense of 'responsibility' towards providing for the continuation of the family and societal bonds.

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Jolly: Sure. Yeah. So, I guess mostly, um, my masculinity approach has been shaped by my observation of my father. And I guess things that I noticed from him was the ability to be calm in many situations, Uhh, responsibility for the family in terms of many different aspects. Like obviously financial, looking after our health and looking after your kids' happiness. Yeah. And, uh, I don't know if those things are really expressed externally, but it's the way that you like consider your response, you're like what you need to do. Yeah. So, like tasks that need to be completed or a particular way that you need to present yourself. Yeah.

Amrinder: So, kind of like that gravity, like you're there in, this is. Is that what you mean? Like, uh, the presence of you being in this space and you're responsible first for something, is that what you mean? Or

Jolly: Yeah. More like being a caretaker. Yeah. I would say, um, being like aware of your community, your surroundings and how you can better contribute to that. Yeah. I think that was that important aspect of masculinity. Yeah.

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Jolly was born and raised in New Zealand. Jolly emphasizes that as a man, it is his duty of being the 'caretaker' and being responsible for the family and the community. This requires accomplishing certain tasks but also presenting oneself in a more 'hands on' light. In addition to the responsibility to provide for the family financially, as discussed by Participant 1, Jolly also emphasizes on how the health and mental wellbeing of the family is also the responsibility of the 'caretaker'. Here as well, it is this centrality as a contributor to the family that becomes a form of duty that he must perform for the family. In taking this subject position, he expresses agency in his actions and how these should be in line with the needs of the family and the community. The participant uses the example of 'calmness' to emphasize how a virtue displayed by a father can influence the ability of his children to learn to manage a difficult situation. Just like a gardener would tend to the plants to meet their needs so they could grow to be strong, it is the integrity of an 'able-responsible' man that enables his offspring to learn to navigate life successfully. The participant emphasizes that this responsibility towards the offspring should also be displayed towards the community. A responsible man is a good judge of his surroundings and performs his masculine obligations by contributing towards community based on his 'finger on the pulse' of society. The 'caretaker' therefore is in authority for the garden to flourish. Through this subject position, Jolly strengthens the rights that he holds such as being able to make decisions that are for the betterment of his family and society on the basis of his awareness of his surroundings. This discourse of agency puts the obligation of an 'able-responsible' man into perspective in line with the rights held by him from his standpoint.

However, a negative lens to masculinity was also mentioned by some participants. This idea has been discussed in the gender role theory within Chapter 2. The male sex role has typically been defined with a negative lens (O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, and Wrightsman, 1986). Results of masculine indoctrination are so pervasive among men despite individual variations in education, race and ethnicity, that many men find it difficult to believe that their masculine beliefs have primarily cultural as opposed to biological origins (Eisler & Blalock, 1991). Masculine traits such as dominance and competitiveness are imposed on the individual by the culture. A "masculine identity" is therefore because of valued social approval and avoidance of social condemnation. This however can lead to gender role stress and lead to unhealthy or dysfunctional coping behavior (Eisler & Blalock, 1991). O'Neil et al.

(1986) describe this role stress/negative effect as gender or sex role conflict. Gender-role conflict is a psychological state where gender roles have negative consequences on a person or others. The ultimate outcome of this conflict is the restriction of the person's ability to actualize their human potential or the restriction of someone else's potential. Gender role conflict due to limitations around gender roles and desire for 'actualization' has been used to explain men's reluctance to seek help for physical, psychological, and other problems (Vogel, Wester, Hammer, & Downing-Matibag, 2014). Several participants discuss aspects of this potential negative side to masculinity. They associate a sense of selfishness and ego with being overtly and singularly masculine. This discourse suggested that unchecked masculinity of an individual can ultimately be seen in a negative lens by society.

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Participant 3: I'll say so, yes. And then once we, once I become more personal and [come into] my own, I guess my own way, my own thinking, then I'm able to develop, well not develop but able to come to grips with my own sense of masculinity. Now, that would take me into, I guess, the word comes to mind is ego can potentially have a negative aspect of masculinity could be more ego driven.

Amrinder: Like, this is me.

Participant 3: This is me. This is me; this is the right way. What I do is create, you know, and there's no room or less room for negotiation.

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Participant 3 emphasizes how selfishness and a sense of pride in singular agency may take a negative turn in the demonstration of 'responsibility'. Although the standpoint of an 'able-responsible' man requires individuals to shoulder responsibility, it also associates this capability with others through obligations to parents, children, girlfriend/wife and the country. A dysfunctional coping behaviour may mean that responsibility is taken by men at the expense of putting others down or not recognizing their contribution and advice. This selfish-egotistic performance of masculinity constitutes the subject position where control over others becomes more associated with masculinity. Within the above data excerpt, Participant 3 uses the discourse that contains this subject position where he emphasizes

'creation' as being central to society because society would not function without social action. But at the same time, he fears the lack of negotiation on part of a man to be associated with ego and lack of groundedness in the concept of the 'able-responsible' man. This lack of groundedness can also be seen in the indication by Participant 3 that someone who 'has not yet come to grips with their masculinity' maybe more inclined to be selfish. The participant expresses fear in this subject position of disrupting the idea of an 'able-responsible' man. He discounts the ability of some men, who do not have a well enough understanding of this idea, to be able to take accountability towards themselves and others. While expressing this standpoint in the first person, he focuses on the impact of such actions on 'others', thus making selfish behaviour a negative form of masculinity.

The data item below from the interview with Participant 6 also supports this view of the negative lens to masculinity in the context of 'going too far'. Participant 6 narrates an experience in Auckland where the driver in a car full of young men yells a racial slur at him as he is walking down the street. He suggests how putting someone else down may become a toxic form of 'ownership' or 'taking charge'. Similar to the standpoint shared by Participant 3, Participant 6 indicates that this individual and others in the car had 'not yet come to grips with their masculinity' and did not have their 'finger on the pulse' of what would be considered acceptable within society. This subject position where 'lack of understanding of one's surroundings' makes some men put others down is supported by the participant through his observation that the drivers' friends were not laughing at his actions. Although he is a bit unsure of why this may be. He associates all the passengers in the car with not having a grounded understanding of their surroundings but is especially critical towards the driver. The participant therefore takes the driver's agency away from him and associates it to his naivety or lack of groundedness. Both participants narrate experiences from their life where a masculine identity may become toxic to oneself and others. They suggest that 'ego' or the desire to support singular interests at the expense of others lead to toxic outcomes.

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Amrinder: ..... Did you see any, like any element of masculinity in there or was that, was it to do with masculinity? Like what these guys were thinking that they're? Like, well, like they were real men by doing something like that.

Participant 6: I think so they feel like they were, I guess, by putting down myself at the time, it made them feel good and made them feel more manly. I can definitely see that. Cause this guy looked like he was maybe early to mid-twenties, around that. He didn't look very old, but he was not that young. So, and he was with some friends and he was laughing, but funnily enough his friends weren't laughing. So, I don't know what happened when that happened. [Amrinder: Right.] So, yeah, I would say there was a bit of that. Definitely. Yeah. Trying to look cool and manly in front of his friends.

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There was not a huge discrepancy however between participants in their discourse regarding masculinity and 'responsibility' being interrelated. All participants emphasised masculinity as being related to taking 'ownership' and being able to provide for and contribute to family and society. The participants expressed control over their ability to this aspect of their identity and this aspect was a foundational theme for their Asian and masculine identity.

❖ Masculinity is Physical

Several participants shared their standpoints around competitiveness and physicality being central to the idea of masculinity. Most participants shared in the consensus that physical ability was linked to competitiveness. Sports formed another avenue for this central theme associated with masculinity. Some participants suggested that the idea of competitiveness had different manifestations with the physical aspect being more emphasised in one culture (Asian culture or Kiwi culture) over the other. Other participants took up subject positions where the values of both Asian and Kiwi cultures encouraged men who were physically stronger. One participant did not mention any association between masculinity and physicality in relation to either culture. Adegbosin et al. (2019) in their study on Australian men suggested that physical qualities including physical performance was an indicator of the 'real man'. A frequently cited response by the participants in the above study was that physical fitness was a key masculine ideal. They also suggested other qualities such as strength, stamina, and tenacity that were considered masculine. Other masculine precepts highlighted by the study were 'being fit', 'keeping active' and 'the need to push the limits of disability and injury'. Studies have shown that in addition to this, sports performance was also

considered exclusively masculine among men who endorse hegemonic masculine ideologies (Connell, 1995; Drummond, 1995).

While some participants in my study thought physicality was a universal aspect of masculinity, others did not support this subject position. They attributed it more to the 'Asian' or 'Kiwi' culture exclusively. Below are some of the extracts that discuss the varied discourse which contains these subject positions held by the participants. Participant 1 relates the challenging work of a chef with his masculine identity as an Asian minority. He emphasizes the character of 'strength' required to be successful at work as being both physical and mental. In line with our discussion around 'able-responsible' men, Participant 1 performs his masculinity of a tenacious worker who could manage the challenging working conditions that a professional chef works in. It is through this challenge that he is able to gain employment and generate wealth for his family. Tenacity is also associated with physicality and in turn with masculinity. Several other instances within the interview with Participant 1 also highlighted the discourse of relating physicality exclusively with masculinity. In identifying his standpoint as someone who is up for a physical challenge, he also emphasizes on the lack of cultural preference among Kiwi working population to be involved in this type of work. He associates performance of masculinity as a 'real man' with someone who can endure physical and mental challenge. His standpoint holds this to be an outcome of the Asian cultural association between masculinity and physical ability. He uses his experience of working within the industry to highlight a lack of emphasis on physical performance among Kiwi men to gain employment/generate wealth and in turn does not award the same allegiance of masculinity to them. At the same time, he affords the working Kiwi population the choice to enter into employment that has other skills. In doing so, he identifies their position of privilege in the form of choice to no undertake physically demanding work.

