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Work–Life Balance: Exploring the Perspectives of Māori Employees

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

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Abstract

The work–life balance literature is well established, however the conceptualisations and experiences of Māori employees are grossly underrepresented. This thesis addresses that gap by exploring Māori perspectives of work–life balance. Three research questions guided this thesis:

1. How do Māori employees understand work–life balance?
2. How do Māori employees prioritise their mahi and other life responsibilities?
3. What are the experiences of Māori employees of their employing organisations supporting them to achieve good work–life balance?

A Kaupapa Māori Research approach (by, with, for Māori) was adopted, which took for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori knowledge and worldviews. In-depth, semi-structured, and kānohi-ki-te-kānohi interviews were conducted with eight Māori employees living in the Wairoa district. These Participating Experts (participants) were securely enculturated in their worldviews as Māori, and employed by either Māori-led or Pākehā-led organisations. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to help interpret the research findings. Data analysis resulted in four themes: work–life balance as grounded in one’s identity as Māori; values, beliefs, and practices (VB&Ps); important life priorities; and the role of the employing organisation. Analysis revealed that Māori identity is central to how my Participating Experts conceptualise work–life balance. Furthermore, to achieve good work–life balance, Participating Experts need to be able to enact their identities as Māori within the workplace. However, tensions arose due to incongruences between their Māori worldviews and capitalist/Western organisational structures. My Participating Experts described valuing relationships, collective wellbeing, and fulfilling cultural responsibilities, which sometimes clashed with employing organisations valuing individualism and economic efficiencies. Therefore, work–life tensions emerged when Participating Experts were unable to enact their identities as Māori, driven by their need to stay grounded in being Māori, while still being ‘good’ employees. This research addresses a notable gap in the work–life literature, but more is needed to achieve the transformational change required to better support Māori employees.

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Glossary of Māori Words/Concepts

This glossary provides *explanations* of Māori words/concepts within the context of this thesis. These are not *definitions*, as iwi and hapū have their own dialect, understandings, and contexts for these terms which may hold different meanings.

<i>Kupu/Aroro</i>	<i>Approximate English Translation</i>
Aotearoa	New Zealand.
Ā-tinana	In person.
Atua	Māori gods.
Awhi	To surround with support.
Hā a koro mā a kuia mā	The ‘breath of life’ that has come down from our forebears.
Hāhi	Church.
Hapori	Community.
Hapū	Subtribe. Can also mean to be pregnant.
Hīmene	Hymns.
Hinengaro	The mind, intellect.
Iwi	Tribe. Can also mean bone/s.
Kai	Food.
Kaikōrero	Speaker, narrator.
Kaimahi	Worker, staff.
Kāinga	Home, residence.
Kānohi-ki-te-kānohi	Face-to-face.
Kapa haka	Māori performing arts.
Karakia	Prayer, ritual chant.
Kaumātua	Elder.
Kaupapa	Topic, policy, matter for discussion, plan, purpose, scheme, proposal, agenda, subject, programme, theme, issue, initiative.
Kawa	Protocols, especially relating to the marae and formal ceremonies.
Kiore	Polynesian rat.
Koha	Gift, present, offering.
Kōrero	To say, speak. Narrative, conversation.
Kōrero Māori	To converse in te reo Māori.

Koroua	Grandfather, elderly male.
Kuia	Grandmother, elderly female.
Mahi	Work, job, employment, activity, exercise.
Mamae	Pain, painful, injury, wound.
Mana	Prestige, authority, control, status, spiritual power.
Mana ake	Uniqueness (in the context of the Te Wheke model).
Mana whenua	Territorial rights, authority over territory.
Manaaki	Support, hospitality, respect and care for others.
Manaakitanga	The process of manaaki.
Manu	Bird, any winged creature.
Manuhiri	Visitors, guests.
Māori	The Indigenous Peoples of Aotearoa.
Māoritanga	Māori culture, Māori beliefs and practices, Māori ways of life.
Marae	More specifically, the marae atea is the open area in front of the wharenuī. Most people use marae to refer to all the buildings around the marae complex, including the wharenuī (where you sleep), wharekai (where you eat), et cetera.
Mātauranga	Knowledge, wisdom, understanding.
Mātua	Father, parent.
Maunga	Mountain.
Mauri	Life principle, life force, vital essence.
Mauri tau	When one's mauri is well, healthy, and relaxed.
Mihi	To greet, acknowledge.
Mihi Whakatau	Speeches of greeting. A ceremony to welcome people.
Moana	Sea, ocean, large lake.
Moemoeā	Dream, vision.
Mokopuna, moko	Grandchild/ren.
Muaūpoko [Ngāti]	A tribal group of the Horowhenua and northern Kapiti coast.
Ngāi Tahu	A tribal group of much of the South Island.
Ngāi Tūhoe	A tribal group in the Bay of Plenty and northern Hawkes Bay.
Ngāti Kahungunu	A tribal group of the southern and eastern North Island.

Ngāti Mutunga	A tribal group of the west coast of the North Island and the Chatham Islands.
Ngāti Pahauwera	A tribal group of the Hawkes Bay.
Ngāti Rongomaiwahine	A tribal group of the Māhia peninsula.
Ngāti Whare	A tribal group of the central North Island.
Noa	Common, free from the restrictions of tapu.
Pae	Orators' bench.
Pākehā	English, New Zealander of European descent.
Pakeke	Mature adult.
Papakāinga	Communal Māori home/land. Home base where the marae is usually located.
Papatūānuku	Earth mother.
Pihikete	Biscuits.
Pono	True, valid, sincere.
Pūrākau	Narrative, story.
Rāhui	Ban, restricted.
Rangatira	Leader, chief.
Ranginui	Sky father.
Rangitāne [Ngāti]	A tribal group in the vicinity of Palmerston North.
Raranga	Weaving.
Rongoā	Medicines, to apply medicines.
Rōpū	Group, committee.
Tā moko	Traditional tattooing.
Taha hinengaro	Mental and emotional side.
Taha Māori	Māori side.
Taha tinana	Physical side.
Taha wairua	Spiritual side.
Taha whānau	Whānau side.
Tamariki	Children.
Tāne	Man.
Tangata whenua	People born of the whenua, local people, hosts.
Tangihanga, tangi	Funeral, the enduring Māori ceremony to mourn the dead.
Taonga	Treasure, anything prized.
Taonga tuku iho	The intergenerational transfer of taonga, such as values, beliefs, and practices.

Tapu	Sacred, set apart, under atua protection.
Tapu-tapu	Extremely tapu.
Tari	Office.
Te ao Māori	The Māori world.
Te reo	Māori language.
Tika	To be true, correct, just, fair.
Tikanga (Tikanga Māori)	Tikanga is the expected way of doing things according to what we believe is true and correct. It is a system of values, beliefs, and practices based on the mātauranga originating from within one's worldview as Māori.
Tīmatanga	Beginning, introduction.
Tinana	Physical body. Can also mean the main part of something.
Tino rangatiratanga	Self-determination, autonomy, self-government.
Tīpuna	Ancestors.
Tohunga	Learned person, expert.
Tūrangawaewae	Literally translated as a place to stand. Tūrangawaewae is a place where one has rights of residence and belonging through whakapapa and kinship.
Tūturu	True, actual, authentic.
Tūwharetoa [Ngāti]	Tribal group of the Tāupo area.
Uri	Descendants.
Utu	Repaying, responding.
Waiata	Song, to sing.
Waiora	Health.
Wairua	Spirit, soul.
Wairuatanga	Spirituality.
Whaikōrero	Formal speech.
Whakaaro	Thought, opinion, understanding.
Whakamutunga	Conclusion, end.
Whakapapa	Genealogies and family links. Layering one thing on top of another.
Whakataukī	Proverb, significant saying.
Whakawhanaungatanga	The process of creating, developing, and nurturing whanaungatanga.

Whānau	Family, both nuclear and extended. Can also mean to give birth.
Whanaunga	Relatives, kin.
Whanaungatanga	Quality relationships, sense of connection to others.
Whāngai	Fostered, adoptive.
Wharenui	Large house. The main building of the marae complex where people sleep and attend hui.
Whatumanawa	Emotions.
Whenua	Land. Can also mean placenta.

Chapter One: Tīmatanga; a Starting Place

Ko Panekiri te maunga

Ko Waikaremoana, te wai-kaukau o ngā mātua tīpuna, te moana

Ko Mātaatua te waka

Ko Tūhoe te iwi

Ko Ngāti Hinekura te hapū

Ko te Kūha Tārewa te marae

Ko Ngaire Sparkes ahau

Panekiri is the mountain

Waikaremoana, the bathing place of our ancestors, is the lake

Mātaatua is the ancestral canoe

Tūhoe is the tribe

Hinekura is the subtribe

Te Kūha Tārewa is the marae

I am Ngaire Sparkes

Positioning Myself as a Researcher

I am a Ngāi Tūhoe woman through my mother who also has English ancestry from my father. My social-welfare upbringing was very far removed from the privileged world of academia, but my mother, who was a single parent with six tamariki (me being the oldest), wanted a better future for her children. She encouraged us all to work hard from a young age, telling us to “look in our empty food cupboards for motivation”. When I reflect on my upbringing, I reflect on the strength, tenacity, and determination of my tīpuna. For many centuries prior to the late 1800s, my tīpuna lived in numerous papakāinga settlements all around Te Urewera. Their lives were not void of hardship, but they were able to live on their whenua in accordance with what they believed and valued, within their systems of tikanga and kawa that were built firmly upon their worldviews as Indigenous Peoples of Aotearoa.

However, due to scorched-earth tactics¹, land confiscations, and the introduction of new diseases, my tīpuna were killed, starved, and forcibly displaced from their

¹ Scorched-earth tactics are a military strategy used during the 1845–1872 New Zealand Wars. The British Crown (along with their allied iwi) burnt down Māori villages, and destroyed Māori crops and livestock.

homes (The Waitangi Tribunal, 2017). Indeed, the Māori population more generally declined so drastically during the 19th century that many predicted Māori would become extinct. A notable statement from Dr. Isaac Featherston sums up the prevailing beliefs and attitudes of Pākehā towards Māori at that time: “All we can do, is to smooth the pillow of the dying Māori race” (as cited in Durie, 2005, p. 16). However, due to the resilience, courage, and hard work of our tīpuna, this grim prediction never came to fruition. Instead, Māori are reclaiming many things including lands, culture, language, values, practices, and our rights as knowledge peoples. My Māori identity – being part of an Indigenous group that has overcome such adversity – helps bring me pride, strength, and confidence.

Over the last several years, I have been on a journey of self ‘rediscovery’ to strengthen my connection to my identity as Māori. Although I am extremely proud to be Tūhoe, and to be Māori, our whānau moved away from our ancestral homelands of Waikaremoana when I was a child and I became somewhat disconnected from this important part of my identity. My experience of ‘disconnection’ is not an uncommon one, with many Māori whānau moving to larger centres for more opportunities, mainly pertaining to education and employment (Houkamau, 2010). I do not claim, therefore, to be an expert or an authority in tikanga, te reo, or Māoritanga. What I do proclaim, however, is to be on a life-long campaign to learn more about my taha Māori. As part of this campaign, in 2019, I was fortunate to gain employment as a kaimahi for my iwi’s Waikaremoana tari.

Having only worked in Pākehā-led organisations up until this point, I noticed interesting similarities and differences between Māori-led and Pākehā-led organisations, especially in terms of processes, practices, organisational culture, and politics. One notable difference is that as an iwi employee, I had the opportunity and pleasure of working alongside people who were not only co-workers, but who were also my whanaunga. As a team, we worked together *within* our local community, *with* our whānau, to facilitate and strengthen the resilience and permanency of our people in a way that strived to privilege a Tūhoe worldview. Working for my iwi not only helped me to strengthen my identity as Māori, but it also allowed me to honour the hard work of my tīpuna who had fought so hard for the survival of Māori.

Background and Justification for this Study

My interest in conducting a piece of Kaupapa Māori Research for my Master's thesis stems primarily from wanting to continue the legacy of my tīpuna. As a student of industrial organisational psychology, I have a moemoeā to contribute to improving work-related outcomes for Māori employees by producing a piece of research that is grounded in Māori conceptualisations of balance and wellbeing. In terms of work–life balance more specifically, I was first introduced to the literature as an undergraduate student. Using this rudimentary understanding of the dominant work–life discourse, I explored the literature further as a postgraduate student and found that studies about Indigenous views on work–life balance were basically non-existent.

Although there is some research *on* Indigenous Peoples such as Māori, there is a notable paucity of studies conducted *with* Māori employees, investigating how their worldviews shape their understandings of work–life balance (a review of the work–life balance literature is provided in chapter three). In other words, the dominant work–life literature reflects and privileges the worldviews, values, and perspectives of certain cultural groups. In her keynote address at the 2020 NZ Psychological Society annual conference, Natasha Tassell-Matamua shared that, as a discipline, we have a responsibility to nudge our dominant discourses and practices that continue to privilege Western (i.e., European and North American) academic scientific perspectives, while oppressing and marginalising, albeit perhaps unintentionally and unconsciously, Indigenous Peoples and their knowledges (Tassell-Matamua, 2020). Indeed, as a Māori student of industrial organisational psychology, in the position of being able to undertake a Master's thesis, I have a unique opportunity, interest, and responsibility, to nudge dominant Western understandings by exploring work–life balance from the perspectives of Māori employees.

Research Aim and Intended Contributions

The aim of this study is to explore work–life balance as it is conceptualised and experienced by Māori employees. This study privileges the worldviews of the Māori employees who participated in this research, by taking for granted the validity and legitimacy of their beliefs, values, and conceptualisations of reality. At this juncture, it is important to point out that there is no 'one Māori worldview', or 'one way of being Māori'. Māori identity is delightfully subjective, diverse, and strongly positioned within one's iwi and hapū affiliations, histories, and personal experiences. In fact, assuming rigid homogeneity amongst Māori is not only grossly incorrect, but also further

marginalises the experiences of Māori (Rangihau, 1977). With that said, although there is no ‘one way of being Māori’, this study weaves together some of the shared understandings and experiences of the Māori employees who participated in this study. To explore this topic, a set of research questions were developed:

1. How do Māori employees understand work–life balance?
2. How do Māori employees prioritise their mahi and other life responsibilities?
3. What are the experiences of Māori employees of their employing organisations supporting them to achieve good work–life balance?

It is my intention that this study will contribute to work–life balance for Māori in Aotearoa in four ways. First, for the Māori employees who participated in this study, this research provided a platform for the privileging of their worldviews. This research created a space in which their conceptualisations and experiences of work–life balance could be articulated, taken for granted, and embraced for their inherent worth. Second, in terms of contributing to the Māori community, this research adds to the growing body of Kaupapa Māori Research that has been developed with the specific aim of benefitting Māori (an overview of Kaupapa Māori Research is provided in the next chapter). Graham Smith (2020, April 9) explains that, to advance the wellbeing of Māori, many arguments and many pieces of research are needed that address issues important to Māori across a number of different sites.

The third intended contribution of this research is that it will challenge, in order to enhance, the narrow, Western-dominated understanding of this topic. Exploring a wider range of cultural perspectives can encourage us, as students, researchers, and teachers within academia, to think more broadly and inclusively about work–life balance to devise ways which help enhance the wellbeing of Indigenous employees. Fourth, at an organisational level, I hope this thesis instigates and encourages conversations in the workplace around the wellbeing of Māori, particularly in terms of work–life balance. It is my hope that organisations develop workplace policies and practices which better suit the needs of their Indigenous employees. Based on the findings of this research, a number of recommendations for organisational practice will be provided.

Overview of Thesis

This thesis is made up of seven chapters. This chapter started by describing my journey, motivations, and reasons for investigating Māori perspectives of work–life

balance. This chapter also outlined the research aim, research questions, and intended contributions of this thesis.

Chapter two positions this research within its context. It provides an overview of the socio-economic history of Māori in Aotearoa, and an overview of Kaupapa Māori Research. It then locates this thesis within the Wairoa district (the area in which it was conducted), and discusses the impact of the March-April 2020 COVID-19 lockdown on this study.

Chapter three reviews the work–life balance literature. It provides an overview of the ‘conflict’, ‘enrichment’, and ‘balance’ perspectives of this literature, and then highlights critiques including the underrepresentation of Indigenous employees in existing research. This chapter introduces the numerically few studies with/on Indigenous Peoples, and outlines how this thesis addresses a gap in the work–life literature.

Chapter four discusses Māori perspectives of balance by introducing two Māori models of wellbeing: Te Whare Tapa Whā and Te Wheke. The concepts underpinning these models provide important insights into a Māori worldview, and are fundamental to comprehending the kōrero of my Participating Experts (the interview data). These concepts also provide the theoretical background upon which to understand various other aspects of this thesis.

Chapter five details the research methodology adopted in this study. It provides an overview of four Kaupapa Māori Research principles, and then introduces Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, explaining why it was deemed an appropriate data analysis tool for this Kaupapa Māori thesis. An overview of the research methods used for this study is presented, which introduces my Participating Experts and provides a description of the processes related to interviewing, transcription, and data analysis. This chapter concludes with a section on research ethics.

Chapter six presents an analysis and explanation of the findings from the kōrero with my Participating Experts. It is organised into the one superordinate theme, and the three subthemes, that were identified during data analysis. Interview extracts, and an interpretation of these extracts, are presented alongside each theme.

Chapter seven provides a discussion of the key findings in relation to the wider literature. It goes on to offer recommendations for organisational practice, proposes opportunities for future research, highlights the limitations of this study, and outlines

the contributions of this thesis. To conclude this chapter, and this thesis, I share the impact that conducting this thesis has had upon me personally.

Chapter Two: Locating this Thesis

The Socio-Historic-Economic Context of Māori

The original peoples of Aotearoa, who later came to be known collectively as Māori, arrived in Aotearoa from Polynesia in the late 13th century (Wilson, 2020). During pre-European times, Māori lived within collective whānau, hapū, and iwi structures. The whānau was the fundamental social unit of Māori tribal society, and usually comprised three generations of family members living together (Walker, 1990). Most of the daily work activities were undertaken by the whānau unit, under the guidance of kaumātua (Henare, 2003). Larger-scale activities, for example larger crop cultivations and canoe-making, were undertaken by the wider hapū under the leadership of rangatira (Henare, 2003). When communities had an abundance of particular resources, it was common for them to trade their surplus goods for items not found within their own geographic environment.

Everyone had important roles in traditional Māori society to ensure the wellbeing and survival of the collective. Women fulfilled the crucial tasks of nurturing and caring for tamariki, and were generally responsible for raranga and the cooking of kai such as fernroot. Men were expected to trap kiore and manu, and to engage in warfare when required. Some people engaged in activities such as carving, canoe building, rongoā, and tā moko, contributing to their communities with their specialised skills. Other people were captured as slaves by rival enemy iwi during warfare, and were put to work as labourers. In some Māori communities, slaves made up a substantial portion of the workforce (Petrie, 2002).