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Participant 1: Yeah so yeah, so what I say is, like, it's a …. lot of it depends on the strength. You need to be like, it's totally, like physically plus mentally.

Amrinder: So, when you're being hired, they would go, are you [(tenacious) insinuated]?

Participant 1: Yeah, that depends on what position you are working on. This, I can say like I migrated here also. And most of the hospitality industry has been dominated by

migrants. Because a lot of locals, they don't want to contribute physically, and it's not really good career focus point for them. They opt for more like, different sort of skills. It's because it's a lot of physically demanding work, so they prefer not to get into this.

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Amrinder: So, but, but I guess from, uh, from your own perspective, as, as your identity, as a man, uh, would you still say competition is what would make you define masculinity?

Participant 2: Well, I still play competitive badminton. Okay. Um, competition drives you ay. You go to, uh, uh, improve yourself and, uh, you know, I'm 63 now and I have to keep my body together. So, I have to go to the gym. Do things like yoga, swimming, just trying to keep my body going.

Amrinder: Yep. So that physical aspect is still quite important to you…. yeah?

Participant 2: Cause that's what I've grown up with [(raised in New Zealand)].

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Participant 7: The size of the person here. So generally Northern men in China are a bit taller, a big bigger. I'm a bit of an exception, I'm not that tall. You know, what, 170 centimetres, and these days, 65 kilos. So, if I were to go to any other city, outside of where I come from [illegible], I'll probably be considered average, whereas in my town, I'm probably a bit shorter

Amrinder: Right, right. So, you're almost…. you almost mean, like, the size in the physical build is, is what is common in some way, that people in Northern China are taller, and so they're more masculine, right? So that's physical strength as well?

Participant 7: Physical strength as well. You know, probably more visible. You see how people behave, how people conduct themselves. So northern men are quite straightforward. And if they don't like something and they will….. they would say that, and

they also quiet, you know, [have a] strong sense of brotherhood. Something's wrong. And, you know, my brother's not doing well. I'll go in and help. And if there is an argument, there's not a lot of time for words.

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As can be seen from above three extracts, the participants were really varied in their worldviews of whether a particular culture can influence the relationship between masculinity and physicality. Participant 2 was the only participant in the 40+ age bracket and he associates his ageing needs of staying active with his upbringing in New Zealand, thus focusing on Kiwi cultural influence on masculinity. Adegbosin et al. (2019) highlight 'keeping fit' and 'staying active' as indicators of association of masculinity with physicality. 'Keeping his body going' and 'improvement' is central to Participant 2's performance of masculinity through the association of physicality with masculinity. He relates improvement in his game of badminton to improvement as a man. This preference of the participant becomes more important in the context of his ageing, however, due to the participant led approach of the interviews, there was no further discussion into how ageing relates specifically to the participant's understanding of masculinity. He identifies competition as being a major driver in his life and emphasizes focus on sports/physical activity as being part of his culture. He shares various standpoints throughout his interview that are contained within the physicality discourse such as encouraging his children to be involved in sports and focusing on physicality for a more holistic growth. Although the above data extract does not identify the exclusivity that he associates with Kiwi culture and masculinity, the participant supports his standpoint during the interview by suggesting the need for physicality and communication for personal development among Chinese youth. As the researcher, my interview with Participant 2 was the most challenging one since it required reframing the interview questions in multiple ways so as to get a response related to the topic from the participant. He was relatively guarded and held stoic masculine ideals from the beginning of the interview. He became more comfortable in sharing his standpoints around an exclusive association between masculinity and the ability to push physical boundaries as we progressed with the interview.

While Participant 2 more strongly associates Kiwi culture with masculinity, Participant 7 suggests both cultures are equally associated with masculinity. Participant 7 suggests similarities between Northern Chinese and Kiwi men in terms of behaviour, ruggedness, and

emphasis on physicality. The ‘physical size’ of a person is identified as a visible sign of masculine prowess by Participant 7. Another quality that is highlighted by the participant to be associated with masculinity is that of brotherhood. The ability and intention to help friends and relatives is considered masculine. ‘Mental strength’, ‘leadership’ and ‘pushing the boundaries’ are also used as masculine indicators by the participant during the interview. This was identified when I enquired with participant 7 using a double negative approach (Did lack of physical fitness mean lack of masculinity?). The rights offered to men within his standpoint are that of a leader, someone who possesses the ability to push the boundaries. But it also brings with itself the obligations to be strong and competitive as is suggested through the use of ‘something's wrong. And, you know, my brother's not doing well. I'll go in and help’. He identifies the obligations of a man to be ‘responsible’ for taking charge and taking care of his friends/relatives (family) through the use of physical force if required. This exclusive relationship of physicality with masculinity is what forms a foundational theme for the formation of the identity of Asian men within the context of New Zealand society.

In the context of ‘physicality’ being exclusively masculine as suggested by some participants, there have been studies that support the continuation of association of ‘physical ability’ with masculinity. A study by Harris & Clayton (2002) on the influence of English tabloid media and how it constructs and maintains masculine hegemony in sports suggested that those characteristics which are traditionally associated with men are highlighted, while maintaining that women do not display the same attributes. The study shows the gendered nature of sports coverage promoting ideals of manhood, masculinity, and superiority in men, while simultaneously (mis)representing women athletes as the ‘other’, who maintain attributes of subordination, fragility, and sensuality. The study suggested that this was done by promoting tennis star Anna Kournikova on the pages of the tabloid media (over other female athletes) in order to epitomize (hegemonic) femininity, because of her sensual, feminine body and the non-athletic narrative which can be applied to such an athlete. Female athletes showing more traditionally masculine characteristics were not highlighted equally and characterised as not ‘heterosexually successful’ or ‘butch’. My study showed some participants expressed strong standpoints around physical ability and its exclusive association with masculinity. The influence of media on how masculinity and cultural identity is constructed is discussed later in this Chapter.

Another worldview shared by Participant 1 is that of sexual preference and its relationship with physicality and in turn masculinity. Although this research does not explore the centrality of this aspect to the identity formation of self-identified Asian men, this is a challenging and unique element of the interview with Participant 1. My relatively liberal views on sexuality made me especially uncomfortable about discussing this with the participant but on reflection, the connection of physicality with sexual preference and in turn with masculinity requires further discussion within this theme. Participant 1 suggests that sexual preference is linked to physical ability and thus homosexual women were more masculine than homosexual men. Studies show that gay men who are not compliant to traditional masculinity are more often the targets of negative attitudes than gay men who appear as stereotypically masculine (Cohen et al., 2009; Glick et al., 2007). Other research suggests that heterosexual men are concerned about the fact that others may perceive them as non-heterosexual, as heterosexuality is perceived as being related to masculinity, and therefore a possible strategy to cope is not confronting sexual prejudice (Bosson et al., 2005; Kroeper et al., 2014). Salvati et al. (2021) found that traditional masculinity was a sufficient factor for heterosexual men to have negative implicit attitudes toward feminine gay men, independent of their levels of sexual prejudice. Note that the idea of masculine capital (De Visser & McDonnell, 2013) also suggests that masculine capital may be accrued through activities deemed masculine. This capital may then be 'traded' for activities deemed less masculine. This means that negative implicit attitudes may provide the speaker with masculine capital that may then be used for activities considered less masculine. In the performance of his masculinity, participant 1 in the extract below relates the sexual preference of a lesbian work colleague to be associated with the 'masculine' trait of being more tenacious at work. The discourse that contains this standpoint takes away the agency of the female coworker to be physically stronger or more tenacious and attributes this to her sexual preference. The participant suggests that by having a sexual preference towards women, she is more 'masculine' and in turn physically stronger. This idea therefore promotes a more exclusive relation between sexual preference, masculinity and physical ability, similar to what was discussed in the study done by Harris & Clayton (2002). This link between physicality and sexual preference was not discussed with any of the other participants as this was not a focus of the interviews and due to the participant led approach. However, it highlighted and supported the exclusive and precarious relationship between masculinity and physicality.

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Participant 1: Different occupations like, again, like I have a female Chef, but she's identified, who identified more as masculine because she's clearly wanting to be like that. Because she's … stronger. Her, clothing, let's say like…

Amrinder: She was, I'm guessing she was homosexual. [Participant 1: Yeah, yeah]. But she was interested, so she was more off ah…. She was a lesbian but she …her attraction towards females was what was making her more masculine?

Participant 1: Because she… she's more into female. She shows men up in a tough competition, like the physicality wise.

Amrinder: Yeah. This is also very interesting. So ..so you're saying masculinity is kind of relative to your sexual preference ? [Participant 1: sexual preference, yeah].

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❖ Unique Existence

The third foundational theme that was generated from the analysis of the research data set was that of a 'unique' identity of the participants which was a blend of 'Asian' and 'Kiwi' values. While some participants in my study identified as Kiwi-Asians and were proud of this 'uniqueness', other participants suggested a more mutually exclusive space offered to them within Aotearoa New Zealand culture for identity construction as a 'Kiwi' or 'Asian'. Their subject position was that a blend of the two cultures could lead to formation of a distinctive cultural identity. However, this was not considered part of the popularly accepted mainstream cultural identities. They were relegated with the identity of the 'other'. These participants also identified some challenges that related to this uniqueness especially in the context of multiculturalism within New Zealand. All participants supported this unique existence, whether it be with a positive or negative connotation. Within the bicultural debate in New Zealand, claiming nativity to Aotearoa/New Zealand as non-Māori cannot be done with reference to the Treaty, because under the Treaty framework, Pākehā are classified within the same group as new migrants (Omura, 2014). A zero-sum mentality has led to

contestation around notions of belongingness in recent and past popular debate. Below is an example of an extract that supported the discourse of 'uniqueness'. Participant 7 suggests how his Chinese heritage and life in New Zealand informs his mixed values and identity. He also emphasizes his singularity by using the statement 'I moved by myself' to identify him being the only one moving to New Zealand even though several individuals who are young, single and undergoing tertiary education often relocate alone nationally or internationally. By using this discourse, the participant supports his unique identity which allows him the space to define his Asian masculinity.

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Participant 7: …. So when I moved from China to New Zealand, I moved by myself as an international student. And I would identify myself as a Chinese man, by heritage. But really, in terms of how I think, and in terms of behaviour, it's probably a mixture of Chinese values and Kiwi values….

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Dürr (2011) discusses in her study how Latin American migrants to New Zealand from Argentina, Chile and Uruguay created various forms of cultural identities which transcended national identification and citizenship. Some of them identified as Latin-Kiwi. Whereas other participants who did not identify with a hyphenated identity still identified with NZ as their home and emphasized on the 'cosmopolitan identity and clean environment' of Auckland making it their home. They also emphasized on how their life as an 'outsider' (not actively being a part of New Zealand in the cultural context) influenced their unique bond with the Argentinian and New Zealand identity. These participants did not claim a 'Kiwi' identity for themselves. Just like the discourses that contained the subject positions chosen by the participants of my study, the views of the participants in Dürr's study varied significantly especially in the context of multiculturalism within New Zealand. Central to understanding these subjectivities is the biographic context of the individuals, their expectations, and self-conceptions as migrants.

Recent migrants from a professional background from Argentina did not perceive themselves as being part of New Zealand's cultural context (Dürr, 2011). They shared a critical view of New Zealand society regarding interethnic relations, discrimination, gender, and notions of biculturalism. They deconstructed biculturalism as a myth and discussed Pākehā dominance

in the New Zealand context. One of the participants perceived 'Kiwis' as less honest with each other than she would expect. She suggested that Kiwis follow a concept of 'politeness', which she classified as hypocritical. She also had a critical view to New Zealand's inter-ethnic relationships and identified racism as an underlying pattern. The other participant associated New Zealand women with having a masculine tone and often being involved in sports and other activities which he associated with masculinity rather than femininity. This is in line with the hegemonic masculinity theory discussed previously which supported the interrelationship between masculinity and physical ability. He explained the resentment against migrants, in particular from Asia, with the lack of control over them and with the fact that their numbers have grown so fast.

The other Latin immigrants with lower educational qualifications identified themselves with a hyphenated identity of Latin-Kiwis. They came from socially and ethnically disadvantaged backgrounds and believed New Zealand to be a country where aspirations of equity, solidarity, empowerment, and classlessness were a lived reality. These participants supported multiculturalism within a bicultural framework, and had strong sympathies for Māori issues, but felt at times rejected from minority groups they wished to support the most. They also expressed a strong feeling of support from the community and appreciated a free healthcare system and a capitalist society that provided for welfare benefits. One of the participants highlighted some anti-immigrant tendencies and rejection of pluralism.

A similar picture was generated from the analysis of the data sets within my research. Below are two extracts from participants who performed subject positions of a unique identity leading to the othering of 'Asians' in society. They discuss within this discourse how it impacts their masculine identity. For example, Participant 3 suggests that the experience of being called an 'outsider' made him feel less masculine. The level of agency ascribed to oneself is limited within his discourse. He identifies the close relationship that he had with an individual who told him to 'go back to your own country'. He does this through several markers such as 'we were good friends since we were young', 'known this guy since I was young' and 'back in the day, we were still very close'. The participant acknowledges that he is not in touch with the individual today. But he also communicates a sense of disbelief at this incident at the hands of someone who he presumed he knew very well. He suggests that the lack of agency attributed to him or the inability to act in this situation made him rethink his masculinity. This

discourse identifies his experience as a symbol of 'othering' by a member of the ingroup ('I was close friends with this guy of Caucasian descent, like local,') and a confirmation of his standpoint that behaviour, Kiwi English accent, and values would still not make him part of the ingroup within Aotearoa New Zealand society. He solidifies this standpoint by referring to Kiwis as 'they' on multiple instances. This experience also brings the participant the right to become further associated with his Asian values in the performance of his masculinity, since he is not considered 'Kiwi'.

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Participant 3: So, if I go back a little bit first, in high school, something just came to mind. I remember, I was, you know, growing up through primary school and all that high school, I was close friends with this guy of Caucasian descent, like local, and we were good friends since we were young. And then at one stage for some reason, you know, we were very close. And we still are. Not today. But back in the day, we were still very close. He just said, somewhere along the lines, you know, you should go back to your own country. And at that stage, I was taken back, you know, what, I was probably 14, 15 at that time and known this guy since I was young.

Amrinder: Yeah.

Participant 3: I guess that…. that part in itself made me question even though if, if I behave, talk, think exactly like they, they do. I'm still not really accepted for one of them… as one of them. So that I guess was a challenging aspect of growing up. And that change shifted my masculinity, which made me feel like as an Asian man, I'm, I could be <u>at the bottom of the food chain as culture of masculine men have hierarchies</u>? Yeah.

***

Participant 6: I guess it's more like, because the thing is I noticed at the start, when I first started doing this job, there's certain customers, they, they speak to me, they don't know I'm Asian, but once I meet them in person. Oh, you're…… right. So, I was like, okay, cool. And then, because I feel like, because there's a lot of contract negotiations, you know, with pricing and legal, legal terms and conditions, they feel like if you're Asian, I get the feeling. They feel like if you're Asian, it's easier to kind of walk all over you. Whereas, if

you're not Asian, that's my old shoe, I gotta, I gotta put up with a bit of a fight here. But if your Asian it's like, this is going to be easy, [Amrinder: Right. Ahh.. from like from the customer?] Customer's perspective, because I noticed at the start, there was a few that were like, they kind of gave me the feeling that they didn't really fully respect me the same as they did my counterparts. My non-Asian counterparts because I'm Asian. Uh, they speak to me on the phone and they don't know, but once they see me, I can see the look change on their face.

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Participant 6 also describes the subject position where limited space is offered to him to identify with a 'Kiwi' identity. His experience of being accepted as a Kiwi based on his Kiwi English accent over the phone is followed by 'surprise' and 'relief' from customers at his work when he meets them in person. The participant describes this 'relief' from his standpoint as acknowledgment by the customers that they would be able to negotiate with him more easily since he is not Caucasian. The participant's discourse contains the subject position that the customers assume they hold more 'power' over an Asian than a Caucasian individual. He suggests an institutional nature to this challenge which only becomes evident when his customers at work find out about his Asian descent. In the performance of his masculinity, the participant ascribes agency to himself to be able to deal with this narrative and he also acknowledges his ability to be able to serve other customers of Asian descent much better than his Kiwi European counterparts through other discourses within the interview. While this subject position highlights his obligations of having to negotiate with some Caucasian costumers with more ferocity to arrive at a deal, it also suggests the privilege that he holds with other Asian descent customers. Participant 6 supports this standpoint through the use of the word 'they' to refer to 'Kiwis' as was the case in the previous extract from the interview with Participant 3.

Other participants however do not hold the same subject position of 'othering' and respect the 'unique' position in society they hold. They do not have a critical understanding of their culturally mixed identity. Data extract below suggests the unique subject position held by Jolly who is a heterosexual male. Jolly associates the ability to attract the opposite gender to masculinity. He suggests that he is in a better position to attract women within New Zealand and this is due to the perception of his masculinity among women. He attributes this to

behavioural aspects such as being 'outgoing' and 'assertive'. Although there are nuances in how the participants understand their cultural identity, all of them view their unique identity as something that is foundational to the formation of their masculine identity. There is further discussion on this commonality later in this Chapter.

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Jolly: So, I guess part of masculinity. And being a male, I guess, would be your opportunity to interact with the opposite gender. So how you can attract females. I think, um, using that as a base and then comparing, I would say I have much more chance in New Zealand than when I go back to Hong Kong. Maybe that's because purely cultural. I think some of the things, uh, the females are looking for. Uh, over there I may not have, and therefore I may not have as good of a chance due to their perception of my masculinity, I guess.