The arrival of Europeans had a gradual but significant impact on the Māori workforce. From 1769, the time of Captain Cook's arrival in Aotearoa, Māori communities started expanding their trading ventures to produce goods sought after by Europeans, such as flax and fish, and, in later years, pork and potatoes (Petrie, 2015). Trade with Europeans introduced Māori to new technologies and different ways of thinking, which resulted in the abandonment of some traditional methods (Durie, 2005). In the early 1800s, some Māori men started working on whaling ships, where their contributions led them to become highly sought after as crew members (Petrie, 2002). In later years, as the number of traders and British settlers increased, some Māori ventured into the flour market, growing wheat and building mills to process it (Petrie, 2002).

While an increase in the number of British settlers increased demand for Māori-produced products, it also increased demand for Māori land. Land and other resources were removed from Māori using two methods: sale and force. Of the two sides involved in this removal process, regardless of the method used, Māori came out with the worse deal. For instance, prior to 1840, even though the New Zealand Company² did purchase Māori land, it did so for a “ridiculous[ly] low price” and then on-sold it for a “‘fair’ or high price in Britain” (Sinclair, 1977, p. 72). The Treaty of Waitangi (1840) then put in place the legal mechanisms deemed necessary for settlers to purchase Māori land, and at the same time further deflated the prices Māori received. Under Article Two of the English version of the Treaty, Māori were only allowed to sell their land to the Crown³ (Sinclair, 1977), removing any chance of receiving a fair market sale price. Māori land was also confiscated from ‘rebellious’ Māori iwi in Taranaki, Tauranga, the Waikato, and the eastern Bay of Plenty / northern Hawkes Bay. The lands lost through colonisation removed not only the ability of Māori to produce goods for trade, but also the natural resources upon which they had traditionally relied for survival.

Colonisation in Aotearoa has also been costly to Māori in terms of illness and death (Durie, 2005). Tuberculosis, influenza, and venereal disease arrived in Aotearoa for the first time with the arrival of Europeans, and because Māori had neither immunity nor prior experience in treating these illnesses, their early communities were decimated (Hanham, 2003). In some areas, when there were conflicts between Māori and the Crown, Crown forces deployed scorched earth policies which devastated entire Māori communities. For example, in my home of Waikaremoana, approximately 200 of my tīpuna died from starvation during the scorched earth campaign that was part of the Crown’s pursuit of Te Kooti during the 1860s (The Waitangi Tribunal, 2017). Māori have suffered tremendous loss, hurt, and trauma because of colonisation.

Colonisation in Aotearoa is both a series of events and an ongoing system of oppression that has disrupted Māori ways of being. The historical trauma inflicted by colonisation has been described as a “soul wound” (Pihama et al., 2019, p. 9), which sits at the core of intergenerational Māori suffering. The ongoing *mamae* caused by

² The New Zealand Company was a commercial organisation, founded in the United Kingdom, that was in operation during the first half of the 19th century. It was established to systematically colonise New Zealand.

³ There are two versions of the Treaty/Tiriti. The English version – the Treaty of Waitangi, and the Māori version – Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The clause stipulating that Māori were only allowed to sell their land to the Crown was included in the English version but not the Māori version, leading to conflict between Māori and the Crown.

colonisation is evident in, for example, the poorer labour market outcomes experienced by Māori today. To illustrate, the employment rate for Māori in Aotearoa of 62.8 per cent is 4.7 percentage points lower than the national average (Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment, 2021). In addition, 56.7 per cent of Māori employees are employed in ‘skilled occupations’, compared with 68.4 per cent of non-Māori (Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment, 2021). Furthermore, Māori are more likely to be employed in industries susceptible to economic fluctuations and technological advancements that undermine job stability (Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment, 2017, 2021). While there are indications that these labour market outcomes for Māori are improving (Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment, 2017, 2021), Māori still remain largely marginalised in social, economic, and cultural terms within Aotearoa.

This brief overview of the socio-economic history of Māori has presented a summary of the changes and events that have arguably had the most significant impact on the working lives of Māori. Understanding this history is crucial to making sense of the current positioning of Māori in the workforce. Similarly, acknowledging this history is important for understanding the whakapapa of this thesis, for it is from within this context that this thesis, and Kaupapa Māori Research more generally, has developed.

Kaupapa Māori Research

As a distinct research approach, Kaupapa Māori Research developed in the 1980s through the pioneering work of Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Graham Hingangaroa Smith (Pihama, 2001). Many other Māori academics have played prominent roles in shaping and progressing Kaupapa Māori Research, including Leonie Pihama (Pihama, 2001), Russell Bishop (Bishop, 1995) and Shayne Walker (Walker et al., 2006). Although it has been said that it is unwise and perhaps impossible to define Kaupapa Māori Research (Walker et al., 2006), it is important to describe some of its core tenets that locate it as a distinct research approach.

To start, Kaupapa Māori Research carves out a space that takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori knowledge, language, and culture (Smith, 1997). The space retrieved by Kaupapa Māori Research encourages researchers to privilege Māori processes and worldviews, and to reclaim our right as a knowledge peoples. As such, theorists such as Leonie Pihama (2001) have argued that this space can only be specified and determined by Māori. The ‘fierce’ protection of this research space is a

result of the legacy of Western researchers who conducted research *on* Māori, theorised *about* Māori, but were interested primarily in *benefitting* the Western community (Smith, 2012). This legacy perpetuated dominant Western academic approaches and discourses, while at the same time disempowering and marginalising Māori. Māori were forced out onto the periphery of academic research: a space where Māori were not able to theorise about their own knowledge, culture, and processes. Kaupapa Māori Research is, therefore, a research space that empowers Māori to regain control of investigations into their own lives (Bishop, 1995).

Kaupapa Māori Research is organically Māori because it is embedded in *being* Māori, and is therefore articulated in multiple ways. Kaupapa Māori Research is embedded in the lived experiences, learnings, understandings, worldviews, values, and beliefs that have been handed down through many generations (Pihama, 2001; Smith, 1997). Pihama (2010) explained that, because Kaupapa Māori Research grows from the space and the place in which we as researchers are located, it is influenced by our unique and personal connectedness with our whenua, our maunga, and our communities. The organic nature of Kaupapa Māori Research means there are multiple ways in which it is understood (Smith & Reid, 2000). This organic nature – embedded in being Māori and articulated in multiple ways – influenced how I have shaped and presented this thesis. It is the reason why, for example, I chose to explicitly position myself and this research in the beginning chapters of this thesis.

Kaupapa Māori Research is both theory and practice (Smith, 1997). It is a way of thinking about the world that is distinctively Māori, and is therefore inherently based on Māori ontological and epistemological assumptions. Kaupapa Māori Research as practice shapes the more pragmatic aspects of the research: from the research design and data collection methods, to the relationships with communities (Smith et al., 2016). Graham Smith (1997) asserted that the theory and practice of Kaupapa Māori Research must be congruent and constantly evolving through critical reflection. Engaging in a process of critical reflection, inspires us as researchers to consider whether the practical ways we conduct research are embedded and understood within our own worldviews as Māori. Regarding my own research journey, this process of critical reflection encouraged me to examine the pragmatic aspects of my Kaupapa Māori Research approach, to ensure that I truly understood what I was doing, and more importantly, why I was doing it.

Kaupapa Māori Research has been described by many prominent Māori theorists as closely aligned to critical theory (Henry & Pene, 2001; Pihama, 2001; Smith, 1997; Smith, 2012). Critical theory reveals and challenges power structures, and theorists such as Linda Smith (2012) have argued that it is vital to critique these structures given the impact of colonisation on Māori. The development of Kaupapa Māori Research has created a ‘strategic positioning’ that challenges Western hegemony, but does not reject Western literature, researchers, or theories, *if* they help advance a Māori agenda (Smith, 1999). As Linda Smith (1999) stated: “[Kaupapa Māori Research] is about centring our concerns and worldviews and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspectives and for our own purposes” (p. 39).

In conclusion, Kaupapa Māori Research is an approach to research that is conducted *by* Māori, *with* Māori, and for the *benefit of* Māori (Smith, 1999). It was the key overarching paradigm that guided this thesis. Māori perspectives are noticeably absent in the work–life balance literature, and adopting a Kaupapa Māori Research approach allowed me to privilege Māori worldviews with the goal of benefitting Māori employees.

The Wairoa District

This research was undertaken in the northern Hawkes Bay district of Wairoa (Figure 1). Wairoa, known as the ‘centre of the universe’ by some locals, is an area rich in culture, history, and natural beauty. It is also an area that I am fortunate to call home. Wairoa has a modest population: 8,367 live within the district, with slightly over half (4,527) residing in the township of Wairoa and the remainder living in remote rural areas such as Waikaremoana, Māhia, Nūhaka, and Raupunga (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c). Of our population, the majority – 65.7 per cent – identify as Māori (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c). This large proportion is particularly impressive when one considers Māori comprise 16.5 per cent of the total national population (Statistics New Zealand, 2018a). In fact, the Wairoa district has the second highest concentration of Māori in Aotearoa, at only 0.4 of a percentage point behind the Chatham Islands (Statistics New Zealand, 2018b, 2018c).

Figure 1

Location of the Wairoa District



Note. The Wairoa district, northern Hawkes Bay, North Island, Aotearoa New Zealand. Source: Informed Decisions (n.d.).

The boundaries of four distinct but interconnected iwi overlay the boundary of the Wairoa district: Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Pahauwera, Ngāi Tūhoe, and Ngāti Rongomaiwahine. These iwi have mana whenua, or territorial rights and claims to areas within the district, and as such all have successfully negotiated Treaty of Waitangi settlement claims (i.e., Iwi and Hapū of Te Rohe o Te Wairoa Claims Settlement Act, 2018; Māori Fisheries Act, 2004; Ngāti Pāhauwera Treaty Claims Settlement Act, 2012; Tūhoe Claims Settlement Act, 2014). Due to Crown settlements, local investments, and the securing of various contracts, these local iwi entities are emerging more prominently as employing organisations within the district. For example, as part of its settlement with the Crown, my iwi – Ngāi Tūhoe – has taken over the operational activities and management within Te Urewera from the Department of Conservation.

While Māori-led entities are expanding their capacities as employing organisations, the majority of people in Wairoa are still employed by Pākehā-led

organisations. Our local freezing works is the single largest employer in Wairoa, hiring up to 650 people during its peak season (Affco New Zealand, 2021). The primary production and processing industries (pastoral farming and livestock processing) make the largest contribution to employment, together accounting for 56 per cent of the jobs available in the district (Wairoa District Council, 2017). Regardless of organisation type – Pākehā-led or Māori-led – the local labour pool available to these organisations is an impressive and notable 63.2 per cent Māori (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c).

Wairoa is a special and unique district and has itself had a significant impact on many aspects of this research. With its high Māori population, most, if not all, of the people who live in this area are at least somewhat knowledgeable of Māoritanga. Furthermore, with a growing number of people in the region employed by Māori-led entities, it is an ideal place to compare and contrast the work–life balance experiences of Māori employed in Māori-led and Pākehā-led organisations. I was interested in exploring what these different organisations are doing well, and what they are not, in order to harness learnings that may facilitate better work–life balance outcomes for Māori employees in any workplace.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The March-April 2020 lockdown had a significant effect on every aspect of our lives in Aotearoa, including my undertaking of this research. Immediately prior to this lockdown, the initial interviews were all set to take place. The research questions, data collection questions, and relevant documentation had been formulated, and I had scheduled interviews with six people who had agreed to participate. Everything changed, however, when Aotearoa went into Alert Level Four lockdown on the 25th of March 2020. Although conducting the interviews during the lockdown via electronic means was discussed as an option, this did not ‘sit right’ with me as a Māori researcher, because I felt it was important to conduct the interviews kānohi-ki-te-kānohi. Furthermore, we all needed to focus on keeping ourselves and our whānau safe, so I decided to postpone the scheduled interviews until safety concerns and anxiety levels, as well as alert levels, had gone down.

Given that the lockdown had profound impacts on all aspects of our lives, I wondered how it might have affected work–life balance in particular for Māori employees classed as essential workers. Did the lockdown affect how these employees thought about work–life balance? Did it amplify any work–life balance related issues?

Did it cause them to reconsider or re-evaluate their important life priorities? Upon consultation with my supervisors, I decided to re-position this thesis. I re-formulated the research and data collection questions, and I changed my focus to more closely examine the work–life balance experiences of Māori employees classified as essential workers during this first lockdown.

In July 2020, after we had all had a few weeks to adjust to life at Alert Level One, I re-engaged with the people who had agreed to participate in this study. Three of these people were not classed as essential workers, so I contacted them first. I thanked them for expressing an interest in participating in the research, but then explained that, given the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown, I had decided to embrace this as an opportunity to explore the experiences of essential workers more specifically. Thankfully, these people were understanding and still very supportive of the research. I then continued on to recruit and conduct interviews only with Māori employees who were classed as essential workers during this first lockdown.

Upon completing the research interviews, I discovered, interestingly and unexpectedly, that although this COVID-19 lockdown did have an impact on my Participating Experts, it was actually quite peripheral to how they understood and experienced work–life balance. They shared deeper, more universal, and more enduring kōrero that transcended temporal boundaries and discussed work–life balance within a complex and holistic system of tikanga, beliefs, values, principles, and practices. To me, this more enduring kōrero seemed more pertinent to how these Māori employees conceptualised and experienced work–life balance.

Therefore, after much deliberation, I decided to return to the initial (i.e., pre COVID-19) research questions that had been formulated, and to not include the COVID-19 related themes in the final data analysis. Although I felt rather deflated at this point – believing I had invested so much time in exploring the impacts of COVID-19 only to return to my initial starting point – my supervisors encouraged me to embrace this as a learning opportunity. Indeed, I believe this experience has helped to enhance many aspects of this thesis, especially in terms of how I have interpreted the research findings.

Chapter Summary

This chapter located this research within its context in order to understand its origin and its focus. The impact of New Zealand’s March-April 2020 COVID-19 Alert

Level Four lockdown was explained with respect to its impact on the research questions, data analysis, findings, and timing of this research. A description of the Wairoa district was presented, situating this research within its geographic location, and giving a community-level context. Furthermore, Kaupapa Māori Research was introduced in this chapter, because it provides the fundamental building blocks upon which this thesis is built. An overview of the socio-economic history of Māori in Aotearoa was provided, foregrounding the critical role that colonisation has played in the positioning of Māori in the workforce today.

Chapter Three: Review of the Work–Life Balance Literature

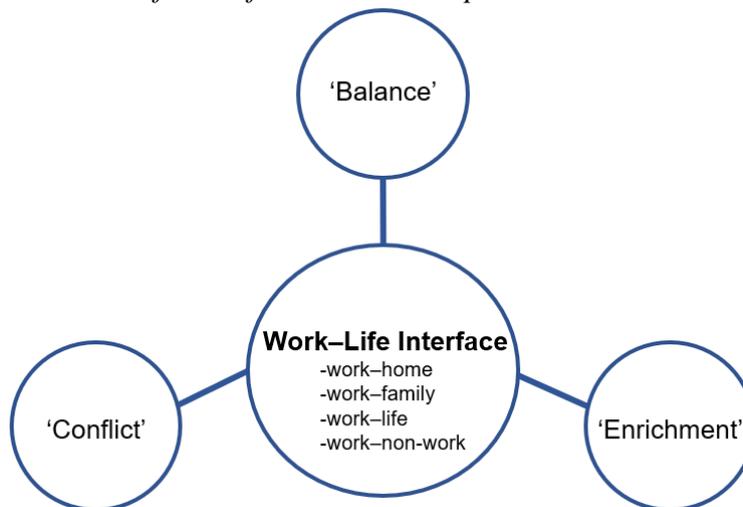
This chapter provides an overview of the literature examining the work–life interface, which contains three separate, but closely related, research perspectives: ‘conflict’, ‘enrichment’, and ‘balance’. Furthermore, this chapter highlights critiques of this literature, including its lack of Indigenous representation. Finally, a number of relatively rare pieces of research with/on Indigenous Peoples are presented, and an explanation provided regarding how this current study fills a significant research gap.

The Work–Life Literature

The literature examining the work–life interface is well established, with numerous constructs developed to study different aspects of engaging in multiple work and non-work domains. The work–life interface is known by many terms, from the more narrowly defined ‘work–home’ (e.g., Russo, 2015) and ‘work–family’ (e.g., Matias & Recharte, 2021), to the more inclusive concepts ‘work–life’ (e.g., Haar & Brougham, 2020) and ‘work–non-work’ (e.g., Casper et al., 2018). Although there are distinctions between these concepts, for purposes of clarity, this thesis uses ‘work–life’ as an umbrella term encompassing all constructs used to define the work–life interface. Figure 2 graphically presents the work–life interface, and highlights its ‘conflict’, ‘enrichment’, and ‘balance’ research perspectives.

Figure 2

The Work–Life Interface and its Perspectives in the Literature



Note. The work–life interface is described by various terms. ‘Conflict’, ‘enrichment’, and ‘balance’ represent different research perspectives of the work–life interface.

The 'Conflict' Perspective

The 'conflict' literature focuses on the negative aspects of engaging in work and other important life roles. This perspective first emerged in the 1980s, and frames work and other life roles as oppositional forces competing for scarce and finite resources (Bedeian et al., 1988; Voydanoff, 1988). Although different labels have been used to explore the conflict perspective, such as 'interference' (e.g., Cheung & Tang, 2009) and 'negative spillover' (e.g., Dilworth, 2004), conflict is the most frequently used term. Work–life conflict is commonly defined as a form of inter-role conflict, in which the role pressures from work and other life domains are incompatible (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This conflict is typically grouped into three categories: when *time* allocated to one role hinders participation in another role, when *strain* symptoms produced in one role negatively affect other roles, and when *behaviours* required in one role clash with the expectations of another role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). A bi-directional relationship exists between the domains, meaning that work can interfere with one's ability to engage in other life roles, and other life roles can interfere with one's ability to engage in work. The underlying premise of work–life conflict is that people will have difficulty performing each role successfully if these roles contain conflicting and negative demands.

Since its inception, the conflict literature has grown exponentially. Numerous meta-analyses have been conducted, providing overviews of research findings and important insights. In one meta-analysis, Michel et al. (2011) examined the relationships between a large number of theoretically derived antecedents and both work-to-life conflict (WLC) and life-to-work conflict (LWC). Collectively, Michel et al. (2011) found antecedents of WLC included work role stressors (e.g., role ambiguity and role overload), work role involvement (e.g., higher levels of psychological involvement in the work role), work social support (e.g., lower levels of organisational support), and some work characteristics (e.g., task variety and job autonomy). Furthermore, they found antecedents of LWC comprised family role stressors (e.g., family role overload and family role ambiguity), family social support (e.g., lower levels of spousal support), and certain family characteristics (e.g., family climate⁴). In another meta-analysis, Amstad et al. (2011) examined the relationships between both WLC and LWC and a range of outcomes they grouped into three categories: work-related (e.g., turnover

⁴ Family climate was defined as the extent to which the family group is sympathetic towards the needs of its members (Michel et al., 2011).

intentions⁵ and work-related stress); family-related (e.g., family satisfaction and family-related stress); and wellbeing-related (e.g., life satisfaction, somatic/physical symptoms, and psychological strain). Amstad et al. (2011) concluded that both WFC and FWC are consistently related to all three of these outcome categories, albeit to varying extents. Overall, the conflict literature suggests that to help improve the work–life balance of employees, attempts must be made to *minimise conflict* between their work and other important life domains.