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❖ Lack of Representation/Misrepresentation

Several participants express subject positions that highlight a lack of Asian representation in Aotearoa New Zealand society and a lack of role models available to Kiwi Asians. This forms the final foundational theme for the Asian masculine identity formation in this research. Some participants also mention discourses that contain subject positions of actively negative representations of Asian men in the media. Sibley & Liu (2007) suggest that experimental research on implicit associations pointed to a strong link between both Māori and European faces with national symbols; however, this implicit association was not extended to Asian faces. Sibley & Ward (2013) discuss their study results indicating that Asian and Pacific peoples were most likely to expect race-based rejection and that New Zealanders of European descent were least likely to expect rejection. Expectations are typically linked to experiences, and there is some evidence that members of the Asian community are more likely to experience discrimination than their peers. One of the contributors may be the high levels of resource threat perceived from Asian people by other groups in New Zealand. The study also indicated that Europeans and Māori tend to perceive Asian peoples as having the greatest potential resource-based threat, as reflected by perceptions of them as a possible source of competition for jobs with other New Zealanders (Sibley & Ward, 2013).

Studies on media influence on Asian Kiwi identity formation show a similar picture. A study by Salahshour (2016) on portrayals of immigrants showed that the majority of representations surrounding the immigrants referred to the economy in one way or another. Immigrants were evaluated as 'good' or 'bad' based on the degree of contribution they were considered to make to the economy, i.e. if they were regarded as making a positive contribution to the economy they were perceived as beneficial; if they were perceived as posing a risk or as constituting a liability, then they were classified as a problem. The articles used for Salashour's research were shortlisted using the terms 'migrants', 'immigrants' and 'Asians' to study the representations surrounding immigrants. The capitalist discourse of immigration is a contributor for treating Asians as 'commodities' in the media. They are considered as people to be made use of, thus contributing to their dehumanization. Hannis (2009) found that following the influx of Chinese immigrants into the country an article published by a leading magazine 'North & South' painted a picture of rampant Chinese crime in the country. The press council later ruled the piece inaccurate and discriminatory and concluded that the magazine adopted this stereotype because it was determined to portray Chinese immigrants in poor light in spite of no actual data to support it.

Several participants shared their standpoints around misrepresentation as well as lack of representation of Asians in popular media. Below are some extracts from the data set and its discussion to support these constructs. Participant 7 suggests a general lack of representation of Asians and Asian values within the New Zealand discourse. From his standpoint, the bicultural approach within New Zealand furthers a sense of righteousness towards discussion about Māori values in society. He expresses however, his discontent with hegemonic European masculinity and its ideals of 'men don't cry' in order to raise his voice against singular representation of European masculine values within New Zealand society. His use of 'we tend to be forgotten' gives a regular or readily accepted characteristic to this standpoint such that the problem of underrepresentation of Asian men is more common than widely understood. He ascribes the agency for this underrepresentation to the society and in doing so allocates a back seat to himself and other Asian community members in changing this problem. The use of an expletive suggests his frustration with this understanding of masculinity. In the performance of his masculinity as someone resisting the predominant European masculine values, he points towards the nature of institutional hegemony to the furthering of European values by using words such as 'undercurrent' and 'mainstream'.

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Participant 7: Yeah, I think Asian men are relatively underrepresented in New Zealand. And, and we tend to get forgotten, there's a lot about Maori values, there is a lot in this country, rightly so as well. And there's a lot about European values. That's the undercurrent, you know that is just mainstream everything, you know I was quite happy when they raised masculine toxicity. Because being tough on the outside, and you know being tough on the inside, and men don't cry. It's totally bullshit.

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Participant 6: I was like, yeah, it was an Asian guy with an Asian accent. So, it's like, look, that wouldn't be allowed today. But back then when it was out. You know what I mean? Like even when it came out, it was so-called controversial anyway, but it's like the portrayal of Asian men in media.

Amrinder: But then does that, I'm curious about this cause I've seen …I'm sure. Um, I forget the name. There's a YouTuber, he is Malaysian, like of Malaysian descent and from Malaysia, um, Uncle Roger.

Participant 6: Oh yeah. I've heard of him.

Amrinder: Yeah. Right. And there was this discussion around there. So why is Asian accent bad? Cause, you know, this person who does the 'spray and walk away' commercial is of Asian descent. And he's talking in an Asian accent. Do you know what I mean? Like, would you be surprised if, uh, advert in India about an Englishman speaking in English accent? Do you know what I mean, like, I guess Uncle Roger's discussion was the same, like, so what, yeah. Malaysian people have an accent.

Participant 6: Yeah. Yeah. It's I guess it's more, once again,

Amrinder: it, I am just trying to understand. I'm not … I'm just exploring that further.

Participant 6: So once again, It has to do for me, from my perspective, it has to do a lot of people, the way it's been portrayed, because obviously the reason people think it's bad because it sounds funny.

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Participant 6's standpoint highlights the idea that people associate certain Asian English accents with being funny and this is used to portray Asians in a negative light. The participant suggests this is often done through the use of television media. He refers to a television advert that has an Asian character with an Asian English accent. He explains his subject position by suggesting that the adverts tend to stereotype Asians as having that accent. This may not be factual with increasing movement of people from Asia into English speaking countries. Although the participant suggests that with the change in popular discourse around political correctness, an advert like this may face backlash, these types of advertisements are still used to distort the image of Asian people within Aotearoa New Zealand. I as the researcher, used a hypothetical question to understand the participant's standpoint. I asked the participant 'would you be surprised if, uh, advert in India about an Englishman speaking in English accent?'. My understanding of association of an individual with an English accent from their country of descent was misplaced due to the context of a significant migration of Asian descent individuals to English speaking countries. Nevertheless, this exacted an answer out of the participant. With the increasing population belonging to the Asian geographical cohort, the chance of first- and second-generation Asians born in New Zealand has increased significantly. This means a higher chance of Asian men having a Kiwi English accent as Aotearoa New Zealand would be their place of birth. This standpoint of the participant also demonstrates another discourse of 'othering'. It takes the agency away from Asian Kiwis in identifying as New Zealanders and relates the Kiwi English accent to be associated with the Kiwi European identity.

Several participants also identify familial role models or religious role models but no community-based role models that they looked up to while growing up. This also represents the discourse around a general lack of/misrepresentation of Asians within New Zealand. In the extract below, participant 4 acknowledges religious leaders of the past to hold a role model like influence in current times for him. He emphasizes on their historical influence and

ability to stand up for their followers' rights as an act of bravery and admiration. He holds them as his inspiration to be the voice for social justice and human rights. Within the interview, he suggests that these religious role models help to build his sense of maturity and influence his masculinity through his Asian identity. Although familial role models are common for everyone, the lack of a discourse around public role models was what stood out as a means for generation and support of this theme to me as the researcher. A lack of mention of community role models suggests a limited space offered to Asian minority men of younger age group during the development of their identity. Only Participant 2 mentions a public role model in the interview. He is in his 60s. Participant 4 therefore ascribes the agency of change to himself. He actively participates in social action and believes that this would improve representation for Asians as well as other communities. He also suggests that such social action may come with some backlash through the use of the words 'without having a fear of people criticizing you'.

The understanding of the lack of representation is also evident in the standpoint shared by Jolly who is born and raised in New Zealand. However, he does not ascribe an outright negative/discriminatory connotation to under/misrepresentation of Asians. The participant ascribes the agency of having limited representation in society to television media and institutionalization. He holds the subject position of separating the institutions from the people and the society that those institutions are a part of. Jolly holds a sense of civic responsibility and an accountability to contribute to society as a potential means of social action that could lead to change in this area. He therefore also takes the accountability to change the discourse around mis/underrepresentation of Asian men in New Zealand society. The use of 'main character' for European leads in movies supports his standpoint of working to bring more Asian men into the role of the 'main character'. He ascribes this agency of influencing society to him being a man and this standpoint has been shared through several discourses within the interview with Jolly.

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Participant 4: Because, like, I'm not, you know, I just find that, from my personal thing. I, you know, my ancestors were warriors. And if you look at all the Guru's they were warriors and I find that, the… the logic I work on, if they can do it, why can't we? So from my background, like, I have many people ask me, you know, you have that courage of

grabbing a mic and screaming your lungs out in front of everyone, without having a fear of people criticizing you. I just say, if it comes to someone's right. I have to be a voice. So, I don't know, it's just….

***

Jolly: Okay. So, I think we could …take a lot of the time, um, masculinity is sort of, uh, not skewed, but sort of manipulated by media a little bit. So maybe if you watch like, popular films, some popular shows you will have, you will see the ..majority of the time. Maybe it will be a European lead and then maybe the side characters, maybe of Asian descent, and then they may be portrayed in a particular way. Um, not all the time as a less masculine, but less of a main character.

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All the themes shared in this Chapter relate to the identity formation of the participants; however, some of the standpoints discussed below helped generate themes that feed into/ inform the foundational themes discussed above. The foundational themes are recurring throughout the interviews and are supported by the supporting themes discussed below. The following three themes were generated out of the dataset by the researcher under the supporting category.

❖ Standing Up for Everyone: Relation to 'Othering'

Most participants' standpoint was that of increasing awareness and sensibility towards the New Zealand Asian community in recent times. There is, however, a mention of the need to be socially responsible for preventing discrimination against others in public. Some participants do not outrightly ascribe this to their culture or heritage. This sense of social justice is demonstrated through discourse around social action as a part of 'responsibility' in the performance of masculinity. The participants suggest that Asian men have the agency and control to influence the society through this means. This sense of justice seems to be associated with the 'able-responsible' aspect of their masculine identity. To perform the 'able-responsible' man, the participants feel 'accountable' to not only provide for their family but contribute to society as well. Standing up for others forms part of this contribution. The participants also suggest that physical ability privileges men and gives them a duty to act to

prevent discrimination against others. In doing so, they ascribe the agency to themselves and grant themselves the rights to act in good judgement. These subject positions inform the positive (and potentially negative) manifestation of the masculine identity discourse. Two of these extracts have been shared and discussed below.

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Amrinder: It's about standing up… Well, it can be good or bad. It's about, um, getting it done or like somebody needs to do this. Could it be me sort of thing.

Jolly: Uh, sort of like a little bit more aggressive energy, a little bit more leadership type situations.

Amrinder: Was this experience recent or was this from school?

Jolly: Not too recent? Maybe? Last time. Yeah. Some just so, so I was on the train. I think it was in Hong Kong, just so like some random guy abusing this couple. And I was just like, no way. So, I just was like, hey man, let's chill out. Yeah. I think most people would do the same in that situation. But for example, if I was a female or like a smaller female, maybe I don't have the opportunity to do that. Yeah.

***

Jolly expresses a need to stand up for others. He describes a situation on a train where a couple is being harassed by a single man. He suggests that his position as a man bounds him with the duty to act as this is what 'most people would do'. He associates this responsibility with 'physical size' as discussed previously in this Chapter. He contrasts it with how a woman of smaller body stature may not possess the physical ability to stand up to someone bigger than herself and therefore it is his 'responsibility' to do so. This strengthens the standpoint of an exclusive relationship between physicality and masculinity. Jolly also suggests that masculinity allows space in society to have a more aggressive approach in some situations that may require this. The association of aggression with leadership supports the standpoint of being able to use physical force to ensure order or public good, if required. Suggestions around 'leadership' also bring into light the 'responsibility' of a man to ensure that the perpetrator is led in the right direction. This forms a very complex set of obligations and rights given to men within this discourse. As discussed previously, the participant had

suggested ‘a finger on the pulse’ or ‘good understanding of surroundings’ as the key aspect for men to ensure they act to contribute to society in a positive way. This line between right and wrong is also discussed within the ‘selfish’ discourse earlier in this chapter.

Participant 7 holds the subject position of supporting ‘equality’ within the professional and personal sphere. Through his standpoint, he suggests that standing up for others who may have been marginalised in the past is important. His disdain for double standards is supported by the argument that everyone can be viewed as possessing equal ability to learn and grow mentally. He suggests that physical differences of gender, race etc should not be used to discriminate against others. The discourse utilized by the participant is of the performance of masculinity through his responsibility of ‘contributing’ to society via moral and philosophical means. These worldviews were central to the theme of ‘standing up’ against ‘othering’ and several instances of this discourse were identified within the codes that were generated as part of the analysis of interviews.

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Participant 7: Possibly. yeah, possibly. Because I’m naturally quite ambitious and thinking about you know what it means. I think deep inside I’m also a feminist. I believe in the view of equal rights, not necessarily of just men and women, but the equal rights of everyone. Sometimes you see double standards, and I really, absolutely hate that double standard, regardless of, you know, whichever, whichever way it is. So, being a man, or being a woman shouldn’t matter. Obviously, physically different. But mentally, they’ll have a result in the way they behave.

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❖ Physical Differences - Relation to ‘Othering’

Participants mentioned physical differences influencing their cultural and masculine identity in the context of their ‘unique’ identity. Some of the participants also suggested that these physical differences could be used to discriminate against them and thus relate these to their ‘othering’ in society. The data extracts below are discussed in detail.

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Participant 1: To me, it's more first thing is my colour. Could be and now like in New Zealand, it's, when I came here, I identified myself as Asian but again, like, it's with me, because, you know, how do I look my let's say body structure, because back in .....

.... I feel myself as a smaller than western (illegible).... physical size of a western kid here now because, again, my.... my family, extended family here, my sister has kids, I can comparatively see they are actually growing bigger and stronger. When I have seen extended family in India, compared to them.....

Amrinder: So, you're saying, sorry, if I got this, right. Essentially, there is an element of physical size that is associated with Asianness. And... and colour, [Participant 1: colour], colour and physical size...

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Participant 7: Yeah. So yeah, there's probably quite a few questions wrapped up in there. If I could just try and unwrap it, I guess, the first thing is language. The way that Chinese is pronounced is quite different to English, you know, English, you pronounce it from your throat, whereas Chinese you pronounce from the front of your mouth [(phonetics)]. So when I learned English, in New Zealand, it was an adjustment period, you just can't be loud. Because, physically, you know, I still haven't learned how to be loud enough. Now I struggle to speak up in the bar, the people who struggle to hear me because I still can't make out the voices. And if you've come across anyone like in a bar situation or at a party, you know, the boys will be boys and they'll be loud. People have a pretty strong [illegible]. Also, English being my second language, you tend to be a little bit more reserved. You probably worry about your grammar, trying to get a message across. This is a couple of hurdles before you even get to the point. Yeah, before even getting to speak, trying to convey a message that is understandable, that is cross cultural, that they will understand. Because the way I see language is basically a tool kit. [illegible] So that's the first part of it in language and the practical side of things....

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Participant 1 suggests that physical appearance (race and physical size) was the major distinction between Asian masculinity and more traditionally accepted European hegemonic masculinity within Aotearoa New Zealand. He does not ascribe any negative connotations to this distinction. He associates this difference to biological and genetic factors (race & physical size)) as well as to European culture and diet (physical size). He suggests that his nieces/nephews growing up in New Zealand were bigger in size than his nieces/nephews in India. Participant 7 on the other hand mentions phonetics and how being an English as second language speaker could be a reason that influences his masculinity. He explains phonetics of languages to compare Mandarin with English. Phonetics is the classification and study of speech sounds. Through the difference in the sounds produced within these two languages, he suggests an advantage for first language speakers in terms of ability to communicate in their spoken language. He also identifies that as a second language speaker of English, his command on other aspects of the language often made it harder for him to communicate in public with confidence. His standpoint is that these factors may be one way to classify him and others in his situation through the 'othering' lens. These differences did not by themselves hold any influence in discrimination against him. Participant 7 also takes ownership of his ability to speak a foreign language within this discourse. In the example of speaking up in a crowded bar given by the participant, he justifies that his status as a second language speaker and his ability to speak English loudly while conveying his message defines his ownership over the command of the language. He therefore suggests that this is something that is within his control and it would be his responsibility to learn the phonetics and grammar of any language. However, his limited ability to speak English may bring a limited set of rights for him in society in the meanwhile. This could also obligate him to create his identity within this limited construct if used by the ingroup for 'othering' Asian men.

The physical differences were not ascribed any negative connotations from a cultural perspective in themselves. It was the phenomenon of racial discrimination that may be influenced due to these differences and this was discouraged by the participants. Limited agency on racial discrimination was communicated by the participants through this discourse. It is discussed below within the next theme.

❖ Racism - Relation to 'Othering'

Some of the participants shared experiences of racial discrimination which were also of influence on the development of their masculine and cultural identity. Several participants suggested that they were very aware of them being different to other locals growing up in New Zealand. Other participants mentioned of social exclusion at workplaces and attributed this to their race. However, not all of the participants shared an incident of racism in their lifetime. Below are a few instances of the discrimination discourse that are communicated through data extracts from the interviews with the participants.

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Participant 4: Yeah, 1980... 89, and, you know, there was a lot of racism, open racism.

Amrinder: Can you give us an example.

Participant 4: Ohh.. in our school days, we used to, you know, because we used to get called names curry muncher, especially when they knew where we were from and the food that we ate, but today, that same food has become quite popular back then it wasn't. So, it was just used to shame, you know, the Indian community...

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Participant 2: Well you know.. have being an Asian in a white society, you tend to be excluded, especially in the workplace.

Amrinder: So, you did. Okay. So, you had....

Participant 2: Well, you know, but yeah, I learned to drink really early, so that's quite hard to exclude, exclude me from there. Like you, you, you know, you got excluded ay.

Amrinder: Um, did you have a personal instance that you could share? Like if, if you don't mind, if you're comfortable with that?

Participant 2: Well, that's pretty universal. So yeah. When you went to, when you're working and the reason, you know, the reason why you didn't get invited to this function or whatever and they didn't think about you, you as part of the, yeah the group, the group.