The ‘Enrichment’ Perspective

The ‘enrichment’ literature focuses on the beneficial aspects of engaging in multiple roles. With a growing interest in positive psychology which emphasises strengths rather than weaknesses (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014), researchers began examining the positive side of the work–life interface. As with the conflict literature, various labels have been used to examine enrichment, including ‘enhancement’ (e.g., Wadsworth & Owens, 2007), ‘facilitation’ (e.g., Grady & McCarthy, 2008), and ‘positive spillover’ (e.g., Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). However, in a recent meta-analytic review of this literature, Lapierre et al. (2018) concluded these other labels capture the core elements of work–life enrichment, and can therefore be considered synonyms. Work–life enrichment is commonly defined as the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in another role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). According to this definition, resources generated in one role (such as skills and perspectives, psychological and physical resources, social capital, flexibility, and materials) can be transferred to another role, either directly or indirectly. As with the conflict perspective, a bi-directional relationship is seen to exist, meaning benefits can be derived from work and applied to other life domains, and vice versa. The underlying premise of work–life enrichment is that the enactment of work and other life roles can also assist, rather than just impede, each other.

The enrichment literature is voluminous and has also benefitted from a number of meta-analytic reviews. In one meta-analysis, Lapierre et al. (2018) examined the relationships between a number of theoretically derived antecedents of both directions of work–life enrichment, which they categorised as either ‘resource-providing’ or ‘resource-depleting’. Lapierre et al. (2018) found resource-providing antecedents from both the work domain (e.g., supervisor support and work autonomy) and the family

⁵ Turnover intention refers to an employee’s intention to quit their job with their current employing organisation.

domain (e.g., family support), were associated with both directions of work–life enrichment. They found little evidence that resource-depleting demands in either role (e.g., work hours and number of dependent children), serve as meaningful antecedents to either direction of enrichment. In another meta-analysis, McNall et al. (2010) examined the relationships between both directions of enrichment and work-related (e.g., job satisfaction and affective commitment), non-work-related (i.e., life satisfaction), and health-related (i.e., physical and mental health) outcomes. McNall et al. (2010) found that both directions of enrichment were positively associated with favourable work-related and health-related outcomes, and that work–life enrichment had a positive influence on non-work-related outcomes⁶. Overall, the enrichment literature suggests that to help improve the work–life balance of employees, attempts must be made to *maximise enrichment* between their work and other life domains.

The ‘Balance’ Perspective

The ‘balance’ perspective takes a more integrative approach to examining the work–life interface. In other words, this perspective conceptualises work–life balance as a construct that focuses more on the interplay between work and other life roles, and combines the negative and positive aspects of engaging in multiple roles. Work–life balance is a relatively new construct in the academic literature, and there is a lack of consensus regarding an agreed-upon definition. To illustrate, in a recent meta-analysis, Casper et al. (2018) reviewed 290 research articles and found 233 conceptual definitions for work–life balance. That said, several definitions have become more widely accepted. One example is the definition proposed by Frone (2003), who conceptualised work–life balance as the simultaneous experience of low conflict *and* high enrichment. The underlying premise of this definition is that balance can be achieved when enrichment is higher than conflict, suggesting that enrichment can ‘cancel out’ the detrimental effects of conflict.

Other researchers have proposed that work–life balance is a construct that extends beyond low conflict and high enrichment. For example, Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) conceptualised it as a *relational construct*, defining work–life balance as the accomplishment of work and other life expectations which are negotiated and shared with role partners. Voydanoff (2005) took a *demands-resources fit* approach, suggesting that achieving good work–life balance involves work and other life demands being met

⁶ McNall et al. (2010) stated that there were not enough studies to meta-analytically examine the relationship between life–work enrichment and non-work-related outcomes (i.e., life satisfaction).

by resources present across all domains, such that participation in all domains is effective. While Valcour (2007) considers work–life balance as *psychological in nature*, defining it as one’s satisfaction with the fit and allocation of time and attention across their work and other life roles. Indeed, researchers have provided a varied range of definitions, which has led to a lack of conceptual clarity in the balance literature.

Despite this, research has still provided evidence that the balance perspective is broadly associated with a range of beneficial work and life outcomes. For example, in one study examining a range of balance conceptualisations, Wayne et al. (2017) found positive relationships with organisational commitment, job satisfaction, family satisfaction, and family performance⁷. Casper et al. (2018), who had found 233 conceptual definitions for balance in the literature, also found positive relationships between these varied conceptualisations of balance with job, life, and family satisfaction. Ultimately, the literature examining the balance perspective specifically, and the wider work–life interface more generally, has provided important insights as well as evidence that achieving balance is beneficial to both employees and employing organisations.

Critiques of the Work–Life Literature

The literature used to examine the work–life interface has been subject to a number of key criticisms. To start, its philosophical underpinnings are based primarily on European and North American (i.e., Western) worldviews, and therefore non-Western understandings of this construct tend to be overlooked (Adisa & Gbadamosi, 2021). Indeed, to examine the work–life interface, researchers have drawn mainly on Western theories such as role balance, role enhancement, boundary/border theory, and inter-role conflict/interference (Casper et al., 2018). As a result of these shared Western underpinnings, this thesis considers the ‘conflict’, ‘enrichment’, and ‘balance’ perspectives of the work–life interface a collective body of work. Therefore, unless explicitly stated otherwise, the label ‘work–life balance’ is used throughout this thesis as an umbrella term capturing the positive, negative, and integrative aspects of the work–life interface.

The work–life literature has been further critiqued for excluding analysis of the historical, economic, and political contexts in which employees work and live. In a critical review, Özbilgin et al. (2011) noted the individual-level and present-day focus

⁷ Family performance was rated by the participant’s spouse, and measured how well the participant performed the family tasks that were expected of them.

taken by most work–life researchers. They argued that by focusing on these “micro-individual” (Özbilgin et al., 2011, p. 177) levels of explanations, these researchers are overlooking the influence of historical context on work–life balance dynamics. In addition, the work–life literature tends to neglect consideration of the economic and political context in which employees and employers operate. However, in an insightful study exploring the work–life balance experiences of occupational therapists in Wales, Clouston (2014) identified what she called a “potent link” (p. 508) between neoliberal capitalism and work–life ‘imbalance’. Clouston (2014) asserted that neoliberalism has generated pressures within the working environment, driving organisational cultures to become performance-led, thus exacerbating work–life balance issues. Studies that ignore these wider contexts fail to address the drivers that cause and perpetuate ‘imbalance’.

Work–Life Balance Research: Indigenous Populations

Another important critique of the work–life balance literature is its lack of Indigenous representation (Brougham et al., 2015; Julien et al., 2017; Spector et al., 2007). The small number of work–life studies on/with Indigenous Peoples are worth noting. One such study was conducted in the United States of America by Clark (2002) and surveyed employees from two organisations in which the majority of participants self-reported as Native American. Clark (2002) found that, compared with their non-Indigenous work colleagues, Native American employees reported lower levels of both job flexibility and family-supportive supervision (i.e., the willingness of supervisors to discuss family-related issues in a sensitive way). These lower levels of flexibility and support increased the amount of work–family conflict Native American employees experienced.

A more recent study by Julien et al. (2017) explored how Indigenous Peoples from Canada framed work–life enrichment and conflict. Julien et al. (2017) found that Indigenous employees regularly felt frustrated because they were not allowed by their employing organisations to take time off work to engage in important cultural and family practices. This finding emphasises the critical role employing organisations play in hindering (or helping) the work–life balance experiences of Indigenous employees. Furthermore, Julien et al. (2017) also found that Indigenous employees were often able to call upon an extensive family network to help meet competing work and life demands. By providing an understanding of the work–life experiences of

underrepresented Indigenous groups, Julien et al. (2017) and Clark (2002) provide much-needed contributions to the work–life balance literature.

Work–Life Balance Research: Māori

Māori are another Indigenous population that have been included in a relatively small number of work–life studies. Researchers have used Māori samples to quantitatively examine the work–life interface and its relationships with a range of antecedents and consequences, including: job autonomy, work and family demands, positive affect, job stress, depression and anxiety, job and life satisfaction, and workplace cultural satisfaction and wellbeing (Brougham et al., 2015; Haar & Brougham, 2020; Haar & Cordier, 2020; Haar et al., 2014). These studies, as with those mentioned in the previous section, help address significant research gaps.

Importantly, these studies provide insights of work–life balance for Māori employees. To illustrate, Haar et al. (2012) found that, for Māori employees, family-to-work conflict was a much stronger predictor of turnover intentions than was work-to-family conflict, a finding, these researchers asserted, is unique in the context of the wider work–life literature. Furthermore, these studies emphasise the important role employing organisations play in helping or hindering work–life balance for their Māori employees. For example, Brougham and Haar (2013) noted that Māori employees who reported higher levels of perceived cultural inclusion (i.e., organisational support for their cultural backgrounds), were more likely to experience better work–life balance. By revealing key factors that affect the experiences of work–life balance among Māori employees in particular, these studies indicate the value of conducting further research with this Indigenous population.

It is important to note that these quantitative studies mentioned above adopt research methods that privilege Western theories, Western measures, and, consequently, Western perspectives of work–life balance. Therefore, arguably, these studies ‘pigeon-hole’ the experiences of Māori employees by confining their understandings of work–life balance to pre-existing Western conceptualisations. Haar et al. (2014) pointed out that their work “contributes to establish the generalizability of work–life concepts and measures developed in Western countries to other regions of the world” (p. 370). However, to truly understand work–life balance from the perspectives of non-Western employees, it is necessary to explore this construct from *their* worldviews. More specifically, to understand how Māori employees conceptualise work–life balance, it is

necessary to privilege *their* ‘voices’, and to try and understand how *they* make sense of, and experience, this construct for themselves.

Moving Towards Māori Perspectives of Work–Life Balance

Ngairé Harris (2007) presented a rare piece of research for her Master’s thesis that attempted to explore work–life balance from the perspectives of Māori employees. Harris (2007) qualitatively explored whether ‘being Māori’ affected the way female employees managed their personal, work, whānau, and community commitments. Harris (2007) concluded that being Māori was integral to how these Māori employees managed their time, as they had a firm commitment to ensuring their Māori cultural values and beliefs are practised and shared with the next generation. Harris (2007) privileged the thoughts, experiences, and opinions of her Māori participants, and in doing so conducted a piece of research *with* Māori. This research focused primarily on personal time management, and its results provided a rich understanding of this dimension for Māori women. This current thesis adds to the literature by exploring how male and female Māori employees conceptualise and experience work–life balance more generally, and by examining the ways in which employing organisations are helping or hindering the ability of these employees to achieve satisfying work–life balance.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the work–life literature, introducing the ‘conflict’, ‘enrichment’, and ‘balance’ research perspectives of the work–life interface. Work and other life roles are said to conflict with each other when they contain contradictory and negative demands, and enrich each other when resources from one role improve the quality of life in other roles. Balance has been conceptualised in multiple ways but generally takes an integrative approach focusing on the interplay between work and other life roles. This chapter argued that these three perspectives can be considered a collective body of work because they are largely derived from Western understandings. Furthermore, some important critiques of this literature have been highlighted, including its individual-level and present-day focus; disregard for the historical, economic, and political contexts in which employees and employers operate; and lack of Indigenous representation. A number of the rare exceptions exemplifying studies of Indigenous experiences were presented, including research conducted here in

Aotearoa. This chapter closed by introducing the research gap addressed by this current thesis, which explores how Māori employees conceptualise and experience work–life balance and explicitly investigates the ways in which their employing organisations are supporting them.

Chapter Four: Balance from a Māori Perspective

This chapter introduces conceptualisations of balance from a Māori worldview, using the ideas underpinning two Māori models of wellbeing: Te Whare Tapa Whā and Te Wheke. These ideas provide the theoretical background upon which many components of this thesis can be understood. Both models have been published within the last 50 years, but are based on cherished Māori ideas/concepts that have been developed and refined over many centuries (Kingi, 2005). These concepts still resonate strongly in contemporary Māori society and form the basis of many Māori values, beliefs, and practices (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013). Therefore, these two models can be applied across a number of contexts pertaining to Māori, including work–life balance.

After providing a brief explanation of the symbolism of each model, identifying its dimensions/concepts, this chapter explores the dimensions in more depth by drawing upon the works of other Māori authors. Because there is overlap in dimensions (i.e., tinana, hinengaro/whatumanawa, whānau, and wairua are described across both models), this chapter uses Te Whare Tapa Whā as a base model, and focuses discussion of Te Wheke on its more unique dimensions. Once each model has been presented, a brief overview of its strengths and limitations is provided.

Te Whare Tapa Whā

Model Overview

As described by Mason Durie (1998), Te Whare Tapa Whā was developed from a training session of Māori health workers in 1982, in response to Māori wanting to move towards a view of health that “made sense to Māori in Māori terms” (Durie, 1998, p. 68). Mason Durie drew together and discussed what were widely considered at that session to be the four essential dimensions of wellbeing, symbolised by the four sides of a wharenui (Figure 3): taha tinana (the physical side), taha hinengaro (the thoughts and feelings side), taha whānau (the extended family side), and taha wairua (the spiritual side). To achieve balance and maximise wellbeing, all four interdependent dimensions need to be strong.

Figure 3*Te Whare Tapa Whā*

Note. The four sides of a whareniui represent the four essential dimensions of wellbeing. Source: Durie (1998).

Taha Tinana

The tinana is a person's physical body, and in Te Whare Tapa Whā, taha tinana is the capacity for physical growth and development (Durie, 1998). As well as representing physical wellness achieved through eating well and exercising, taha tinana can be understood in terms of access to the resources necessary for physical survival, such as appropriate housing, clothing, and health care. Therefore taha tinana, or physical wellbeing, should also be viewed within wider societal considerations.

Taha Hinengaro

In Te Whare Tapa Whā, taha hinengaro is described as psychological wellbeing: a person's capacity to communicate, think, and feel (Durie, 1998). The key theme of taha hinengaro is that the mind and the body are inseparable (Durie, 1998). Therefore, the idea that mental or emotional troubles can be treated without addressing the other dimensions of wellbeing is foreign to Māori ways of understanding the world (Love, 2004). Because the hinengaro influences a person's physical actions as well as their thoughts and feelings (Pere, 1997), it is understood to connect their inner being (i.e., what occurs within the mind) to the outer world (i.e., the lived space one occupies).

In Māori culture, emotional expression is encouraged. Perhaps one of the most notable examples of this is witnessed during a tangihanga, where tears and cries of sorrow are freely shared. A tangihanga, which typically lasts for at least three days, provides a space for people to come together to grieve and support each other. The expression of grief is integral to the mourning and eventual healing process for Māori (Nikora et al., 2010; Paterson, 2015). Māori also express emotion powerfully through kapa haka, an art form that generates a sense of ‘embodied emotion’ (Hollands et al., 2015), whereby the physical sensations and emotions of the performers become interwoven.

Taha Whānau

Taha whānau represents social connectedness: the capacity to belong to, and to engage with, a wider social network (Durie, 1998). As previously mentioned, whānau was the fundamental social unit in traditional Māori society, and this is still the case today. The concept of whānau is inclusive: it extends beyond one’s immediate family and commonly refers to people with shared whakapapa or genealogical links. More recently, some academics such as Mason Durie (as cited in Cunningham et al., 2005) have drawn attention to the existence of ‘kaupapa’ whānau, or close friends and other people with whom we relate, to emphasise the importance of non-whakapapa-based social relationships and groups.

Whakapapa, which consists of layers of generations of whānau who are connected through kinship ties, is fundamental in te ao Māori. From a Māori worldview, whakapapa links all people to our primeval founding parents, Ranginui and Papatūānuku. To honour this common descent, whakapapa encourages us to base our relationships with each other on reciprocity and balance (Henare, 1988). Henare (1988) described the various whānau groups Māori may affiliate with – maternal, paternal, whāngai, in-laws – and illuminated how these affiliations also serve as a means to mobilise support on a fairly extensive scale.

Whanaungatanga – secure, quality, interpersonal relationships – is derived from the strong sense of belonging that develops from kinship rights and obligations which together serve to strengthen whānau (Henare, 1988). It is created through shared experiences and working together, and it is nurtured through an emphasis on valuing interpersonal relationships. Whanaungatanga also helps people form a sense of identity and at the same time invokes feelings of security, value, and mutual respect (Huriwai et al., 2001).

Taha Wairua

Taha wairua, the spiritual side of a person, is described in Te Whare Tapa Whā as the capacity for faith and connection with the natural environment (Durie, 1998). This capacity may include religious beliefs and practices, but as Mason Durie (1998) asserted, it is not synonymous with regular church attendance or adherence to a particular religious denomination. Belief in a higher power is one way in which wairuatanga is realised, but it is also evident in the interconnectedness people develop with each other, the natural environment, and their histories (Wenn, 2006).

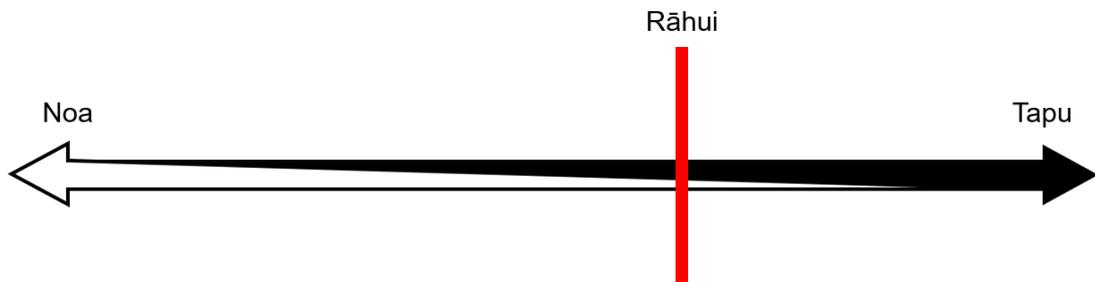
Wairuatanga is fundamental to a Māori worldview. As Marsden (2003) shared: Māori does not, and never has[,] accepted the mechanistic view of the universe which regards it as a closed system into which nothing can impinge from without. The Māori [perspective] conceives of it as at least a two-world system in which the material proceeds from the spiritual, and the spiritual (which is the higher order) interpenetrates the material physical world. (p. 20).

Given that Māori believe everything descends from atua, it can be argued that wairuatanga not only exists for Māori, but also forms the basis of reality. Indeed, as Mason Durie (1998) asserted, spiritual wellbeing is for Māori, the most essential requirement of health.