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Participant 4 describes an experience of being called a 'curry muncher' and how the lack of awareness and popularity of a certain cuisine was used to exclude him from the ingroup. In his standpoint, limited agency is ascribed to him in identifying as Kiwi since several South Asian countries are associated with having curries as part of their cuisines. Through this approach, the perpetrator tries to allocate an exclusive identity to Kiwis wherein any individual who eats curries is South Asian and therefore cannot be Kiwi. Although the participant suggests that curries are now quite popular within New Zealand, this type of discrimination is not unheard of in current times. Participant 2 shares his experience of being left out of work functions and other events due to his racial background. From his standpoint, he suggests that there is an institutional nature to this exclusion and calls this phenomenon 'universal'. The participant emphasizes on the regularity or commonly accepted nature of such discrimination several times through words such as 'well, you know', 'that's pretty universal', 'when you're working and the reason, you know, the reason why you didn't get invited'. His subject position classes him as an outsider but Participant 2 suggests his habit of drinking is something that gives him control over this exclusion. Due to the commonly accepted nature of drinking as a social activity, he suggests this makes it hard for others to exclude him from social events. Participant 7 supports the standpoint around the regular occurrence and institutional nature of racial discrimination. He suggests being more pragmatic and 'taking it on the chin' since his experiences of speaking out have often not worked out in his favour. Participant 7 also expresses his standpoint of social justice as a potential solution for furthering individual rights of minorities. He uses the example of 'Black Lives Matter' movement as a means to stand up for racial discrimination against African descent people and extends it as support to all other minorities.

These experiences of racial discrimination create a sense of 'othering' among some of the participants, although different participants ascribe different levels of agency in what room they have in negotiating these challenges and in performing their masculinity. While some participants suggest the problem is institutional, others discuss masculinity being about

standing up for what is right, as discussed in the earlier part of this Chapter. Overall, this theme became a shared standpoint that stood out for me from the interviews and informs the foundational themes.

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Participant 7: Sometimes you have to take it on the chin. You know, like I said, if you know, in a socially, social environment, you sort of just, you have to just go with a flow a little bit. Speaking up about it hasn't done me any favours. A lot of the times, it's really just about sucking it up. How do you navigate those challenges? How to resolve these challenges? Like you said, and it goes beyond just the one person, and its institutional? How do you fight an institution? So, when Black Lives Matter came up, I felt that I could identify with that quite strongly. And I was highly supportive of it. Whereas people, you know, the comments on Facebook, where people will say, well, all lives matter. I say yes. But like, if black lives don't matter, all lives can't matter. It is just logic, and likewise, Asian lives matter too. But people don't think about it, because black people are generally more vocal and you know me being Asian, I'm happy to support them. Because that would inspire people to think beyond what is immediately in front of them saying that, okay, Black Lives do Matter. And they come across to the nation, then will hopefully extend to that as well.

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Reflection: My Contribution to the Research

Braun and Clarke (2019) suggest that qualitative research is about meaning and meaning making. It is important to view this research as context-bound, positioned and situated. Qualitative data analysis is about telling 'stories', about interpreting, and creating the 'truth'. The final analysis was therefore the product of data immersion, thoughtfulness and reflection, something that is active and generative.

Braun et al. (2019) emphasize on the reflexive aspect of thematic analysis by conceptualizing themes as evident in explicit (semantic) or conceptual (latent) ways, and as the output of coding. Phase 2 of the thematic analysis allowed me to prepare codes for the data sets in an organic and reiterative process. These codes were revisited and amended during the coding process as I went through each of the data sets. The aim of this approach was that such reviews during coding allowed me to best capture the developing conceptualization of the data. As suggested by Braun et al. (2019), the aim of coding and theme development is not to "accurately" summarize the data, nor to minimize the influence of researcher subjectivity on the analytic process. The aim is to provide a coherent and compelling interpretation of the data, grounded in the data. I as the researcher contributed as a storyteller, actively engaged in interpreting data through the lens of my own cultural membership, social positioning and theoretical assumptions.

Some of the possible errors within thematic analysis highlighted by Braun & Clarke (2006) are providing data extracts with little or no interpretation of the data that tells us how they are relevant to the research question or simple paraphrasing. Using data collection questions as themes is another common error. Analysis can also be considered unconvincing if themes are not coherent or try and do too much. Analysis can also suffer from lack of evidence. I tried to address these concerns around analysis by visiting and revisiting the themes generated and how they interconnected with each other using the 'string of pearls and necklace' analogy. Feedback from my supervisor on the first and second draft of the thesis also helped form a more robust analysis. I used a journal/comment approach to revisit my observations from the time of transcription. I tried to be keenly aware of my mood at the time of working throughout the analysis and notice if there was any impact on

the output of the analysis because of this. I also kept in mind the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and considered if the research would have any direct or indirect impact on this.

Throughout this study, I endeavoured to understand my contribution in co-creation of the stories that are shared in this research. My approach included the following three aspects. I have discussed each of these in more detail below using data items and recommendations for inclusion in future qualitative studies:

Interactions with participants: acknowledging my interactions with the participants and recognising how the questions asked or statements made by myself impacted the subject positions of the participants. Some of the extracts used in the previous section of this Chapter could help us understand how my background may influence the interactions with the participants. Since most of the participants were professionals/semi-professionals, I shared a common professional background with most participants. I was in the same age group (mid-20s to mid-30s) as most of the participants. I also shared a common Asian background with the participants as an insider. However, I did not necessarily share the same ethnicity with all the participants. As an immigrant to New Zealand in his teens, I was more closely placed in cultural experience as an immigrant with two of the participants who moved to New Zealand in their teens, whereas some participants had been brought up in New Zealand from birth or early childhood. All of the participants were heterosexual, and I shared this identity with them as well. There were instances of me speaking over the participants due to limited interview time or to provide a nudge in the form of a question to ensure the participants were on topic.

In the interaction with Participant 6 below, I was able to use a line of questions around why the association with a particular Asian accent was considered as a means of misrepresentation of Asian men from his standpoint. By providing an example of a Youtuber with a Malaysian accent and an Englishman in an advert in Asia, I was able to understand the participants' standpoint where he associated the stereotypically given connotation of 'funny' to Asian accent as being misrepresentational to the Asian community. According to the participant this allowed society to not take Asian men seriously in other instances. The higher level of migration from Asia to English speaking countries also increased the chance of first- and second-generation Asians living in New Zealand who would most likely have a

Kiwi English accent. An advert that stereotypes Asian men would limit the agency of these subgroups to identify as Kiwi. My affirmation of the idea and acknowledgment of using these questions as a means to delve deeper into the topic, allowed the participant to continue with their line of thought and co-create these subject positions with me as the researcher.

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Participant 6: I was like, yeah, it was an Asian guy with an Asian accent. So, it's like, look, that wouldn't be allowed today. But back then when it was out. You know what I mean? Like even when it came out, it was so-called controversial anyway, but it's like the portrayal of Asian men in media.

Amrinder: But then does that, I'm curious about this cause I've seen …I'm sure. Um, I forget the name. There's a YouTuber, he is Malaysian, like of Malaysian descent and from Malaysia, um, Uncle Roger.

Participant 6: Oh yeah. I've heard of him.

Amrinder: Yeah. Right. And there was this discussion around there. So why is Asian accent bad? Cause, you know, this person who does the 'spray and walk away' commercial is of Asian descent. And he's talking in an Asian accent. Do you know what I mean? Like, would you be surprised if, uh, advert in India about an Englishman speaking in English accent? Do you know what I mean, like, I guess Uncle Roger's discussion was the same, like, so what, yeah. Malaysian people have an accent.

Participant 6: Yeah. Yeah. It's I guess it's more, once again,

Amrinder: it, I am just trying to understand. I'm not … I'm just exploring that further.

Participant 6: So once again, It has to do for me, from my perspective, it <u>has to do a lot of people, the way it's been portrayed,</u> because obviously the reason people think it's bad because it sounds funny.

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Subject positions shared by participants - 'blinkers on a racehorse': reflecting on the subject positions shared by the participants that I was particularly comfortable or uncomfortable with, they can be considered the 'blinkers on a racehorse' and may limit the generation of themes as I might not be cognitively aware of such subject positions forming outside of my intellectual boundaries as a researcher unless actively reflected upon. I paid special focus on interactions with participants that made me rather uncomfortable or too complacent and used this reflexive approach to identify subject positions that I have/do not have strong associations with. This assisted me in revisiting and further refining themes as I went through the analysis. The analogy of 'blinkers on a racehorse' allowed me to acknowledge these subject positions more actively to present a fuller picture of how Asian masculinity maybe co-created by the participants and myself.

In the interaction with Participant 1 below, I was rather uncomfortable with the idea of sexual preference being associated with physicality and in turn masculinity as I was struggling to not come across as homophobic through acknowledgement of this subject position. I was also concerned about not being masculine enough by not affirming the participant's position. From the standpoint of the participant, he associated lived experiences of working with a lesbian woman being more physically and mentally suitable to work in a high paced busy environment in a commercial kitchen as a chef. He contrasted this with gay men he had previously worked with to suggest that sexual preference towards men would make the gay men less inclined to take up a physical challenge and therefore less masculine. However existing research suggests that heterosexual men are concerned about the fact that others may perceive them as not-heterosexual, as heterosexuality is perceived as being related to masculinity, and therefore a possible strategy to cope is not confronting sexual prejudice (Bosson et al., 2005; Kroeper et al., 2014). This allowed me to form a fuller picture of the 'masculinity is physical' theme discussed in this chapter.

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Participant 1: Different occupations like, again, like I have a female Chef, but she's identified, who identified more as masculine because she's clearly wanting to be like that. Because she's … stronger. Her, clothing, let's say like…

Amrinder: She was, I'm guessing she was homosexual. [Participant 1: Yeah, yeah]. But she was interested, so she was more off ah…. She was a lesbian but she …her attraction towards female was what was making her more masculine?