Although not explicitly discussed in Te Whare Tapa Whā, three important concepts related to wairuatanga are tapu (sacred), noa (safe, normal), and rāhui (restricted). It is helpful to think of tapu and noa as dimensions on a continuum (Figure 4): everything has elements of both tapu and noa, while rāhui indicates the point on this continuum where the balance between the two is disrupted and the tapu-tapu or forbidden has been entered ('Tangaroa', personal communication, August 4, 2020). Tapu comes from the power and influence of atua, and everything has inherent tapu because everything has been created from atua (Barlow, 1991). For each thing, there is a unique level at which tapu and the noa are in balance. When this balance is upset, and levels of tapu are too high, special actions (relating to noa) must be undertaken, such as the laying of a rāhui as a practice of preservation to reduce tapu to a safe level and bring about balance (Mead, 2016). From a Māori worldview, this balance is fundamental to spiritual wellness.

Figure 4

Tapu, Noa, and Rāhui as Dimensions on a Continuum



Note. Everything has elements of both tapu and noa. Rāhui is the point on the continuum at which tapu has reached a dangerous level. The point of rāhui is arbitrarily drawn here for illustrative purposes.

Strengths and Limitations of Te Whare Tapa Whā

Te Whare Tapa Whā, as a wellbeing model, has its virtues and weaknesses. This model has been praised for being easy to understand and apply (Wratten-Stone, 2016) and noted for the way it reflects a unified interpretation of the universe which is fundamental to a Māori worldview (Rochford, 2004). Because it presents a holistic perspective of balance, Te Whare Tapa Whā generally resonates well with Māori. However, this model has been critiqued for being created primarily to explain a Māori worldview to non-Māori (V. Murray, personal communication, November 3, 2020), and some have suggested that it is too generic, or ‘not uniquely Māori enough’ (McNeill, 2009). Perhaps the most important criticism is that Te Whare Tapa Whā does not explicitly take into account the impact of the wider societal context on Māori (Pitama et al., 2007). Despite the limitations of this model, the key ideas or concepts underpinning it are crucial for understanding a Māori worldview.

Te Wheke

Model Overview

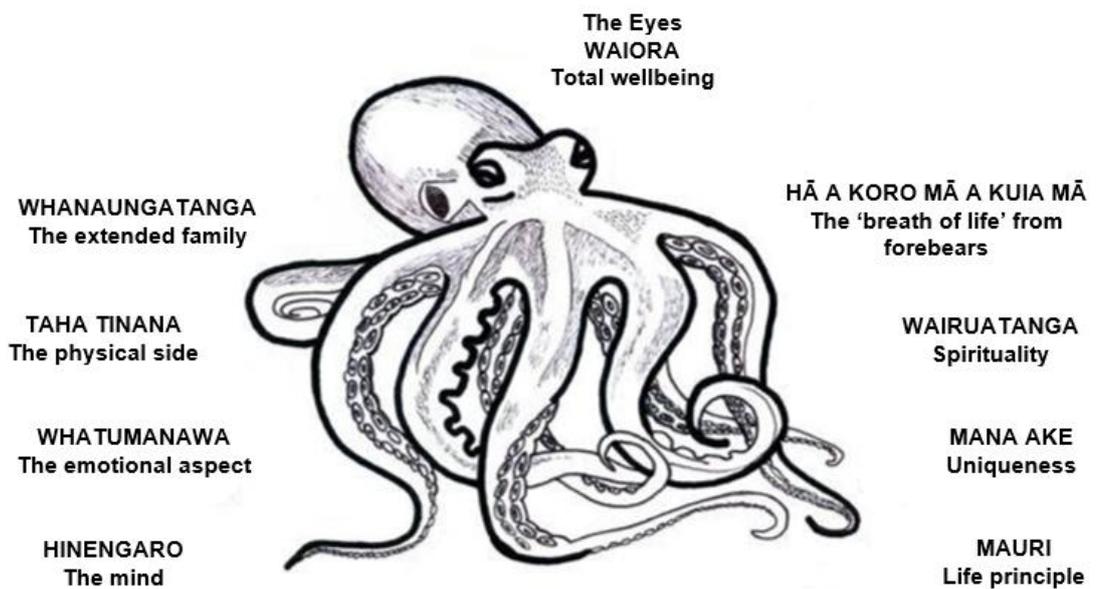
Te Wheke was presented by Rose Pere at the Hui Whakaoranga Māori Health Planning Workshop (Pere, 1984). She presented a kōrero at this hui and used the symbol of an octopus to help describe whānau health (Figure 5). Rose Pere explained the Te Wheke model as follows:

The body and the head represent the individual/family unit. Each tentacle represents a dimension that requires and needs certain things to help give sustenance to the whole. The suckers on each tentacle represent the many facets that exist within each

dimension. The eyes reflect the type of sustenance each tentacle has been able to find and gain for the whole. The intertwining of the tentacles represent a mergence of each dimension. The dimensions [...] need to be understood in relation to each other and within the context of the whole because there are no clear cut boundaries (Pere, 1984).

Figure 5

Te Wheke



Note. Each tentacle of the octopus represents an important component of whānau health. The eyes represent total wellbeing. Source: Pere (1984).

As with Te Whare Tapa Whā, the Te Wheke model conceptualises wellbeing as holistic. All parts are interdependent, symbolised by the intertwining tentacles that exist as part of a wider system. These eight tentacles, or dimensions, represent: taha tinana (the physical side), whanaungatanga (the extended family), whatumanawa (the emotional aspect), hinengaro (the mind), wairuatanga (spirituality), mana ake (uniqueness), mauri (life principle), and hā a koro mā a kuia mā (the 'breath of life' from our forebears). All tentacles are important for waiora; if one tentacle is not functioning optimally, this will impact upon overall wellbeing.

As previously mentioned, there are commonalities between the dimensions of Te Wheke and Te Whare Tapa Whā. More specifically, taha tinana, whanaungatanga, wairuatanga, hinengaro, and whatumanawa are also captured in the Te Whare Tapa

Whā model⁸ (and described previously). Therefore, the remainder of this discussion will focus on the dimensions unique to the Te Wheke model: mana ake, mauri, and hā a koro mā a kuia mā.

Mana Ake, Mana

In her presentation, Rose Pere (1984) referred to a dimension she called ‘mana ake’: uniqueness which is part of the individual’s own mana, and, by extension, is part of the mana of the whānau unit. She stated that if a whānau receives sustenance – the nurturing and support they need – then this will empower them to pursue the goals which can uplift them. Because every person and every whānau situation is multifaceted and unique, in order for them to thrive, the sustenance required for wellbeing needs to be relevant to their circumstances.

In later publications of Te Wheke (Pere, 1985; Pere, 1997), Rose Pere presented this dimension more generally as ‘mana’. Mana can be described in terms of charisma, control, divine right, influence, prestige, power, psychic force, status, and vested and acquired authority (Barlow, 1991; Henare, 1988; Mead, 2016; Pere, 1985; Pere, 1997). Originally bestowed by our atua, the mana of a person can be recognised or reinforced through ancestral descent and through gaining the respect of people via the development and practise of various skills, knowledge, abilities, and deeds (Barlow, 1991; Marsden, 2003; Pere, 1985). Henare (1988) stated that understanding mana and its related concepts (e.g., tapu, noa, wairuatanga, manaakitanga, and utu) is paramount to understanding a Māori worldview, because in te ao Māori, virtually every activity is linked to the maintenance and enhancement of mana.

Mauri

Mauri is the life principle, an abstract concept that Rose Pere (1997) acknowledged is difficult to define. Mauri has been described as a special power, the life force bestowed by our atua, which makes it possible for everyone to live in accordance with the conditions and limits of their lives (Barlow, 1991). Everything, both animate and inanimate, has a mauri which remains within them throughout their existence (Barlow, 1991; Henare, 1988). Perhaps because everything within the universe possesses it, mauri has been construed as the bonding element that knits together the diverse elements of the universe, giving creation its unity (Marsden, 2003).

⁸ In the Te Wheke model, Rose Pere differentiates the dimensions/concepts of whatumanawa and hinengaro, whereas in Te Whare Tapa Whā, Mason Durie combines them.

Nurturing and supporting the mauri is of utmost importance. Rose Pere (1984) stated if the mauri of a person is nurtured, then that person will appreciate the mauri of, for example, other people, meeting houses, trees, rivers, oceans, and mountains. In other words, having a nurtured mauri helps one to understand and care for everyone and everything. Mead (2016) asserted the mauri and the self are one, therefore, if a person is well, then their mauri is in a state of balance described as mauri tau. We can see therefore, a strong and healthy mauri is essential not only for the wellbeing of people, but also for the wellbeing and balance of everything within the universe.

Hā a Koro Mā a Kuia Mā / Taonga Tuku Iho

Rose Pere (1984) described hā a koro mā a kuia mā as the heritage that has come down from our Māori forebears. In later discussions of this model, she used the phrase taonga tuku iho to describe this concept (Pere, 1997). A taonga is a highly prized tangible or intangible treasure that has meaning on both a physical and a spiritual level (Henare, 1988). In today's society, all aspects of Māori culture are regarded as taonga tuku iho (Henare, 1988). Some examples of taonga tuku iho are: mātauranga; values, beliefs, and practices; iwi histories; tikanga; and whakapapa.

Hā a koro mā a kuia mā, or taonga tuku iho, is very important for Māori. Rose Pere (1984) explained that Māori hold the belief that the past and the future are linked, therefore the intergenerational transfer of taonga can be thought of as a mechanism that helps create a shared Māori identity which links us with our tīpuna and with our uri. Taonga tuku iho also provides an instant connection that reminds us we are part of something much bigger than ourselves (Love, 2004). Māori belong to an Indigenous culture, rich in history and strong in character, which has not merely survived but flourished for hundreds of years.

Strengths and Limitations of the Te Wheke Model

As with Te Whare Tapa Wha, the Te Wheke model has its merits and shortcomings. Te Wheke has been positively described as “a charismatic model based in Māori cosmogony thus retaining its links with the past, while adapting to the contemporary world” (Wenn, 2006, p. 117). In other words, the values and concepts that underpin Te Wheke are enduring and relevant. On the other hand, the model has been judged to be more complex to understand than Te Whare Tapa Whā (Wenn, 2006). Perhaps more importantly, it has been critiqued for not taking into account the impact of colonisation on Māori (McNeill, 2009). Despite this, and as with Te Whare Tapa Wha,

the key concepts that underpin this model can facilitate a clearer understanding of a Māori worldview (McNeill, 2009).

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided insight into core beliefs generally shared by some Māori, based on the ideas underpinning Te Whare Tapa Whā and Te Wheke. Both models use metaphors (i.e., a whare and an octopus) to provide frameworks that emphasise the interconnection between various dimensions required to achieve holistic balance and wellbeing. The dimensions/concepts these models draw upon are tinana, hinengaro (including whatumanawa), whānau, wairua, mana, mauri, and taonga tuku iho. This chapter discussed these concepts within the context of the models, and included perspectives from other Māori authors. This chapter also highlighted critiques of these models, including that neither accounts for the wider societal context in which Māori live, which means that neither model explores the huge impact that colonisation has had, and continues to have, on Māori. However, the concepts underpinning these models are extremely useful for understanding various aspects of this thesis, especially the kōrero shared by my Participating Experts.

Chapter Five: Research Methodology

This chapter details the research methodology used to explore how Māori employees understand and experience work–life balance. It starts by providing an overview of four Kaupapa Māori Research principles, and then introduces Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis explaining how this tool aligns well with this qualitative Kaupapa Māori thesis. Subsequently, an outline of the research methods used in this study is presented, which introduces my Participating Experts and provides a description of the processes related to interviewing, transcription, and data analysis. This chapter concludes with a section on research ethics.

Kaupapa Māori Research Principles

Theorists have identified a number of principles to help guide researchers adopting a Kaupapa Māori Research approach. This section briefly overviews four Kaupapa Māori Research principles that relate to the research methods of this thesis: kaupapa, tino rangatiratanga, taonga tuku iho, and whānau. Examples of how these principles have been applied in practical terms are demonstrated in this section and in other parts of this chapter.

Kaupapa (the Collective Philosophy Principle)

The principle of kaupapa refers to the collective commitment, vision, and aspirations of the wider Māori community (Smith, 1997; Smith & Reid, 2000). Therefore, it is important for researchers adopting a Kaupapa Māori Research approach to work with communities to ensure the research produced is aligned with the ambitions and objectives of the wider collective. In line with this principle, during the initial stages of this research, the research proposal was reviewed by my community during one of our hapū hui held at Te Kūha Tārewa marae. After some discussion, my hapū supported the proposal and asked that the research findings be shared during a future hapū hui.

Tino Rangatiratanga (the Self-Determination Principle)

Tino rangatiratanga expresses Māori aspirations for self-determination, sovereignty, autonomy, and independence (Smith, 1997; Walker et al., 2006). This principle is situated directly from the Treaty of Waitangi, and its importance reflects the ongoing impact of colonisation on Māori. The principle of tino rangatiratanga in Kaupapa Māori Research asserts that Māori have the right to control and exert

ownership over, for example, the research aims, processes, data analysis, and dissemination of findings. Consistent with this principle, Participating Experts were invited to participate in the data analysis stage of this research. This is discussed more fully later in this chapter.

Taonga Tuku Iho (the Cultural Aspirations Principle)

The concept of taonga tuku iho was discussed in the previous chapter. As a key principle of Kaupapa Māori Research, it asserts the centrality of tikanga, mātauranga, and te reo within the research context (Smith, 1997; Smith & Reid, 2000). For this study, a crucial consideration was that the qualitative interviews were conducted in a manner that was ‘culturally safe’, to help uphold the mana of my Participating Experts, myself, and this thesis. Therefore, expert advice was sought from pakeke/rangatira living within my tūrangawaewae of Waikaremoana. These pakeke/rangatira provided invaluable direction to ensure interviews were conducted in a way that minimised the potential for harm (from a Tūhoe worldview). Harm can occur physically, mentally, and spiritually, but operating under the protection of our tikanga and kawa helps keep us safe.

Whānau (the Extended Family Structure Principle)

The concepts of whakapapa and kaupapa whānau, as well as whakawhanaungatanga, were introduced in the previous chapter. The principle of whānau sits at the heart of Kaupapa Māori Research (Pihama, 2001; Smith & Reid, 2000), and sets the expectation that the research process will involve the building and nurturing of interpersonal relationships. Kaupapa Māori researchers aspire to move beyond the power dynamics inherent in traditional researcher/researched relationships, trying to relocate their focus towards developing quality relationships with all involved in the research (Tiakiwai, 2015). Aligned with this principle, a snowball sampling technique was adopted for recruiting potential Participating Experts (discussed in more depth later in this chapter), and interviews were put on hold, due to COVID-19 restrictions, until they were able to be conducted ā-tinana.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

Given the purpose and positionality of this research, as well as the questions it seeks to answer, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was chosen as the most appropriate tool for data analysis. Although IPA was developed in the United Kingdom (see Smith, 1996), it has been used successfully by many Māori researchers to

qualitatively explore topics of importance to Māori (e.g., Butcher, 2012; Mark & Lyons, 2010; Perkins, 2009). This section provides a brief overview of IPA, and explains why it was deemed an appropriate tool for this Kaupapa Māori thesis.

IPA: An Overview

IPA is a method of qualitative data analysis that has two primary aims: to understand and ‘give voice’ to people and their lived experiences, and to make sense of these experiences through detailed and nuanced interpretations (Larkin et al., 2006). It is underpinned by the philosophical study of phenomenology, which put simply, is the examination of human lived experience from the first-person point of view. IPA is phenomenological in the sense that it is trying to understand the ‘lifeworld’ of participants – their subjective perceptions and understandings of a phenomenon – rather than trying to make an objective statement about the phenomenon itself (Smith et al., 1999). In other words, IPA is interested in exploring participants’ experiences of, for example, events, constructs, and relationships, as well as the meanings they ascribe to these experiences.

IPA attempts to get as close to the participants’ worlds as possible but recognises that researchers cannot step fully inside. Access depends on, and is complicated by, our own understandings as researchers, which means that some form of sense-making is inevitably involved (Smith et al., 2009). Therefore, IPA also embraces hermeneutics, the theory of interpretation, to offer insight into this sense-making process (Smith et al., 2009). The IPA process of examining experience has been described as a ‘double hermeneutic’, because we as researchers are trying to make sense of our participants’ sense making (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Viewed in this way, this sense-making process requires participants and researchers to work together, as both parties are actively involved in understanding the phenomenon in question.

IPA further incorporates idiography, or a commitment to focusing in-depth on individuals as they deal with particular situations or events in their lives (Larkin et al., 2006) in order to produce a detailed, nuanced, and “finely-textured” analysis (Shinebourne, 2011, p. 22). Research conducted from an idiographic stance allows for an in-depth analysis to be provided for each case, before the researcher carefully moves on to identifying patterns across cases (Eatough & Smith, 2017). To fulfil this idiographic commitment, researchers are encouraged to use small, purposefully selected samples (Smith et al., 2009).

Given its idiographic, hermeneutic, and phenomenological underpinnings, IPA is a useful tool for researchers seeking to explore the ways in which people describe how they personally experience and make meaning of phenomena.

The Appropriateness of IPA for this Kaupapa Māori Thesis

Although IPA is a non-Māori tool, as Cram et al. (2003) stated: “a Kaupapa Māori approach does not exclude a wide range of analytic methods, but rather signals the interrogation of methods in relation to cultural sensitivity, cross-cultural reliability, useful outcomes for Māori, and other such measures” (p. 2). Therefore, this section reveals how IPA was examined and consequently deemed as a tool which aligns well with my Kaupapa Māori Research approach.

The primary consideration in choosing a data analysis method was that it had to allow the worldviews of my Participating Experts to be privileged. IPA was chosen because it was able to facilitate this in three important ways. First, its phenomenological commitment to exploring the lifeworlds of participants from their perspectives, enabled the understandings and experiences of my Participating Experts to be privileged as Indigenous Peoples situated within a particular socio-historic-economic context. Similarly, by acknowledging the participant as the “experiential expert” (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012, p. 76), IPA recognises that they are actively involved in making sense of their experiences, and are therefore central to the research process.

Second, the idiographic attention of IPA to particular people in particular situations, enabled the worldviews (or ‘lifeworlds’, in phenomenological language) of my Participating Experts to be examined on their own terms. This is particularly important, because, as previously stated, there is no one single Māori worldview or one way of being Māori.

Third, the ‘bottom-up’⁹ analytic approach involved in IPA was crucial, given that the aim of this thesis was to explore work–life balance from the perspectives of Māori employees without confining their understandings and experiences to existing work–life theories. An IPA approach allowed the themes generated during analysis to be derived from the data (i.e., the kōrero of my Participating Experts). Essentially, I chose IPA as the analytic tool for this thesis because, for the above reasons, it allowed me to uphold the mana of my Participating Experts in significant ways.

⁹ Where the emergent themes/codes derived during the analytic process are grounded in the data rather than pre-existing theories.

Research Methods

Interview Process

Interviews were conducted *kānohi-ki-te-kānohi* at a time, date, and location that suited my Participating Experts. Three Participating Experts asked to meet at their place of work, three in their homes, and, to my surprise, two of them asked to meet at my home. I was able and willing to accommodate in all instances. Six Participating Experts met with me by themselves, while two (who had *whānau* present at the time) asked if they could include their partners and children. Including *whānau* helped foster an environment of inclusivity, and in my opinion also helped create a special *mauri* to these interviews. With the luxury of hindsight, I would have liked to have been more proactive in inviting *whānau* participation during recruitment.

Once the Participating Expert was ready to begin, I opened our *hui* with the *karakia tīmatanga* that had been gifted to me by a *pakeke* from Waikaremoana. Together, my Participating Experts and I discussed the Information Sheet (Appendix A) and Consent Form (Appendix B), which allowed me to answer questions they had. There were a number of key points from the Information Sheet and Consent Form that I reiterated. First, they were welcome to *kōrero Māori*, and if I needed clarification or interpretation I would simply ask. Second, at any point, they were able to decline answering any of the interview questions, ask for the audio recorder to be turned off, and withdraw from the study. Finally, I would respect their privacy, and measures had been implemented to keep their personal information safe.

I positioned an audio-recording device between my Participating Expert and myself to ensure optimum recording quality, but did not place it so close as to impose on my Participating Expert. I then collected their personal and employment details (Appendix C). Next, I commenced the in-depth, semi-structured interview, following an Interview Schedule (Appendix D) but allowing for flexibility of topics and order. The Interview Schedule was designed to guide, not dictate, the interview; as a novice researcher who had memorised all of the data collection questions, I still found it very valuable having this prompt on hand. Aligned with a *Kaupapa Māori Research* approach, the questions were phrased and responded to in an empathic and sensitive manner. I closed each *hui* with the *karakia whakamutunga* that had also been gifted to me by a *pakeke* from Waikaremoana.

The length of the interviews ranged from 48 minutes to 87 minutes, with an average (mean) interview time of 57 minutes. Two of my Participating Experts asked

for the audio recording device to be turned off during their interviews: one person shared sensitive information they did not want recorded, and another had a manuhiri call in unexpected. All of my Participating Experts appeared to find the interview a reflective process, with one person commenting it was a very “timely exercise” because their employer was currently reviewing their work–life balance policies. My Participating Experts were also very grateful for the koha/utu (a \$40 supermarket voucher), which was provided to thank them for their time and valued contribution to the research. One person, who also had whakapapa ties to Waikaremoana, asked me to gift their voucher to a deserving Waikaremoana whānau.

Participating Experts (Participants)

Eight adult Māori employees (four male and four female) living in the Wairoa district participated in this study. Because these Māori employees are experts in their own views and experiences, they are referred to throughout this thesis as Participating Experts. Participating Experts were also: engaged in at least part-time paid employment¹⁰; ‘active members’¹¹ of their marae, hapū, iwi, and/or hāpori; and classified as essential workers during the March–April 2020 COVID-19 lockdown¹². Being an ‘active member’ of one’s marae, hapū, iwi, and/or hāpori was used as a proxy measure of a relatively strong connectedness to te ao Māori. Māori employees firmly grounded in their identities as Māori were purposively selected, because, as mentioned, a Māori perspective is absent in the work–life discourse. Due to the qualitative and exploratory nature of this research, a sample size of eight allowed sufficient time and attention for detailed idiographic readings of the data, as well as searching for more generic themes.

Table 1 contains a basic description of the demographic characteristics of my Participating Experts. Three Participating Experts worked for Māori-led organisations, and five for Pākehā-led organisations. Information pertaining to my Participating Experts’ current positions within their employing organisations was captured, but not presented, to preserve anonymity. The majority of Participating Experts (five out of eight) had experience working for both Māori-led and Pākehā-led organisations. The

¹⁰ In paid employment of at least 20 hours per week.

¹¹ Being an ‘active member’ was defined as spending an average of at least five hours per week engaging in unpaid mahi to benefit one’s marae/hapū/iwi/hāpori.

¹² As noted in chapter two, the impact of the March–April 2020 COVID-19 Alert Level Four lockdown turned out to be quite peripheral to how my Participating Experts understood and experienced work–life balance. Therefore, I returned to the initial pre-lockdown research questions for this study.

number of financial dependents for each Participating Expert was also recorded but not included here, because it does not do justice to the broader, more inclusive way in which they understood whānau.

There was diversity in terms of age, relationship status, distance lived from main marae, length of employment with current employing organisation, and iwi affiliations. The age of my Participating Experts ranged from 28 years to 57 years, with an average age of 44.5 years. Most Participating Experts lived relatively close to their ‘main’ marae¹³, with an average distance from kāinga to papakāinga of 10.8 kilometres. Seven out of eight Participating Experts had worked for their current employing organisation for 10 years or less, while one had worked for the same organisation for 33 years. As stated previously, Māori are not a homogenous ethnic group, and as such, some Participating Experts specified multiple iwi they identify with (these have not been listed in Table 1 to preserve anonymity). Iwi affiliations included (in the words of my Participating Experts): Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāi Tūhoe, Pāhauwera, Muaūpoko, Ngāi Tahu, Tūwharetoa, Rangitāne, Ngāti Whare, and Ngāti Mutunga.

¹³ ‘Main’ marae – the marae they affiliate most strongly with.

Table 1*Participating Experts' Demographic Information*

Pseudonym	Gender	Current employing organisation type	Age (years)	Relationship status	Distance lived from main marae	Current length of employment (years)
Amiria	Female	Pākehā-led	52	Separated	5 km	33
Aperahama	Male	Māori-led	57	Married	8 km	1
Aroha	Female	Māori-led	51	Married	25 km	3
Manaaki	Male	Pākehā-led	28	De facto	40 km	10
Pono	Female	Māori-led	45	Married	1.5 km	4
Tangaroa	Male	Pākehā-led	46	Separated	400 m	3
Whetu	Female	Pākehā-led	33	Single	1.5 km	1
Wiremu	Male	Pākehā-led	44	Single	6 km	6

To recruit Participating Experts, purposive sampling via my own whānau/community networks was used, as well as snowball sampling. Purposive sampling enabled me to approach potential Participating Experts for whom I believed the research questions would have specific relevance (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Snowball sampling involved asking my Participating Experts to help identify other potential participants employed by different organisations within the Wairoa district. This technique was chosen because it inherently involves whakawhanaungatanga (aligning to the whānau principle of Kaupapa Māori Research). Four out of the eight Participating Experts were recruited via snowball sampling.

Kaupapa Māori Research values relationships that are conducted on a kānohi-kite-kānohi basis (Smith, 1999) and I was mindful of this when interacting with my potential Participating Experts. I hand-delivered the Invitation and Information Sheets (Appendix A) to all potential Participating Experts, and spoke to them all ā-tinana when seeking their involvement in this research. Although most of my Participating Experts lived or worked within the Wairoa township, I travelled four hours (inclusive) to meet with two who lived in remote rural areas.

Transcription, Review, and Feedback

All audio recordings were transcribed within one week of the interview, to enhance my recall of non-verbal factors that might shape transcription (e.g., physical gestures and postures). This helped facilitate transcription quality and rigour (Poland, 1995). To begin this process, I carefully listened to each audio recording all the way through to help place the interview in context and get a fresh perspective. I then transcribed the audio recordings at a semantic level, including false starts, fillers, laughs, and significant pauses.

After the five-stage data analysis process (outlined in the next section), I met again with six of my Participating Experts who had expressed an interest in being involved in data analysis. Involving my Participating Experts with data analysis was important because I wanted to make sure the way I had interpreted their kōrero was tika and pono, and therefore accurately reflected their understandings and conceptualisations of work–life balance. It also provided me with the opportunity to seek clarity and ask follow-up questions around particular discussion points.

As well as discussing their own individual kōrero, I also shared with my Participating Experts some of the collective findings/themes that had been identified across all interviews. The purpose of discussing these shared understandings was to

gauge how well I had interpreted their collective kōrero: did the themes/findings as a whole resonate at least somewhat with my Participating Experts? Or had my analysis completely missed the mark? Seeking feedback on the collective understandings proved very fruitful, as most Participating Experts provided extremely useful input that helped to refine my own analytic thinking. After some discussion, these Participating Experts endorsed the collective findings, with most cautioning me not to universalise their experiences as what could be expected for all Māori.

This opportunity for further feedback and participation also aligned with the Kaupapa Māori Research principle of tino rangatiratanga, whereby my Participating Experts shared ownership of this research by being involved in the analysis process. I expressed to each Participating Expert my deepest gratitude for their participation in this research. The fact they allowed me to enter their 'lifeworlds' by sharing their kōrero made me feel very privileged and humbled. Finally, I explained to my Participating Experts that they could receive a summary of the final results if they wished, and made suitable arrangements.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was informed by the series of steps recommended by the developers of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003). Each transcript was analysed in detail, on its own terms, before moving on to the next transcript. Eventually a cross-case analysis was undertaken and narrative account written. As a novice researcher new to conducting qualitative research, I found the 'prescriptive' guidelines provided by the developers helpful, and also sought ongoing advice from my thesis supervisors.

First Stage: Data Familiarisation and Initial Noting. Data analysis commenced immediately, minutes after the interview, as I noted initial observations, impressions, points of interest, and ideas. To help maximise my familiarity and intimacy with the data, I chose to transcribe each interview myself. Upon completion, I read the transcript several times to become thoroughly familiar with the material. With each different reading, I focused on different aspects of the kōrero: the overall tone and gestalt of the interview, objects of importance, descriptive accounts, linguistic features, and my conceptual interpretations. This allowed me to move from the descriptive to the interpretive, while still encouraging my sense-making to be grounded in the transcripts. By becoming familiar with, and, in fact, immersed in the individual Participating Expert's kōrero, I was able to reflect on what mattered to them and why.

Second Stage: Developing Emerging Themes. To develop emerging themes, I produced concise, ‘pithy’ phrases aimed at capturing the psychological essence of important features of the data corpus. This involved turning my analytic gaze slightly, from concentrating solely on the transcript to a wider focus which incorporated my initial notes. I captured the emerging themes in a Microsoft Word document, and included the corresponding transcript extracts to ensure the themes remained grounded in the data. During this stage of analysis, although my focus was on the wider data corpus, I was careful to continually refer back to the words of that particular Participating Expert to help ensure the true meaning in the kōrero was being captured. Because I wanted to develop the themes from the kōrero, instead of from pre-existing theories, I tried to set aside (as much as possible) my pre-existing knowledge of the dominant work–life balance literature.

Third Stage: Searching for Connections Across Emergent Themes. With a preliminary list of emergent themes (the ‘pithy’ phrases), I then moved on to clustering these themes by looking for relationships between them. To help facilitate this, I printed out the typed list of emergent themes, cut each theme out, then used my kitchen table to lay out and group similar themes together. Grouping the emergent themes in this way allowed me to visually see possible connections, and also enabled me to easily move the emergent themes around as new patterns of meaning emerged from the data. Next, I assigned concise, essence-capturing phrases to label these clusters of higher-order themes, which were then transferred from my kitchen table into a Microsoft Word table. For each theme, I wrote a brief abstract outlining the central organising concept, the boundaries of the theme, and once again connected these to transcript extracts to confirm there was enough meaningful data to support the theme.

Fourth Stage: Moving on to the Next Case. After undertaking an in-depth analysis of each case, I then moved on to analyse the kōrero from the next Participating Expert following the same process. I attempted to analyse each transcript in its own right, in order to capture and represent the themes that were specifically important to each Participating Expert. Although it is recommended to ‘bracket’ or set aside (as far as possible) the ideas from preceding cases (Smith et al., 2009), I could not help but notice that there were a number of themes beginning to occur across most, if not all, cases. I took note of these observations and used these initial insights to help with the next stage of data analysis.

Fifth Stage: Looking for Patterns Across Cases. Once all of the interview transcripts were analysed, I changed my focus from the particular to the shared, and endeavoured to look for patterns across cases by bringing all the themes together in one place (my kitchen table). Bringing the themes together allowed me to: get an overview of how my Participating Experts as a collective were making sense of work–life balance, examine how the themes hung together as a gestalt, and map out the prevalence of recurring themes. Bringing the themes together also allowed me to identify convergence and divergence within the data set more easily. Deciding on the final themes was a subjective process that relied heavily on my own intuition as well as the research questions of this study. Deciding on the final themes was a very difficult process for me, because of my whakaaro that all of the themes were interesting and relevant in some way. Ultimately, I based my choice of the final themes on their relevance to the research questions and the positioning of my research.

Ethics

Ethical considerations were guided by the principles outlined in the ‘Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching, and Evaluation involving Human Participants’ (Massey University, 2017). These principles helped inform how I identified and addressed, for example, issues concerning confidentiality and privacy, informed consent, and harm. To mitigate issues of confidentiality and privacy, I used pseudonyms for all Participating Experts, conducted all of the interviews and transcriptions myself, and kept a record of my Participating Experts’ actual names and contact details in a locked drawer. Once my supervisors were satisfied appropriate ethical considerations had been addressed and risks mitigated, I undertook Massey University’s online Human Ethics ‘Low Risk’ notification process. Throughout this research, I have tried to act sensitively and ethically towards my Participating Experts by prioritising their wellbeing and upholding their mana.

Chapter Six: Findings

This chapter provides an analysis of the interview findings. It weaves together some of the shared understandings and lived experiences of my Participating Experts, but also seeks to privilege their uniqueness. To start, the superordinate theme is presented. This theme – work–life balance as grounded in one’s identity as Māori – draws together the findings of this study, encapsulating the essence of how my Participating Experts conceptualise and make sense of work–life balance. Next, this chapter presents three subthemes: values, beliefs, and practices (VB&Ps); important life priorities; and the role of the employing organisation. Although these subthemes are presented separately, they are inherently intertwined with the superordinate theme. Table 2 provides an overview of the themes. For purposes of clarity, content that did not add or change meaning to my Participating Experts’ kōrero has been removed from the transcript extracts presented.

Table 2

The Superordinate Theme and Three Subthemes

Superordinate theme: Work–life balance as grounded in one’s identity as Māori		
Holistic balance and wellbeing		
Taonga tuku iho		
Consequences of identity disconnection		
Subtheme: Values, beliefs, and practices	Subtheme: Important life priorities	Subtheme: The role of the employing organisation
Whakapapa	Whānau – immediate family	The ‘dial-a-Mawree’
Whakawhanaungatanga	Whānau – extended family	Incorporating tikanga into workplace practices
Tapu, noa, rāhui	Marae obligations	Experiences around tangihanga
Mana	Other important life roles	Alignment with personal identity
Tangihanga		

Superordinate Theme: Work–Life Balance as Grounded in One’s Identity as Māori

This superordinate theme introduces an identity-focused framework which expresses the essential features of how my Participating Experts understand, interpret, and experience work–life balance. The importance of their identities as Māori reverberate throughout the entirety of their kōrero. They speak vividly and in-depth about how important their Māori identity is, framing their responses to questions in terms of their worldviews as Māori. This section discusses three components that lay at the heart of this theme: holistic balance and wellbeing, taonga tuku iho, and consequences of disconnection from one’s identity as Māori.

Holistic Balance and Wellbeing

Holistic balance and wellbeing is an essential aspect of the identity-focused understanding from which my Participating Experts conceptualise work–life balance. Tangaroa’s response to questions posed provides an example of this:

Ngaire: How do you think about work–life balance? What is work–life balance? What does it mean to you?

Tangaroa: That balance between home, work, and play. And then balancing that with the physical, the psychological, and spiritual. So, you know, are you getting your fix? Your physical fix? Your psychological fix? Your spiritual fix? And how does it all roll together within home, work, and play?

Importantly, Tangaroa speaks about the “roll[ing] together” of home, work, and play with holistic wellbeing, thereby clearly highlighting an interconnectedness. Tangaroa also describes catering for one’s physical, psychological, and spiritual needs as “getting your fix”, likening the satisfying of holistic wellbeing needs to a craving, or an innate yearning, to ensure these needs are being met. Therefore, Tangaroa’s kōrero reveals a conceptualisation of work–life balance that exists within a wider context of holistic wellbeing.

Similar to Tangaroa, Wiremu also speaks about the important interconnection between one’s work and non-work roles with holistic wellbeing. When asked what an ideal balance between his work and non-work commitments would look like to him, he contrasts his previous one-dimensional focus on work success with his current, more holistic perspective:

Wiremu: So [when] we talk about priorities, being able to get to the top professionally – be the best that I can professionally – in that, faith, family, and

friends didn't factor. Weren't part of that equation. So it was just totally mahi. Now I've realised that there are other more important things in my life which I draw quite significant satisfaction from, in terms of my own wellbeing. My own sort of hinengaro, whatumanawa, tinana, wairua – so my cognitive, my emotional, my spiritual, and my physical wellbeing.

Here, Wiremu shares that he used to prioritise work so much so that “faith, family, and friends didn't factor”. That is, the ‘life’ component of his work–life balance equation was noticeably absent. Now, however, he realises that involvement in these other aspects of life are critical for the nourishment of his hinengaro, whatumanawa, tinana, and wairua. Wiremu's kōrero reveals that focusing on these other areas of his life – faith, friends, and family – helps him to realise holistic wellness.

Wiremu's kōrero may also be indicative of an underlying tension between Western ideologies that privilege individual success, and his worldview as Māori. Earlier in his career, he prioritised “get[ting] to the top professionally” at the expense of the wellbeing of his hinengaro, whatumanawa, tinana, and wairua. This is not to say that ‘success’ in a Western sense and a Māori worldview are totally incompatible: Wiremu today has both an extremely successful career and a higher self-reported sense of holistic wellbeing. However, tensions can and do arise when different cultural values clash. For Wiremu, finding work–life balance is an ongoing journey he consciously embarked upon, one which requires him to navigate through the ebbs and flows of competing demands and cultural values, as he seeks a sense of balance that he intrinsically associates with holistic wellbeing.

It is evident in their kōrero that both Tangaroa and Wiremu conceptualise work–life balance as existing within a wider context of holistic wellbeing. Against this background, they are making sense of this phenomenon through the lens of their Māori identities. The idea of integrating work–life balance within a wider context of holistic wellbeing is useful for understanding how some Māori employees make sense of work–life balance.

Taonga Tuku Iho

Taonga tuku iho is another important aspect of my Participating Experts' identity-focused understanding of work–life balance. My Participating Experts describe their roles in the intergenerational transfer of taonga as crucial. For example, when Whetu discusses some of the taonga passed down to her, she explains:

Whetu: Yeah, so all the stories I was told, we tell the little kids now. It's kind of like a verbal contract that you keep passing [this information] on. [...] It helps to form your identity. And 'cos I know, if I didn't know all this stuff, I'd be like: who am I?