Participant 1: Because she she's more into female. She shows men up in a tough competition, like the physicality wise.

Amrinder: Yeah. This is also very interesting. So ..so you're saying masculinity is kind of relative to your sexual preference ? [Participant 1: sexual preference, yeah].

*****

Limited picture of worldviews associated with the research question: considering the ethnographic/normative information about the participants to consider how the background of the participant may only be a limited picture of worldviews associated with this research question. No participants from South East Asian background were recruited within this research. Limited ethnic backgrounds from East Asian and South Asian backgrounds were recruited in the research. No participants were of a marginal or working-class background and none of the participants identified with a homosexual/alternative gender identity. No participants were of mixed racial identity. Although qualitative research is about a lived experience approach to research, participants from other worldviews not recruited within this research would hold other subject positions that should be shared through further research on this research topic.

As part of the reflexive approach I also requested feedback from the participants after providing a summary of the analysis to them. Two participants provided in person feedback which allowed me to better explain the nuances among the varied participant worldviews for each of the themes. This provided a spatial approach to understanding the nuances among the participants worldviews. Three participants were shared the summary via email and one participant provided an acknowledgement but no further feedback. Two participants were not available for feedback. The research also acknowledged the Treaty of Waitangi principles in line with the bicultural commitment to Māori as per the treaty. In acknowledging the shared resistance to European masculinity among the Māori and the Asian, these principles were kept in mind during the entirety of the research. No participant

discussed the Treaty, but several participants acknowledged the need for equality and 'standing up' for everyone who is being treated unequally. Some participants expressed support towards the bicultural approach within New Zealand with more emphasis given to the rights and the values of the Māori.

Self-identified Asian masculinity in the context of traditional European masculinity

The themes discussed within this chapter described the experience of the participants from their standpoints. The participants expressed a varied level of agency in how these themes impacted their identity. All participants expressed an intention to contribute to society. There was a general sense of responsibility towards family and society that the participants associated with masculinity. They built on this aspect by defining masculinity through the physicality lens. Although there was an exclusive relationship with physical ability and strength that was shared by some participants, this also manifested through a general desire to compete and perform in all spheres. Finally, the participants associated their performance of masculinity with the experience of being 'unique'. This chapter discussed the nuances of this aspect of their identity in depth with some participants holding a critical view of this uniqueness and related it to 'othering' whereas other participants thought of this space as offering a novel position in society. Several participants shared worldviews of racial prejudice, standing up for others and physical differences to describe their performance of masculinity and how this related to 'othering'. Most participants reflected that being able to stand up for what is right was a masculine aspect and this was the way forward to counter the limited representation/misrepresentation in society. The discussion around nuances of the varied worldviews of the participants helped in demonstrating the identity creation process of the participants. The participants claimed agency in their ability to own their narrative, but there were also instances of individual life experiences that made it more challenging for some of them to identify with Asian masculinity and unique cultural identity. However, a general consensus of accountability towards life events and control over life situations was key to the performance of masculinity for all the participants. Multiple participants shared that New Zealand society is becoming more accepting and has changed significantly since before.

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Participant 3: Yes definitely, I reckon there .. as a society, there has been a lot more integration and understanding to different cultures. However, there still is definitely going to be still stereotypes and cultural differences. But there is more understanding of where each different individual cultural people come from, in terms of the way they think, behave. I think it's just more accepting of differences.

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Although there was not many suggestions by participants around how my involvement as the researcher impacts this research, the above section within this Chapter attempted to discuss in detail a reflexive approach and the part I played as co-creator in this qualitative study.

Chapter FIVE: Conclusion

"I think deep inside I'm also a feminist. I believe in the view of equal rights, not necessarily of just men and women, but the equal rights of everyone."
- *Participant 7*

The study aimed to investigate how men within the Asian minority community construct and negotiate their masculinity. Due to limited research within New Zealand on Asian masculinity, this research used a qualitative approach to produce a nuanced understanding of Asian masculinity. Semi-structured interviews based on an ethnographic approach with self-identified Asian ethnicity men were conducted. Thematic analysis of the men's accounts utilized social constructionism as the epistemological basis of the study. Social constructionism required analysis of text to identify what social practices support a specific discourse and the social structures that allow for these discourses to exist. Interactions between myself and the participants allowed for knowledge to be co-created by the participants and myself. The analysis therefore became a bottom-up approach and was driven by the stories shared by the participants. What this means is that the codes and themes were derived from the content of the stories themselves so what was generated by myself during analysis reflected the content of the stories as interpreted by me. A narrative approach to thematic analysis utilized the overall themes to narrate the stories of the participants in constructing and negotiating their masculinity.

Seven participants were recruited for the research. Interviews took place in private discussion rooms at formal or informal locations such as a public library meeting rooms, work offices and participants' private homes. Confidentiality was also protected during transcription. Participants' names and identifying details were not transferred to the transcripts or notes. My insider position as an Asian man enabled the understanding of the need for cultural sensitivity and respect for participants. Cultural consultation with cultural and research advisors at Massey was conducted to ensure acceptable cultural practices prior to the research commencing. Emphasis was on following the principles of Manaakitanga and Whanaungatanga in conducting the interviews and any impact on the Treaty of Waitangi and its principles was carefully considered prior to the start of the research. Participants' consent was required prior to the beginning of the research and they were free to opt out of the

study any time before signing the transcript release form. All interviews started with a background about the research and allowed for any questions that the participant had.

Qualitative research is about meaning and meaning making. It is important to view this research as context-bound, positioned and situated. A key aspect of reflexive research is identifying how a discourse is related to the researcher. This research attempted to utilize a teller focused interview approach which is oriented towards narration. Throughout this study, I endeavoured to understand my contribution in co-creation of the stories that are shared in this research. Since most of the participants were professionals/semi-professionals, I shared a common professional background with most participants. I was in the same age group as most of the participants. I also shared a common Asian background with the participants as an insider. However, I did not necessarily share the same ethnicity with all the participants. As an immigrant to New Zealand in his teens, I was more closely placed in cultural experience with two of the participants who moved to New Zealand in their teens. All of the participants were heterosexual, and I shared this identity with them as well. I paid special focus on interactions with participants that made me rather uncomfortable and used this reflexive approach to identify subject positions that I have/do not have strong associations with. This assisted me in revisiting and further refining themes as I went through the analysis. It also allowed me to acknowledge these subject positions more actively to present a fuller picture of how Asian masculinity maybe understood by the participants. No participants from South East Asian background were recruited in the research. No participants were of a marginal or working-class background and none of the participants identified with a homosexual/alternative gender identity. No participants were of mixed racial identity. Although qualitative research is about a lived experience approach to research, participants from other worldviews not recruited within this research would hold other subject positions that should be shared through further research in this area.

All participants showed a strong inclination of masculinity being associated with responsibility and taking ownership. The concept of ‘able-responsible’ men as a performance of masculinity was highlighted through the story telling. Most participants related masculinity performance with physicality and the physical ability to compete and perform. Participants shared beliefs of existence of cultural uniqueness where multiple cultures informed and led to the creation of a mixed identity for the participants with values from both Asian and Kiwi heritage. The

journey of the participants revealed their experiences of identification as “distinct” from a very young age. Participants subject positions communicated understanding that they are different. This understanding was initially from a cultural and racial perspective and later attached itself to their masculine identity in some instances. Several participants showed that their journey to self-acceptance and growth was linked to being able to acknowledge and relate to their heritage/culture by descent. Public role models were limited, and participants made references to family, religious icons, and cultural icons as role models. Several supporting themes such as standing up for others influenced their performance of masculinity. Helping others was considered masculine and often a moment of pride. Physical differences in race, hair colour etc. between Asians and Kiwi Europeans were referenced by many participants. Examples of racism were also shared. Stereotypes were prevalent and media influence was limited and often negative towards Asian men.

This journey was in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand as a nation that had seen a big influx of Asian minority in the last few decades although many Asians have been part of the NZ settlement project for several centuries. The stories of the participants showed significant intent of assimilation, but these were sometimes met with ideas of exclusion from the society. The research shares these subject positions to identify the lack of agency that some participants ascribed to this phenomenon. The participants in their discourses tried to own varying degrees of agency as individual actors. Some participants implied that the bicultural understanding of the nation left marginal room for inclusion of the Asian identity into the idea of a “Kiwi”. Other participants did not believe that their “unique” position in society was exclusionary. Instead they associated this uniqueness with their identity. Some participants shared stories of feeling like they were lower on the hierarchy of masculine cultures. Again, the participants demonstrated a varying amount of agency with some participants suggesting that there were no such experiences in their life to support this worldview. The participants emerged with a very mature understanding of their position in society, showed intentions of helping others and being the role models in society that they may not have had. Participants supported the idea of increasing representation over the years through a wider Asian community. This meant a growing sense of self-respect and belief in more acknowledgement for Asians in society.

The subject positions and worldviews shared by the participants in this research could also help inform current clinical therapy practices for minority men suffering from anxiety or depression stemming from masculine identity driven issues. There are several other avenues for future research that explores the masculinity journeys of Asian men in New Zealand. The limited number of participants in this study meant that the background of the research participants was limited to certain identity markers. Similar research to include participants with other identity markers would provide further insight into the rights, duties and obligations of Asian men within New Zealand. Participants of working-class background, homosexual orientation, South East Asian ancestry are just some of the examples of varied identity markers that future research could consider when recruiting participants. Further research could also be done on Asian minority men and women to help inform human resource management policies with focus on diversity and working experiences in organisational settings. Research with focus on attitudes towards safety could also be useful in the context of minority men working in social services such as paramedics, firefighting and the police. Asian representation in New Zealand media is another line of research that could be pursued. Research in all these areas would help provide a more holistic view of the experiences of Asian minority men and support and develop the understanding of the readers about the challenges faced by the Asian diaspora in the country.

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Appendix A – INFORMATION SHEET

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGA TANGATA

I will place the meat on the grill: How self-identified Asian men shape their identity in the context of traditional European masculinity within New Zealand society

INFORMATION SHEET

My name is Amrinder Gambhir. I'm a Masters researcher from Massey University's School of Psychology and I'm interested in Asian masculinity. I am of Asian Indian ethnic background and my experiences in New Zealand contribute to my interest in this topic.

For my Masters thesis, I'm researching how Asian men understand their masculinity in New Zealand society. In this project I want to

- Hear about your experiences as an Asian man in New Zealand
- Hear your stories about masculinity, your stories about learning what it is to be a man in New Zealand and abroad, and
- Hear about the challenges that you have faced in the context of traditional European masculinity in New Zealand and how you navigated these challenges.

Through this information sheet, I would like to invite you to participate in my research. This research would require you to collaborate with me on this project by taking part in an interview and discussing the findings with me, if you choose. Up to 10 participants will be recruited through direct contact, snowballing techniques and trusted intermediaries. The criteria for eligibility are

- Self-identification as an Asian man.
- Over 18 years of age.
- Comfortable to take part in the interview in English.

All participants will be offered a $20 voucher in appreciation of their contribution to the study.

Pre-interview meetings will take approximately thirty minutes. Interviews will take approximately an hour, although more time will be available to the participants should they wish. You are welcome to invite a support person to the interview if you wish to. I would like to begin the research by talking with you about our backgrounds, about how you go about identifying yourself as an Asian man, and about the experiences that you've had with

European masculinity and our expectations of what men should be like. The interview will be of a casual nature and will follow the principles of Manaakitanga (hospitality) and Whanaungatanga (relationship building).

Then I'd like to talk with you about what your experiences mean to you. The stories/experiences that participants share with me will be analysed to identify commonalities and differences in their experiences. We'll retell your experiences so that they tell your story of navigating between an Asian understanding of being a man, and the expectations from European masculinity in New Zealand, in the ways that you would like your story to be told. Also, if you agree, I'd like to record our conversations. Transcripts of the interviews will be created and provided to the participants for review.

Reading transcripts and requesting changes might take participants a further thirty minutes, and up to an hour will be scheduled for discussing the results with participants, after the research has finished. Because these are your stories, you can choose another name to call yourself, so that your stories are heard but your identity's kept private. If you don't want to choose for yourself, I can choose one for you. All interviews will be one-on-one. In total, participants will give an anticipated three hours to the project. All interviews will be conducted in a private room at a library or at Massey Albany. Alternatively, we could conduct the interviews in a private, comfortable setting that suits you.

I'll use the information that you share with me to write my thesis for evaluation by the University. Because this material is collected for my Masters, written extracts from our conversations will be seen by my supervisor at Massey University. Some of your stories might be used in articles and presentations that may come from my studies, but the stories will only be used with your agreement. No recordings will be shared.

Consent forms will be kept in locked storage at Massey University for five years following the study. Any recordings will be destroyed once transcriptions are completed and returned to you for signing off. No identifying information will be used.

Your participation is voluntary. You're under no obligation to accept my invitation to participate. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study up until transcription are returned for you to approve;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during your participation;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during our conversations;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used and all identifying information will be kept confidential;
- have access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

Please note below a list of contacts for counselling/support organisations should you feel you require additional support:

- Asian Family Services, Khyber Pass Road, Auckland
  0800 862 342/ help@asianfamilyservices.nz
- Mental Health Foundation, Mount Eden, Auckland
  09 6234810/ info@mentalhealth.org.nz

- Sahaayta, Papatoetoe, Auckland
  09 2804064/ info@sahaayta.org.nz

- Youthline
  0800 376 633/ talk@youthline.co.nz

- Your GP/Primary Health provider for up to 4 free counselling sessions.

If you have any questions about this research, please don't hesitate to contact me:

Amrinder Gambhir, Researcher, School of Psychology, Massey University

[redacted], [redacted]

or you can contact my supervisor:

Professor Mandy Morgan, School of Psychology, Massey University,
(06) 356 9099 ext. 85058, C.A.Morgan@massey.ac.nz

Mandy will be happy to discuss any concerns you may have about participation in the project.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application SOB 20/39. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Gerald Harrison, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 06 356 9099 x 83570, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Amrinder Gambhir
Massey University School of Psychology
Mobile: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Appendix B - PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGA TANGATA

I will place the meat on the grill: How self-identified Asian men shape their identity in the context of traditional European masculinity within New Zealand society

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read, and I understand the Information Sheet attached as Appendix I. 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 enough time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

1. I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.
2. I agree/do not agree to the interview being image recorded. (In case of zoom interview as per social distancing requirements)
3. I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.
4. I wish/do not wish to have data placed in an official archive.
5. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Declaration by Participant:

I _____ [print full name] _____ hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C - AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGA TANGATA

I will place the meat on the grill: How self-identified Asian men shape their identity in the context of traditional European masculinity within New Zealand society

AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview(s) conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Full Name - printed .....

Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa

School of Psychology - Te Kura Hinengaro Tangata
Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand T +64 6 356 9099 extn 85071 F +64 6 355 7966 http://psychology.massey.ac.nz

Appendix D - SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGA TANGATA

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Schedule

The interview is semi-structured, around a starter and a prompt series of questions but participants will be invited to tell their own stories of their experiences.

The use of prompts ensures that the issues of interest to the researcher are raised. The interviewer/researcher will identify appropriate responses within the participant's story as it is told from their own viewpoint, and prompts may not be raised if the relevant topics are covered spontaneously.

Questions may not be asked in the order below and are contingent on what the participant shares and additional/new questions may arise.

Introduction

I really appreciate you giving your time to be interviewed. I will ask you some open-ended questions, but my main concern will be for you to have the opportunity to talk about your experiences.
The topic of discussion may be sensitive and intense. If you feel any discomfort, please do not hesitate to stop the interview process. If you are not sure about anything in this interview, please feel free to ask me at any time. Finding out about your experience is important to understand the complexity and nuances relating to the topic and to improve future understanding. Before we begin, at this point do you have any questions for me? I will start with more information about myself and my background before we begin the interview process.

Questions

- To start, I am interested in learning what it means to you to be a man?
    - Can you tell me of an experience that made you feel like a man?
    - What is important to you now to be a man? You mentioned (response to above question), is this still relevant to you?
- Do you identify as an Asian man? What makes you identify as an Asian man? What does being an Asian man in New Zealand mean to you?
    - Can you share any stories/experiences when you felt like your masculinity as an Asian man was different to what is considered masculine in New Zealand?
    - How do you perceive traditional European masculinity in New Zealand?
    - What do you think are the differences between Asian masculinity and European masculinity in NZ? What do you think are the similarities?
- Can you recall a time when you felt proud or excited about being an Asian man?
- Have you faced any challenges in the context of traditional European masculinity in New Zealand?
    - Can you share any stories/experiences of these challenges?
    - How do you think other men in NZ society perceive Asian masculinity in comparison to European masculinity? How do women perceive this?
- How did you deal with those challenges?
    - Can you share any stories/experiences of negotiating these challenges?

Appendix E - NARRATIVE ANALYSIS PHASE 2 – INITIAL CODES

NARRATIVE ANALYSIS PHASE 2 – INITIAL CODES

Below are examples of initial codes from the narrative analysis

Participant 1

- Physical involvement and pressure – masculine factors
- Mentally and physically challenging work
- Locals do not prefer hospitality industry
- Several migrants involved with hospitality industry

Participant 2

- Uniqueness due to year of birth in NZ as an Asian minority
- Mother tongue spoken at home
- Anti-Chinese sentiment in the school
- National identity of a kiwi rather than a Chinese

Participant 3

- Responsibility and ownership
- Family oriented
- Can do physical tasks, social and outgoing
- Role model to others
- Alpha Male – could also have negative connotations
- Leadership is masculine

Participant 4

- Experiences of racism in school
- Lack of language skills led to poor communication
- Mocked for way of communication
- Minimal support from the school for language assistance
- Family unable to help with English

Jolly

- "Why people that look different get treated differently"
- Recognition of one's difference
- Sport was still an important part of growing up
- Positive mindset important for team sports
- Team spirit and trying your best

Participant 6

- Recent experience of racism
- Grew up in a multicultural environment
- More Asian friends in high school

Participant 7

- English as a language is different to Mandarin
- English is spoken from the throat whereas Chinese is pronounced more using the mouth
- English is second language and hence less comfortable using it
- Kiwi European men more simplistic
- Less life experience through travel or exposure to multiple cultures
- Kiwi men are unsophisticated
- Masculinity is about responsibility
- Family depends on you
- Confidence is masculine