Here, the “stories” Whetu is referring to are the pūrākau and whakataukī that hold special cultural and historical significance for her whānau, hapū, and iwi. Embedded in these taonga is a repository of traditional wisdoms – values, beliefs, and practices – that have been developed and refined through the generations and passed down to Whetu through her whakapapa. In her kōrero, Whetu highlights the importance of these taonga in helping to inform and solidify her own personal identity.

Whetu also indicates that these taonga are crucial to informing and solidifying a collective Māori identity. She compares the responsibility of continuing to share these “stories” with the next generation to a “verbal contract”. This analogy implies that her responsibility to continue passing on this knowledge is very important, binding, and beneficial to the collective. As discussed in chapter four, taonga tuku iho is crucial because it creates a oneness, a shared connection and identity, linking generations together through shared systems of values and beliefs.

In line with Whetu's kōrero, Pono also emphasises the importance of the intergenerational transfer of values and beliefs, but expands on this significantly by emphasising that they must also be realised or manifested through action. To illustrate, when asked about the critical roles she plays in her life, she says:

Pono: One of the roles is passing down my memory of memories that were passed down to me, that hold kōrero for home, and how home worked, and how home people connected and worked through issues and found success. That's the main one. Having that memory and then having that memory actioned. And being a 'doer' of those memories – of those beliefs and values and those principles that have been passed down. That's an important role, and I think it's necessary – 'cos it brings about permanency.

In her kōrero, Pono refers to “being a doer” of the memories, of the beliefs, values, and principles that are passed down through generations. She is highlighting the idea that, as well as creating a shared cultural identity, these taonga also help guide one's habitual or everyday cognitions, decisions, and behaviours. The importance of enacting one's identity as Māori – or living by these beliefs, values, and principles – is fundamental to a Māori worldview. In this sense, these taonga can be conceptualised as a ‘living philosophy’ (Forsyth, 2006; Te Awekotuku & Nikora, 2003). That is, the

significance of these beliefs, values, and principles, is evidenced through the incorporation of these concepts into everyday practices.

The notion of ‘living philosophies’ provides a useful analytic lens to help understand how some Māori employees engage in their multiple life roles. Integrating these taonga into the activities of daily life – whether at home, on the marae, or at work – is of crucial importance. Simply learning about cherished cultural beliefs, values, and principles is necessary, but not sufficient on its own. As Pono says, it is about “having that memory” *and* “having that memory actioned”. Therefore, Pono is highlighting two distinct but interrelated aspects of Māori identity: a discursive component, evident in how one defines themselves, and a practical component, evident in how one embodies their Māori worldview within their everyday practices. When taken together, it is this combination that brings about the survival of Māori culture and identity.

Taonga tuku iho is crucial to both Whetu and Pono. These taonga provide direction to help guide how they think about and interact with the world, thus shaping how and why they engage in multiple life roles. As Pono’s kōrero highlights, these values and beliefs need to be incorporated into the activities of everyday life, including while at work. Therefore, work–life balance for my Participating Experts means embodying their identities as Māori within their life and work roles. Enacting one’s identity as Māori is important because it contributes to ensuring permanency of a collective Māori identity.

Consequences of Identity Disconnection

My Participating Experts highlight the negative consequences that can result from identity disconnection at an individual level. Some, who work in ‘helping professions’, speak about coming across people within their work roles who have become disconnected from who they are. For example, Whetu shares:

Whetu: I’d say most of the people I come across [while I’m at work, don’t feel grounded in their identity] and then I sit down and talk to them. [...]. So I guess that’s another part of me helping them, to say: “Hey, you need to figure out who you are”.

Ngaire: Why do you think it’s important to be grounded and to know who you are?

Whetu: Because you just wonder otherwise – where do I fit? And, if you don’t know where you fit, then how are you able to achieve other things?

Whetu shares that most of her clients do not know ‘who they are’, and by consequence, do not know ‘where they fit’. In other words, they have become lost,

which Whetu implies is the reason they require her services and those of her work colleagues. She indicates that she helps these clients by encouraging them to learn who they are, to learn their whakapapa, highlighting an intersection between her work role and her own identity as Māori. Whetu describes being grounded in one's identity as the strong foundational base upon which we as people are able to flourish and achieve our goals, dreams, and aspirations.

When we do not have a firm grounding in our identity and do not know how we belong in this world, we can feel lost and alone. Therefore, for a person to feel grounded in their identity as Māori is very important because it provides a secure base from which important life (and work) priorities can be more fully realised. Being grounded or secure in one's identity is crucial to making sense of the world we live in.

Superordinate Theme Summary

This superordinate theme introduced an identity-focused framework for understanding how Participating Experts understand work–life balance. More specifically, for my Participating Experts work–life balance means enacting their identities as Māori in practical everyday terms, including while at work. They described work–life balance as existing within a reciprocal framework of holistic wellbeing, aligning this construct with their worldviews as Māori. Furthermore, my Participating Experts emphasised the critical role they play in continuing to pass down intergenerational taonga to solidify their own, and a collective, Māori identity. The importance of Māori identity was further highlighted by sharing how being firmly secure in this identity is fundamental to interpreting the world we live in.

Subtheme: Values, Beliefs, and Practices (VB&Ps)

This subtheme expands on the previous section by unpacking some of the values, beliefs, and practices (VB&Ps) shared by my Participating Experts. These VB&Ps are vital to their identities as Māori, and consequently influence how they understand and experience work–life balance. The five most commonly mentioned VB&Ps in our interviews are: whakapapa, whakawhanaungatanga, tapu/noa/rāhui, mana, and tangihanga. The VB&Ps in this section represent a selection of those raised during our kōrero which provide crucial insights into my Participating Experts' perspectives of work–life balance as Māori employees.

Whakapapa

My Participating Experts describe whakapapa – translated literally as ‘to place upon layers’ – as a cherished taonga that influences how they make sense of their important life roles. For example, when explaining why being a father is the most important role in his life, Tangaroa says:

Tangaroa: Well, and I think, too, though, when you talk about birth rights versus age rights versus whakapapa rights within Māoridom – this was the first time I had a whakapapa right of responsibility. So going from tāne to mātua is quite a big step.

Here, Tangaroa describes the transition from tāne to mātua as “a big step” because as a parent he now has a “whakapapa right of responsibility” to continue passing down the important VB&Ps that have been passed down to him. This notion of “a big step” symbolises a major change in his life: a change that conferred upon him cultural responsibilities and expectations not only to his tīpuna, but now also to his own tamariki and uri. Therefore, Tangaroa is interpreting and internalising his role as a father within a layered network of both intergenerational and current relationships.

Participating Experts also discuss whakapapa within the context of their work roles. More specifically, they describe how their whakapapa, a woven welcome mat of interpersonal relationships, can help new opportunities within their work roles to be realised and seized more easily. For example, Wiremu explains:

Wiremu: So – given my whakapapa and given my family name – a lot of doors have opened. A lot of doors have opened much more easily than they would have if I wasn't from here, if I didn't have whakapapa to this place. I tell my mum all the time: “Man, I met so-and-so in a meeting today, and, mum, they know you! The doors just flew open for me!”

In his kōrero, Wiremu speaks metaphorically of ‘doors opening’ for him. When examined more closely, Wiremu’s whakapapa serves as a positive stimulus, facilitating the ‘opening of doors’ by allowing him to establish and maintain trusting interpersonal relationships within his work role. When we as people know our whakapapa, not only do we know our identities, but we also know how we connect with others within a wider, layered, social context. It can be argued, therefore, that whakapapa is conducive to the development of strong relationships which can help Māori employees pursue their work aspirations.

In our interviews, my Participating Experts describe whakapapa as having a profound impact on the ways in which they make sense of their family roles as well as helping them realise work-related opportunities. Whakapapa embraces mutual connections, shared histories, and other personal similarities. In this sense, whakapapa is a cherished taonga, central to their identities as Māori, that influences how my Participating Experts understand and engage in their various life and work roles.

Whakawhanaungatanga

My Participating Experts describe whakawhanaungatanga – establishing and nurturing strong interpersonal relationships – as a practice that helps them in their work roles. They mention that although they make relationships with both Māori and non-Māori alike, they tend to establish, nurture, and make use of connections with other Māori more easily. Aroha, for example, says:

Aroha: I've gone to huis nationwide, and I've engaged [more] easily [with other] Māori kaimahi. [...] So it's those [people], not only those that work for somebody over there [another Māori-led organisation], but I've met them at the marae or something. And it's just stuck in my head. "I know someone, I'll ring them up".

Ngairie: And this helps you with your mahi?

Aroha: Yeah, yeah, yeah – easy. And I would say, that that's a benefit of being Māori.

Aroha's kōrero reveals she tends to call upon other Māori when seeking help and support in her work role, and considers this “a benefit of being Māori”.

Whakawhanaungatanga has enabled Aroha to establish a strong support network of people that she has met from within both her ‘work’ and ‘life’ domains. In this sense, whanaungatanga can be thought of as a special Māori value that can facilitate the establishment of strong support networks to assist Māori employees in the workplace.

Some Participating Experts speak more specifically about *pre-existing* interpersonal relationships helping them in their employee roles. These pre-existing relationships are developed over many years via genealogical and other community connections. As an example, Tangaroa shares:

Tangaroa: My grandmother was born at [a rural area in the Wairoa district]. We also have whakapapa to [three other rural areas in the Wairoa district]. Then I went to school in Wairoa. So [I've] got mates, and mate's parents, who live across the [Wairoa] area. Pre-existing relationships made my job easy as. Yeah, too easy, really. Well, the thing is – you don't have to pretty shit up. You just say it how it is.

[...] So I think that's probably one of the keys to life – is around QUALITY [word emphasised] relationships. It's all right to know a name, but it takes years to know the person.

Tangaroa shares that he is able to speak frankly with the people he deals with at work – he does not need to waste valuable time and energy “pretty[ing] shit up” – which we can assume is because these people know him well and accept his perspective. For Tangaroa, whanaungatanga is not only “one of the keys to life” but also a practice that made his job “easy as”. Presumably, by making his job easier, whanaungatanga plays a role in reducing the amount of workplace stress Tangaroa experiences.

Importantly, Tangaroa's kōrero also highlights the strong influence his local community context has on his ability to establish and nurture these interpersonal relationships. Tangaroa has whakapapa (genealogical) connections to many people living within different areas of the Wairoa district, as well as other strong community connections built over many years living in Wairoa. Being a relatively small, ‘close-knit’, and predominantly Māori community, the Wairoa district provides a culturally strong environment that facilitates whakawhanaungatanga.

Taken together, the kōrero of Tangaroa and Aroha indicate how (whaka)whanaungatanga helps them to be better resourced (through supportive connections) and less stressed at work. From our conversations, it became clear that whanaungatanga is a VB&P that facilitates good work–life balance for both of these Participating Experts: it is a taonga they inherently treasure and practise as Māori, which also helps them within their employee roles.

Tapu, Noa, and Rāhui

Some of my Participating Experts describe tapu, noa, and rāhui (see chapter four) as other important taonga they integrate into their everyday work practices. For example, when Tangaroa was discussing his unique resources as Māori that he believes help him in his job, he shares:

Tangaroa: The three main principles that guide my life are tapu, noa, and rāhui. [...] So I think that everything has that mana and that tapu, and that everything deserves that respect. That's what guides me in life. [...] Like, tomorrow, I'm going to [a specific place for work purposes] and I know nobody. And I'm just gonna go knock on people's doors. But I know that – if I go there, and I go kānohi-ki-te-

kānohi, and I'm respectful in my initial greeting, and I'm there, I'm present – they will open the door.

Importantly, Tangaroa's kōrero reveals that tapu, noa, and rāhui – values firmly grounded in his worldview as Māori – guide how he engages with all people. Given Tangaroa's ingrained belief that everyone has tapu and is therefore inherently deserving of respect, he is confident that if he shows people the respect they deserve, then he will have good outcomes, in this case, in his mahi. Here, Tangaroa provides a great example of how his values as Māori influence how he engages with people within his work role.

As well as influencing interpersonal interactions, some of my Participating Experts also describe how tapu, noa, and rāhui influence the decisions they make at work. When Amiria, for example, is asked if she thinks 'being Māori' influences the way she prioritises and evaluates the important things/roles in her life, she replies:

Amiria: I would NEVER [word emphasised] compromise my ethnicity, or my heritage, just for my job. Culturally, I would never cross my culture just because of my job. And I think as Māori we don't. [...] So I don't think I would have the courage to cross that line. 'Cos to me that would be disrespectful. [...]. So for me – quite a lot of times – the decisions I make here, for Wairoa anyway, aren't probably made the same anywhere else. But at Wairoa, they do come with a bit of Māori behind them.

Amiria's kōrero sheds light on the existence of complex issues concerning cultural identity, and how this identity can sometimes feel 'at-risk' or 'out-of-place' within the workplace. However, she feels strongly about not compromising her important values and believes this whakaaro is shared by Māori. She discusses the "crossing of a line" into a space that is, presumably, prohibited or forbidden: a space that can be conceptualised as tapu-tapu. Given her values, the decisions she makes within her work role "come with a bit of Māori behind them", meaning that these decisions are respectful of important Māori VB&Ps. Values such as tapu, noa, and rāhui help inform Amiria's worldview as Māori, therefore, it stands to reason they would also guide her at work.

Tapu, noa, and rāhui, are taonga that influence the working lives of both Tangaroa and Amiria. Tangaroa speaks about these values impacting his interpersonal interactions, and Amiria suggests that they help shape the decisions she makes. Tapu, noa, and rāhui help facilitate good work–life balance for both Tangaroa and Amiria; both Participating Experts incorporate these values, which are fundamental to their

worldviews as Māori, into significant aspects of how they practically engage in their work roles.

Mana

Some of my Participating Experts use the concept of mana (esteem, prestige) to help make sense of the reasons they engage in work. They explain, for example, how working gives them mana because it allows them to provide and care for their families financially. Manaaki shares his whakaaro:

Manaaki: Honest money. Working money. Just knowing, you know – for a man to have a job – to bring home kai for the whānau. Yeah, feed my kids. Just to have that mana, aye. Yeah, you know. Fuck, I got a job – I’m the man of this house. I pay my bills, you know. That mana, that’s all.

Ngairé: So, being a provider is an important part of your identity?

Manaaki: Yeah, yeah, otherwise if I don’t got a job, fuck, might as well call me nothing.

While work is very important to Manaaki, perhaps one of the main reasons for this is because it allows him to enact his core identities as a father, a partner, and a provider. Importantly for Manaaki, as well as allowing him to earn money, working also allows him to earn mana. Manaaki describes acquiring mana as accomplishing what he sees as his responsibility to provide for his whānau. Therefore earning mana, by fulfilling this responsibility, helps Manaaki make sense of why he engages in his role as an employee.

Some of my Participating Experts also address the concept of mana and how it influences how they enact their roles as employees. To illustrate, Pono shares her experiences from a previous role she held when she worked for a Pākehā-led organisation:

Pono: When a manuhiri would turn up to see the [boss], the staff would put them in reception and let them wait until the appointment time. The clock ticked over to the time that the [boss] was available. I didn’t. So, I’d get them comfortable. I’d go down and get a kai for them. I’d settle them in. And then I’d get a growling for spending the money on buying a pihikete. And I didn’t care who [the manuhiri] was, because to me, upholding the mana of who it was that I was working for was more important.

Pono’s kōrero illuminates the sometimes stark differences between staff behaviour in relation to cultural values. For Pono, it was a matter of mana to put in extra

resources (time, effort, and money) to care for any and all manuhiri visiting the work site by showing them manaakitanga¹⁴. This is a value she describes as not being shared by her co-workers, who would “let [the manuhiri] wait”. Pono remained steadfast to her beliefs, at the cost of feeling like she did not ‘fit in’ with the other staff, or ‘belong’ within this organisation more generally. This caused significant discomfort for Pono, because while enacting her identity as Māori is important to her, so, too, is being considered a ‘good’ employee.

Pono’s kōrero may also be indicative of larger points of conflict between the values fundamental to a Māori worldview and those underpinning Western neoliberal capitalism (Moewaka-Barnes et al., 2018). Pono was not reprimanded for enacting mana per se, but for the organisational resources she spent to do so. This may highlight a tension between a Māori worldview that prioritises relationships first and foremost and the economic realities of organisations with limited resources and competing demands for these resources. However, this may also illuminate a tension between the enactment of cultural values and an underlying prejudice that such actions are “time wasting and irritatingly resource dependent” (Erueti, 2015, p. 186). Whatever the reason for the tensions, Pono did not last long as an employee in that organisation because she felt ‘out of place’.

Both Manaaki and Pono address the importance of mana, and how mana, which is integral to their worldviews as Māori, helps them make sense of aspects of their employee roles. For Manaaki, acquiring mana is a key reason *why* he engages in his work role, and for Pono, upholding mana influences *how* she engages in her work role. Unfortunately, as Pono’s experience as a Māori employee in a Pākehā-led organisation demonstrates, tensions can arise when cultural values clash.

Tangihanga

All Participating Experts describe tangihanga as one of their most significant cultural practices. When there is tangihanga, everyone has an important role to play on the marae – from those on the pae who formally welcome manuhiri, to those who clean the toilets – the help and support of the wider collective is critical. To illustrate, Manaaki explains:

Manaaki: I’ll be doing something at the back. Meat. As much as we can.

Ngairi: The grieving whānau aren’t allowed to do that mahi?

¹⁴ Manaakitanga is an important component of mana. Manaakitanga is embedded in marae tikanga, whereby caring for manuhiri upholds the mana of both manuhiri and tangata whenua alike.

Manaaki: Nah, nah – they’re not allowed to do that ‘cos they’re grieving. They don’t want to be – you know, helping out cooking. [...] That’s what everyone else is there for – to help – so they can grieve. Stay with their lost one.

Manaaki’s kōrero highlights the collective obligation of the wider whānau to support at tangihanga, so that the immediately bereaved are able to “stay with their lost one”. As discussed in chapter four, the tangihanga is an important cultural ceremony, and paramount to the grieving and eventual healing process for Māori.

A number of my Participating Experts discuss the importance of tangihanga both as an expression of collective obligation and as a practice that nurtures and maintains cherished Māori traditions. They express concerns that the bereavement policies of employing organisations in Aotearoa are usually based on Western conceptualisations of family, which do not recognise the important role extended family members play in the tangihanga process. Manaaki’s kōrero illustrates this point superbly:

Manaaki: It’s keeping our traditions. Even when work is trying to stop us from going [to tangihanga] ‘cos [the person who has died is] not immediate [family]. If we’re going to accept that, that means we’re going to slowly lose our ways. [...] And if we keep to that all the time, we’re going to forget what we’re meant to do. That we’re meant to go. ‘Cos we got to do it the law – the actual Pākehā law way. That’s how you start losing your traditions.

As Manaaki poignantly shares, if Māori employees accept bereavement laws/policies that do not accommodate extended family, they will begin to forget what they are “meant to do” when someone dies and an important Māori tradition will become lost. New Zealand’s current employment law, which guides bereavement policies, is based on a narrow, Western, understanding of who is expected to attend funerals. This understanding marginalises cultures that have different expectations. My Participating Experts report experiencing significant work–life tensions when they have not been allowed by their employers to fulfil their cultural obligations regarding tangihanga (examples are explored later in this chapter).

Manaaki articulates the whakaaro shared amongst my Participating Experts in an impressively candid manner. As he explains, the tangihanga is an incredibly crucial tradition for Māori that the wider whānau have an obligation to support. However, bereavement leave legislation often impedes the ability of Māori employees to fulfil their important whānau/cultural responsibilities. This causes Manaaki distress, because

while it is important to him to fulfil his whānau/cultural obligations, so too is being considered a ‘good’ employee.

Subtheme Summary

Taken together, this analysis showed that the VB&Ps of my Participating Experts had an important influence on how and why they engaged in their work and life roles, and how they made sense of their work and other important life priorities. Whakapapa facilitated the realisation of new opportunities, and also had a profound impact on the ways family roles were made sense of. Whakawhanaungatanga was shown to nurture strong interpersonal relationships and improve work-supportive networks. Values such as tapu, noa, and rāhui guided behaviours and decision-making pertaining to mahi. The concept of mana helped some Participating Experts make sense of why and how they enacted their employee roles. Finally, the ability to leave work for tangihanga emerged as an incredibly important issue, as the tangihanga is a tradition which the wider whānau have a responsibility to support. Although enacting these VB&Ps facilitated good work–life balance for Participating Experts in some instances, at other times it caused work–life tensions.

Subtheme: Important Life Priorities

‘Important life priorities’ encompass the non-work areas that my Participating Experts describe as very significant to them. The VB&Ps discussed in the previous subtheme provide a foundation upon which to understand and appreciate the ways in which my Participating Experts make sense of these other life domains. These domains are categorised into four areas: whānau – immediate family, whānau – extended family, marae obligations, and other important life roles. This subtheme explores these life domains by providing an account of how my Participating Experts understand and experience them within the context of work–life balance.

Whānau – Immediate Family

All Participating Experts describe their immediate family as the most important priority in their lives. Many make sense of their other work and life roles in relation to their family roles. For example, when Manaaki is asked what it means to him to be a father and a partner, he replies:

Manaaki: You’ll do anything for them, aye. You’ll go to work, you know. Just anything in life [...]. So that’s why I go to work – for my family.

Ngairi: So to you, your family is the most important thing – your everything?

Manaaki: Yes, yes, yes, definitely. The things I do is for my family. Yeah. Like even sports, kapa haka – it's for my family.

Clearly, Manaaki's family motivate his engagement in his work and other life activities. For Manaaki, being a dad and a partner means being a provider and a role model, and he internalises these family roles as integral to his core identity. As a provider, Manaaki engages in paid employment to support his family financially. As a role model, he plays sports and performs kapa haka to encourage his family to emulate similar prosocial, healthy, and culturally important behaviours.

It is also clear from Manaaki's kōrero that he does not compartmentalise his work, family, and other important life priorities. Rather, he perceives these areas as inextricably intertwined. Manaaki's kōrero reflects how he experiences multiple life roles: when he is at work, even though he is there in the capacity of employee, he does not lose sight of his core roles of father and partner. This is significant, because we cannot fully understand and appreciate how he makes sense of his role as an employee without knowing the profound impact his family roles have on everything else in his life.

Indeed, because their immediate family is so important to them, many Participating Experts say that the wellbeing of their family is critical to their achieving good work–life balance. To illustrate, when Aperahama is asked what work–life balance means to him, he replies:

Aperahama: Work–life balance, that for me, would be me being able to function – knowing that my kids are all right – wherever they are anywhere in the country, or if overseas. [...] My wife – that's my first – my wife, my mokos, then my children.

As Aperahama shares, work–life balance for him means being able to work knowing that his family are “all right” – that they are safe, content, and healthy. Aperahama's kōrero suggests that a potential for conflict is possible, because his ability to enact his role as employee could be compromised if his family are not well. Viewed in this way, it can be argued that, like Manaaki, Aperahama also sees his employee and family member roles as intertwined.

Because both Manaaki and Aperahama make sense of their other important life priorities, including work, through their core identities as family members, they consider the wellbeing of their immediate family as fundamental to achieving good work–life balance. Although the potential for conflict between work and family is possible, neither Aperahama nor Manaaki describe their important life priorities as

separate or distinct. As such, when configuring the features of their total identity, both present their various roles as inextricably intertwined.

Whānau – Extended Family

My Participating Experts also describe making sense of whānau in a broad way, encompassing both their immediate and extended family. To illustrate, when Amiria discusses the way she values her whānau, she shares:

Amiria: I'm VERY [word emphasised] involved in my extended whānau. So for me, my family doesn't stop at just my children. [...] So to me, that's what I see as important. And as long as they're OK [my whānau] – I'm OK. If they're unwell – if they're unhappy, or they need some awahi, no matter what it is, then I just – it's just habit. Yeah, not just my immediate family. It's bigger than that.

Clearly, Amiria conceptualises whānau broadly, to include extended as well as immediate family, because to her they are all important. Similar to Aperahama's whakaaro regarding his immediate family, Amiria feels such a strong bond with members of her whānau group that "as long as they're OK – I'm OK". Amiria, at another stage of the interview, explains that she had spent her formative years with whānau including her many kuia and koroua, aunties, uncles, and cousins, which is similar to the experiences of all my Participating Experts.

As well as making sense of whānau in a broad way, some Participating Experts also describe their extended family as a support system that helps them to balance their work and home commitments. For example, when Amiria reflects on her successful but challenging career, she notes:

Amiria: I wouldn't have been able to do it without them [my whānau] a lot of the times, because it can be a very emotionally challenging role. I appreciate all my whānau support. [...] When I've had to put work first, it's been my whānau that have been there to help me with my tamariki, to help me with my home commitment. I don't know how many times an aunty, or an uncle, or a cousin's cooked me dinner because I've had to work late. So I appreciate all their help. Yeah, so, and like they say to me – nothing I haven't done for them.

Amiria's kōrero highlights the pivotal role that whānau have played in supporting her to successfully balance her work and home commitments. Her extended family provide practical support by helping with her tamariki when she has to work late, and presumably by supporting her emotionally given the demanding nature of her role.

Amiria appreciates and reciprocates the support from her whānau; her kōrero makes clear the mutual benefits of belonging to a strongly bonded whānau group.

In describing her extended family as just as important to her as her immediate family, Amiria describes a recognised and understood whakaaro shared by some Māori. Furthermore, within the context of multiple challenging life commitments, Amiria's extended family is a support system whose members help each other to balance these demands.

Marae Obligations

Many of my Participating Experts describe their experiences around balancing their home, work, and marae responsibilities. These employees juggle multiple tasks in order to successfully balance multiple roles. For example, Amiria shares:

Amiria: Marae obligations is the – well not even obligation – but when you know you need to be there, 9 times out of 10, those circumstances are unplanned. So to be there where you need to be, then not only do you have to schedule your work life, you also have to schedule your home life. Home and work still need to allow you to be where you need to be. Where your heart needs to be. And where that whānau obligation needs you to be.

The 'unplanned circumstances' Amiria refers to are tangihanga. Here, she discusses the need to reschedule or arrange cover for her work and home responsibilities (often with little or no prior notice) so that she can be at the marae. Her kōrero highlights the internal hierarchy she has constructed whereby her home and work commitments must be met. This simply reflects the reality of many Māori employees: although marae and wider whānau obligations are very important, home and work responsibilities cannot be ignored.

Importantly, Amiria's kōrero offers insight into how she experiences her expectation to fulfil her cultural responsibilities to her wider whānau. She describes the marae as the place where her "heart needs to be", which implies that her need to fulfil her 'marae obligations' is something she experiences at more than just a cognitive level. While her rational brain is telling her she is required at the marae, her heart wants, or needs, her to be there also. This insight is notable, because it suggests that for Amiria her compulsion to fulfil her cultural and wider whānau commitments is an embodied experience: something from within her physical self is compelling her. Indeed, Amiria's kōrero reveals how vital it is for her to cater to her home and work commitments so that she can be there at the marae – not necessarily where she *has* to be – but where her

embodied self *needs* her to be. The depth of commitment my Participating Experts hold to marae obligations has significant implications for how they can experience work–life balance.

Other Important Life Roles

My Participating Experts are also involved in activities ranging from sports, to kapa haka, to volunteering, and to religion. In terms of religion, one Participating Expert, Wiremu, holds a crucial and esteemed role as a minister for his hāhi. When Wiremu reflects on the difficulties he experiences trying to balance competing demands, he shares:

Wiremu: Yeah, at the moment, it's a little bit challenging – I have to pick and choose. I'm at work – there's a tangi. I get a call to say – SERVE [word emphasised] – I've got a big meeting [redacted] – I'm, like, arhm: "I'm not available. I'm not available". And so making those decisions is really hard. It's an uncomfortable thing to have to force one to make those decisions. [...] And so what I do is, I try and organise somebody else [another minister]. So this is probably the biggest tension that I have in my life at the moment.

Wiremu experiences great discomfort when he has to “pick and choose” between his responsibilities to his work and to his faith. Both of these roles are important to him, but when competing responsibilities collide, he is forced to make tough decisions. By sharing how he organises another minister to support the bereaved whānau/hapū during tangihanga, Wiremu is also sharing an important insight into how some Māori work collectively to meet competing demands. Whānau/hapū units share a number of core roles and responsibilities; working together to fulfil the requirements of competing demands ensures important duties are fulfilled. Therefore, Wiremu is describing how the wider collective can be called upon to help balance multiple priorities.

Subtheme Summary

The findings from this subtheme highlighted that whānau – immediate family and beyond – are central to how Participating Experts made sense of and experienced their important life priorities. The wellbeing of one's whānau was described as critical to achieving good work–life balance. Whānau was also understood as a reciprocal support system whose members can help each other balance home, work, and other important commitments. Furthermore, life and work roles were interpreted as inextricably intertwined. Indeed, my Participating Experts provided an account of

experiencing important life priorities in a unified, holistic way, where they are always acutely aware of the primacy of whānau.

Subtheme: The Role of the Employing Organisation

This subtheme more explicitly explores the role employing organisations play in helping or hindering the work–life balance of Māori employees. The critical role played by employing organisations cannot be overstated. Employers have the formal power to set employment policies and practices, define job descriptions, set employee workloads, and change organisational culture. Four topics are included in this subtheme: the ‘dial-a-Mawree’, incorporating tikanga into workplace practices, experiences around tangihanga, and alignment with personal identity.

The ‘Dial-a-Mawree’

Some of my Participating Experts share how within their Pākehā-led employing organisations, they are often called upon to fulfil a contentious role: the ‘dial-a-Mawree’. The ‘dial-a-Mawree’ is the phrase often used to refer to the person (or persons) within an organisation who are seen as ‘the experts in all things Māori’, and so are often asked to provide help and advice in matters pertaining to Māori. When asked about some of the challenges he faces at work, Wiremu explains:

Wiremu: You’re always the ‘dial-a-Mawree’.

[both laugh]

Wiremu: So I’m Māori, and I work in a mainstream [Pākehā-led] organisation. But I also speak te reo, I’m very capable in various forms of tikanga, and so those sort of ‘dial-a-Mawree’ things pop up quite regularly. [...] I’ve come to terms with that. So when I was at [my former employing organisation], one, two, three, four [pause] – four staff out of 2,000 were able to confidently stand on a marae and whaikōrero. And so I was regularly called upon to be the kaikōrero up at the marae.

A remarkably small number, four out of 2000 employees, at Wiremu’s previous Pākehā-led employing organisation were able to whaikōrero on the marae (to clarify, this organisation has its own marae located within its grounds). At this workplace, Wiremu was regularly called away from the role he had been employed to do in order to welcome the organisation’s manuhiri onto the marae. This added significantly to his workload at times. Although Wiremu shares that he has “come to terms” with being regularly called upon to assist with tikanga-related activities, his kōrero sheds light on

an important workload related issue experienced by some Māori employees working for Pākehā-led organisations.

Some of my Participating Experts perceive the role as their Pākehā-led organisation's 'dial-a-Mawree' as purely tokenistic. Indeed, the term 'dial-a-Mawree' implies tokenism, suggesting that Māori employees are simply 'called upon' by others when they 'need something Māori' done. If the requests are deemed not tika or authentic, some Participating Experts simply refuse them. As Tangaroa says:

Tangaroa: I refuse to be a dial-a-mihi or a dial-a-karakia for work. I say things like: "Why? Why do I have to pray? I've got a white job". You know, and then they'll go "oh no, you know, because you're a Māori". And it's like: "What? Do only Māoris pray?" So I'm not a dial-a-mihi, I'm not a dial-a-waiata. Don't invite me to waiata. I just find it patronising.

Tangaroa's kōrero not only reveals his very strong position on this matter, but also conveys his perception that tokenism is the bedrock upon which these requests are made. Tangaroa is told he is being asked by his employer to mihi, karakia, waiata "because you're a Māori", a response that reflects a lack of awareness or cultural consideration of the task or the person being asked to perform it. By refusing to perform 'dial-a-Mawree' requests, Tangaroa is enacting his identity as Māori on his own terms.

Conversely, some Participating Experts enjoy being called upon to help with tikanga-related activities and advice, perhaps when these requests are not perceived as merely tokenistic. Wiremu, who was often called upon to whaikōrero on the marae of his previous Pākehā-led employing organisation, notes that he enjoyed this role because it allowed him to stay connected with his Māori identity in that workplace.

Wiremu: Working in a mainstream organisation sometimes, it can be in that direction where you are SO [word emphasised] mainstream you begin to forget yourself. And being Māori is very important to me. There's a whole lot of things about being Māori – my tikanga, my reo – it just really makes me who I am. And makes me sort of [pause] – it makes me a cool person – a capable person – a happy person – a sad person – an all sorts of persons. It helps define my character. And so I liked going up to the marae at my old job.

Here, Wiremu explains how being Māori "helps define [his] character", and being able to go to the marae – an environment that is of course immersed in tikanga and reo – helps keep him grounded in his special identity as Māori. For Wiremu, being Māori brings him a sense of personal meaning, satisfaction, and pride. It is, therefore,

very important to him that he hold steadfast to this identity whilst working within a Pākehā-led environment. Therefore, Wiremu describes enjoying his ‘dial-a-Mawree’ role because it allows him to enact his identity as Māori while enacting his role as an employee.

It is interesting to note the similarities and divergences between Wiremu’s and Tangaroa’s accounts: both are enacting their identity as Māori on their own terms, yet one is doing this by refusing the ‘dial-a-Mawree’ role, and the other by embracing it. One possible reason for this divergence may be differing perceptions regarding the motivations for the request itself (i.e., tokenistic versus non-tokenistic). Regardless, being regularly called upon to fulfil a ‘dial-a-Mawree’ role, when this involves work over and above the job they have been employed to do, can significantly add to the workloads of some Māori employees.

Incorporating Tikanga into Workplace Practices

Some Participating Experts shared ways their employing organisations incorporate tikanga into workplace practices. Tikanga Māori can be conceptualised as a system of values, beliefs, and practices (VB&Ps) that are based on Māoritanga. Aperahama shares how his Māori-led organisation has formally adopted a programme they call Whakahoahoa:

Aperahama: We have Whakahoahoa every Monday – which is talking about tikanga, waiata, hīmene, karakia – that’s part of our programme now. We do it every Monday. And we have karakia every day of the week when we come in.

Ngairi: Why is embracing tikanga within your workplace important to you?

Aperahama: I was brought up at the marae [...] We actually lived in the wharenuī – me and my sister from another mother. We actually lived with our nan. [...] It’s just been in me.

Aperahama’s kōrero illuminates how important it is for him to enact his identity as Māori at work. As Aperahama says, he was literally brought up at the marae and lived in the wharenuī, so one would expect that the tikanga of his marae/whānau/hapū is ingrained in his being. By formally adopting programmes such as Whakahoahoa, this Māori-led employer is supporting an organisational culture in which Aperahama is able to enact his identity as Māori.

With regards to Pākehā-led employing organisations, some Participating Experts share how their predominantly Māori workforce has driven the incorporation of tikanga

into some of their informal practices. Amiria, for example, shares how staff observe and practise tikanga when a serious incident involving illness/injury or death occurs:

Amiria: When we lose an employee [to death], or we have an employee go down unwell – which does happen in our industry – we always try to respect our tikanga, our people. [...] So, there's a lot of things we do because of our culture. We have karakia, we talk to our people. We make sure that they're awhi'd. [...] The company is getting better. They've still got a long way to go, but they ARE [word emphasised] getting better. And they have to. 'Cos look at who their workforce is.

Importantly, in the context of a workforce that is primarily Māori, Amiria equates respecting “our tikanga” with respecting “our people”. It is notable that it has been the predominantly Māori workforce who have instigated these workplace practices, because this reveals the active role they have played in influencing organisational culture. Their collective efforts have created a workplace environment in which critical VB&Ps are upheld to ensure the spiritual and cultural safety of the staff. However, although the organisation has improved with respect to ‘allowing’ its employees to practise tikanga, as Amiria acknowledges, she believes it still has “a long way to go”.

Both Aperahama and Amiria provide meaningful examples of how employing organisations can incorporate tikanga into workplace practices. Aperahama’s organisation adopts formal, organisational-driven practices, while Amiria’s adopts informal, employee-driven practices. In terms of work–life balance, it can be argued that by integrating these important cultural practices into the workplace, both of these employing organisations are creating space for their Māori employees to enact their identities as Māori.

Experiences around Tangihanga

My Participating Experts relate remarkably varied experiences regarding the level of organisational support they receive when a whānau member dies. Most employers, however, are very compassionate when it comes to the death of an immediate family member. For example, Manaaki shares his experience of being well supported by his Pākehā-led employing organisation when his sister was terminally ill:

Manaaki: They're understandable with tangihanga when it's your immediate family. When my sister passed they were really understanding in every way. Yes, they were. That was highly appreciated. So when I went down to [a specific city] for my sister – when she was on her way out – they actually let me go and spend my time with her. Her last weeks.

Manaaki expresses his gratitude for how helpful and caring his employing organisation was in this instance. His employer was very sympathetic and sensitive, allowing him to take time off work to be with his sister. Later in the interview, Manaaki also mentions they paid him part of his annual leave, which helped alleviate some of the financial pressure he was experiencing during this time. Under these circumstances, this employer provides a great example of supporting their Māori employees to fulfil important family obligations.

In contrast, this same organisation is unsupportive when Manaaki seeks time off work for the tangihanga of extended family. The positioning of Manaaki's employing organisation regarding extended family tangihanga has changed over time, as he says:

Manaaki: So when I first started [working] there, taking the three days off [for the tangihanga of any whānau member] was algud. It was not a problem. [...] Now, it's gone back down to: "it's gotta be your close immediate family". And etah, it just got all ugly, eh. Ratshit. You can't go to your aunty's or your cousin's tangi anymore [...] You're only allowed [to go] one day out of the three. Yeah. And it hurts, aye. It sucks. 'Cos I've known all my life – and this is probably the [same for the] whole of [my iwi] – you go to every day. From the first day to the end. No matter what.

It is clear from Manaaki's kōrero that no longer being able to awahi his extended whānau for the duration of a tangihanga causes him a great deal of anguish and distress. While helping his whānau during a tangihanga is important to him, so too is being considered a 'good' employee, evident by the fact that despite his anguish, he abides by his employing organisation's new bereavement policy. However, the cherished traditional practice of providing support on the marae for the full length of a tangihanga has been role modelled to Manaaki throughout his life. As previously discussed, assisting the immediately bereaved during a tangihanga is a crucial way Māori fulfil their obligations to their wider whānau collective and culture.

Although Manaaki does not explicitly mention it in this particular extract, the organisation's change in positioning – from allowing its employees to attend for the whole duration of a tangihanga, to only permitting one day of leave – is a direct result of a change in the ownership of the organisation. This is important, because within the context of this organisation, new ownership also meant the adoption of other neoliberal practices which privilege productivity and profits, arguably at the expense of employee wellbeing. Manaaki made his feeling clear in his kōrero that Māori values have been

marginalised through these changes, and that these changes have exacerbated work–life tensions¹⁵.

Interestingly, according to my Participating Experts the identity of their employing organisation (i.e., Pākehā-led versus Māori-led) is not necessarily a strong predictor of how supportive the organisation will be regarding extended family tangihanga. In other words, some Māori-led organisations do not allow their employees to take time off work for the duration of these tangihanga, while some Pākehā-led organisations do. To illustrate, Whetu, who is currently employed by a Pākehā-led organisation, shares her experiences when asking for this time off:

Whetu: They're like, "oh, OK, what can we do to help you?" And then they release me. And I've rung up that morning: "I've got a tangi" – "Sweet, we'll figure it out."

Ngairie: That's awesome, they don't make you feel stink about-

Whetu: Nah, they're just like, "Who is it?", "Oh, it's my uncle", and they're like, "OK then." [...] It's like a healing thing, because you don't want workers to come to work with animosity towards the bosses [...] so I'm not going to do my job properly.

Whetu's kōrero reveals that her current employer not only allows her to take time off work, they also ask what they can do to help. This demonstrates that Pākehā-led employing organisations can indeed be very supportive when Māori employees need to attend tangihanga. By allowing Māori employees to cater to their important cultural obligations, this employing organisation achieves a kind of win-win: employers generate a spirit of goodwill within employees who will then work "properly", and employees are able to achieve better work–life balance.

Previously, Whetu had been employed by a Māori-led organisation, but unfortunately her experiences there regarding extended family tangihanga were far less supportive. When asked about her experiences with this organisation, Whetu says:

Whetu: So I had tangi leave [standard bereavement leave], and unless that person was close family, you had to go after work. You couldn't take time off work for it [...] One year, we had 13 tangi in a row. Yeah, it was a HUGE [word emphasised] year. And everyone was tired. And you couldn't NOT [word

¹⁵ Unfortunately, I cannot elaborate further on any of these changes to practice and policy as this could reveal the identity of this employing organisation. It must suffice to say that these changes have been very contentious.

emphasised] go to these tangi. You had to go and help. 'Cos that's when the community had to pull together. And I didn't actually care about my job at that point. 'Cos, to me, my marae was more important than my job.

Whetu's kōrero reveals that, despite her previous employing organisation being a Māori-led entity, she was not allowed to take time off work to fulfil her whānau and cultural obligations. Her resentment towards this organisation is apparent: she "didn't actually care about [her] job at this point". Shortly after the last tangihanga, Whetu quit her job and sought employment with her current Pākehā-led employing organisation. Whetu's previous Māori-led employer forced her into a surprising position, antithetical to Māori values, where she had to choose between her work and her cultural obligations.

Whetu's kōrero alludes to a crucial point about Māori-led employing organisations: these organisations still have objectives to meet, and, perhaps more importantly, the wider society in which they operate is Western and capitalist. It is not surprising that any employer would have difficulty accommodating an employee's request for time off for 13 tangihanga in a row. However, the key issue here is, whenever Whetu requested time off work – whether it was for a single tangihanga, or 13 in a row – if the person who passed away was not immediate family, her request for leave was declined. In other words, this employer, despite being a Māori-led entity, adopted the narrow, Western definition of family privileged in New Zealand's bereavement leave legislation.

Whetu and Manaaki share an interesting 'mixed bag' of experiences in terms of the supportiveness of their employers regarding tangihanga. Manaaki describes being well supported when his sister died, but not being supported to the same extent when extended family members died. Whetu feels well supported by her current Pākehā-led employer regarding extended family tangihanga, but did not receive the same consideration from her former Māori-led employer. It is clear from the kōrero of both Participating Experts that not being allowed to fulfil responsibilities around tangihanga is a major source of tension which causes them to suffer and experience stress. When it comes to tangihanga, employing organisations play an absolutely pivotal role in either enhancing or hindering the work–life balance of Māori employees.

Alignment with Personal Identity

The extent to which my Participating Experts identify or personally align with their employing organisations varies, regardless of the identity of the organisation (i.e.,

Māori-led or Pākehā-led). To illustrate, Pono, who works for a Māori-led organisation, describes a strong alignment, while Aroha, who also works for a Māori-led organisation, describes a weak alignment. As Pono says:

Pono: So I don't see it as a job. I see it as a sense of responsibility that I have. And that is why I'm not motivated by a pay packet, nor am I restricted to Monday to Friday 8 AM to 4:30. Because it is only during that time period that my contribution is recognised financially. But in my brain it's a 24/7 kaupapa. I know I'm an employee, but that's secondary to me.

Here, Pono explains that her mahi is important because she primarily views it as a “sense of responsibility”; being on the payroll is “secondary” to her. Her kōrero implies that she finds her work meaningful and valuable and that she feels a strong sense of loyalty to this organisation. Because she is motivated by this sense of responsibility, Pono considers her mahi a “24/7 kaupapa”. All this reflects a strong personal alignment with her employing organisation, likely because the organisation aligns closely with her own goals, purpose, beliefs, and values.

Conversely, Aroha's kōrero powerfully illustrates her weak personal alignment with her Māori-led employing organisation:

Aroha: I've found that the Crown – the mighty dollar – has sadly eroded the 'Māoriness', if there's such a word, of organisations. [...] [My Māori-led employing] organisation has all the key words. “We're whānau inclusive”, “whānau driven”, “Kaupapa Māori driven”. But they're doing things from a colonised lens. [...] They tend to be quite scared to be Māori.

Ngairi: What do you mean by that?

Aroha: [...] They don't want the perception that, as an employer, they allow too much Māori to happen.

Aroha's kōrero expresses her belief that her Māori-led employer articulates its identity as Māori in a way that is not authentic, or tika. As she shares, although the organisation uses “all the key words” it still operates from “a colonised lens”, implying tokenism. This has work–life implications for Aroha because it affects her ability to enact her own identity as Māori.

Aroha's kōrero implies that Māori-led organisations face difficulties because they operate within a colonised society that is capitalist and Western. These challenges were also illuminated in the previous section, through Whetu's experiences of seeking time off for the tangihanga of extended family from her Māori-led employer. Aroha blames the

“mighty dollar” for “erod[ing] the Māori-ness” of Māori organisations, suggesting that before colonisation and the introduction of capitalism, Māori groups were able to operate in a way that was authentically situated within a Māori worldview. Now, however, Aroha believes that many Māori organisations are “scared to be Māori”, and that they do not want to appear that they “allow too much Māori to happen”. Her kōrero implies that there are incongruences between the values underpinning Western capitalism and a tūturu, or genuine, Māori worldview.

By comparing the experiences and perspectives of Pono and Aroha, we can observe that the extent to which they personally align with their employing organisations differs quite remarkably. While Pono expresses strong alignment with her organisation, Aroha definitely does not. This observation is interesting, because it suggests that we cannot presume the perspectives of Māori employees, in terms of what it means to be Māori, naturally align with those held by Māori-led entities. This can have implications for the work–life balance of Māori employees, given that enacting their identities in practical terms is important to how my Participating Experts understand this phenomenon.

Subtheme Summary

Taken together, the findings from this subtheme suggested that employing organisations can help Māori employees achieve good work–life balance by allowing them to enact their identities as Māori on their own terms. Participating Experts discussed the contentious and (sometimes) tokenistic ‘dial-a-Mawree’ role, particularly with respect to the impact that calling upon Māori employees to play this role has on employee workloads. My Participating Experts also gave excellent examples of how tikanga can be incorporated into workplace practices. Furthermore, they shared their experiences of being released (or not) from work to attend tangihanga, a crucial Māori practice that being unable to attend has caused my Participating Experts a great deal of anguish and distress. With regards to identity alignment, we cannot presume that the perspectives of Māori employees and Māori-led employers naturally cohere in terms of what it means to be Māori.

Findings Overview

My Participating Experts provided powerful insights into work–life balance from their perspectives as Māori employees. Derived from their kōrero, the four themes presented in this chapter captured a deep, rich, identity-focused understanding of what

work–life balance means for them. Taken together, the findings suggested that Māori identity is central to understanding how my Participating Experts made sense of, and experienced, work–life balance. The concept of ‘living philosophies’ was introduced, emphasising the importance of enacting Māori identity in everyday terms, including at work. The findings from this study suggested that to achieve good work–life balance, Māori employees need to be able to enact their identities as Māori within the workplace on their own terms. Furthermore, the findings revealed that issues arose when Māori employees were unable to enact this identity, due to tensions between their worldviews and the capitalist/Western organisational structures within which they work. Throughout the interviews, it was clear that, while ‘living by’ their values and beliefs as Māori was crucial to my Participating Experts, being ‘good’ employees was also important to them, and they could not always do both. The significance of these findings, and of this thesis more generally, is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven: Discussion and Conclusion

The thesis sought to explore Māori perspectives of work–life balance in order to contribute to improving work-related outcomes for Māori employees. Although the work–life literature is well established, the understandings and experiences of Indigenous employees are underrepresented. Indeed, the large majority of studies stem from theoretical underpinnings based on European and North American (i.e., Western) cultural worldviews (Adisa & Gbadamosi, 2021). As mentioned, this is problematic for Indigenous employees, when one considers academic research has the power to influence the discourse that helps inform legislation and policies.

To fill this gap and identify the ways in which Māori employees conceptualise and experience work–life balance, a Kaupapa Māori Research approach was adopted, which took for granted the validity and legitimacy of the worldviews held by those who participated in this study. Three research questions guided this study:

1. How do Māori employees understand work–life balance?
2. How do Māori employees prioritise their mahi and other life responsibilities?
3. What are the experiences of Māori employees of their employing organisations supporting them to achieve good work–life balance?

This chapter provides a discussion of the key findings in relation to these research questions, the research aim, and the wider literature. It also articulates the practical implications of these key findings through recommendations for organisational practice. In addition, this chapter outlines the limitations of this study, proposes opportunities for future research, and highlights the contributions of this thesis. To conclude this chapter, and this thesis, I share how undertaking this thesis has impacted me personally.

Key Findings

Work–Life Balance and Māori Identity

The most prominent finding to emerge from this study is that Māori identity is central to how my Participating Experts understood work–life balance. The importance of their identities as Māori permeated their interviews as they answered questions regarding work–life balance. Part of this whakaaro is based on how vital it was for my Participating Experts to engage in taonga tuku iho – the intergenerational transfer of values, beliefs, and practices (VB&Ps) – in order to solidify their own personal Māori

identity as well as a collective one. Being secure in one's Māori identity was considered crucial because it provides a sense of belonging that can help people from becoming 'lost'. Importantly, using the concept of 'living philosophies', the discursive and practical components of Māori identity were teased apart. My Participating Experts expressed that while learning about their identities as Māori is important, it is necessary to also embody this identity within everyday practices in life and at work, by, for example, helping at tangihanga or showing manaakitanga to manuhiri of the organisation.

In terms of the work–life balance literature, the importance of Māori identity in conceptualising this phenomenon is significant for two main reasons. First, findings from other studies conducted in Aotearoa support this assertion. For example, Harris (2007) found cultural identity crucial to how Māori employees attempted to balance work and life, as these participants also emphasised the importance of enacting their VB&Ps and passing these taonga down intergenerationally. In another study, Brougham and Haar (2013) found correlations for their Māori participants between perceived cultural inclusion and the work–life interface ('conflict', 'enrichment', and 'balance'). When these Māori employees perceived that their employing organisations supported their cultural values and beliefs, they reported experiencing less conflict, more enrichment, and better balance.

The second reason this finding is important, is even though Māori identity is critically important to how my Participating Experts understand work–life balance, the dominant work–life literature does not tend to foreground identity in this way. This is perhaps because for the most part this literature uncritically adopts Western theories and perspectives (see chapter three) as 'the norm', creating a cultural bias that privileges Western worldviews. Because research has the power to influence the discourses which inform policies and legislation, this Western-dominated understanding can result in the development of organisational expectations that work against employees with differing cultural worldviews, albeit perhaps unintentionally. Furthermore, this Western bias can perpetuate power imbalances that widen workplace inequalities, as Indigenous Peoples can be made to feel that their perspectives and needs are, at best, overlooked, and, at worst, 'second-rate' or inconsequential. By revealing an identity-focused understanding and capturing a deep and complex analysis of what work–life balance means for Māori, the findings from this study challenge the dominant Western-centric narrative, and create an opportunity to broaden concepts of what work–life balance means.

Holistic Work–Life Balance

An important finding that emerged within this identity-focused framework is that Participating Experts conceptualised work–life balance as existing within a wider system of holistic wellbeing. Holistic wellness was described as all aspects of one’s self – tinana, hinengaro, whatumanawa, and wairua – being nurtured and well. Participating Experts expressed their whakaaro that, to achieve good work–life balance, one’s important work and life priorities needed to be in balance not only with each other, but also within this system of holistic wellbeing. Achieving good work–life balance was described as a journey, as one strives for balance by navigating the ebbs and flows of competing demands and cultural values. Therefore, my Participating Experts appeared to share a holistic, integrated, and dynamic understanding of work–life balance.

This finding is significant because it fundamentally aligns with ontological assumptions underpinning a Māori worldview. In te ao Māori, the concept of balance is synonymous with holistic wellbeing, with the universe seen as a complex system for which achieving balance is its key organising principle. This is highlighted in the Te Whare Tapa Whā model, for example, with balance being achieved when the four sides of a whareniui (as symbols of the dimensions of wellbeing) are nurtured and strong (Durie, 1998). The inherent connectedness between balance and wellbeing is also evident in concepts such as tapu and noa, where reducing tapu to safe levels (facilitated by activities related to noa) brings about the balance necessary for spiritual wellness (Mead, 2016). Therefore, it can be argued that a conceptualisation of work–life balance which is integrated within a system of holistic wellness is aligned with how some Māori understand the nature of reality.

By embracing Māori perspectives, this finding provides an original contribution to the work–life balance literature. In their critical review of this literature, Özbilgin et al. (2011) argued its development has been ‘stunted’ due to a lack of methodological and conceptual diversity. Furthermore, Özbilgin et al. (2011) noted the experiences of ethnic ‘minorities’ are under-theorised in the work–life literature; although these authors made this statement over a decade ago, it remains applicable today. By framing work–life balance within a wider system of holistic wellbeing, my Participating Experts provide a unique conceptualisation that transcends notions of ‘conflict’, ‘enrichment’, and ‘balance’ (as described in the dominant work–life literature) and enhances our understanding of work–life balance. This demonstrates how academia and society as a whole can benefit when diverse cultural worldviews are embraced.

Facilitating Good Work–Life Balance for Māori Employees

This study found that for employers to help facilitate good work–life balance, Participating Experts need to be allowed to enact their identities as Māori within the workplace. My Participating Experts provided excellent examples of how this can be done well. They described how tikanga can be incorporated into workplace practices, both formally, via organisational-driven initiatives, and informally, via employee-driven actions. Furthermore, Participating Experts described how they incorporate their VB&Ps into practical aspects of their employee roles, such as decision-making and interpersonal interactions. This helped facilitate good work–life balance, because by honouring these inherently treasured taonga through their actions, my Participating Experts were able to feel more like ‘themselves’. The cherished VB&Ps of Participating Experts acted like an anchor as they negotiated the complexities of enacting their identities as Māori within the workplace.

This finding is significant because it can be harnessed by employing organisations to help improve work–life balance for Māori employees. Moreover, other research has identified other important wellbeing benefits for Māori employees that result when employing organisations support their cultural identities. For example, Haar and Broughman (2010) found that when Māori participants perceived that their employing organisations supported them culturally, they reported lower rates of anxiety, depression, and insomnia. Furthermore, Kuntz et al. (2014) found that an organisation’s espousal of Māori cultural values was reciprocated with increased affective commitment from Māori employees, perhaps because they felt a greater sense of belonging. Employees who can incorporate their VB&Ps into their mahi are conceivably more likely to feel accepted, and less likely to experience psychological distress, because they can engage in their employee roles in ways that are more congruent with their personal worldviews.

The dominant work–life balance literature can help shed light on this finding to an extent. As mentioned, ‘enrichment’ is based on the idea that resources generated from one role (i.e., work or other life roles) can assist employees to perform better in other roles (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). We can posit that the VB&Ps of my Participating Experts, derived from their identities as Māori, are ‘resources’ from outside of their employee role that can help facilitate good work–life balance. However, this explanation falls short because one’s cultural identity is much more than a ‘resource’. Cultural identity shapes who we are as people, our worldviews, our beings. It is ironic that despite its individual-level focus, the dominant work–life literature tends

to overlook the individual in this fundamental way. The findings from this study highlight the importance of identity to my Participating Experts, and can be used to encourage employing organisations to allow their Māori employees to enact their identities as Māori in the workplace in order to facilitate better work–life balance for them.

Not Being Able to Enact Māori Identity

Conversely, this study found that not being able to enact their identities as Māori was a major source of work–life tension. Problems often arose due to incongruences between the VB&Ps of my Participating Experts and the capitalist/Western structures of their employing organisations. My Participating Experts privileged fulfilling cultural/whānau obligations and incorporating their VB&Ps into workplace practices, but these behaviours sometimes clashed with the organisation’s drive to prioritise ‘economic efficiencies’¹⁶. While ‘living by’ their VB&Ps was absolutely crucial for my Participating Experts, being ‘good’ employees was important to them also. As a result, Participating Experts oftentimes felt like they did not ‘fit in’ or ‘belong’ in their workplaces. This caused them distress and, in some instances, resulted in their seeking employment elsewhere.

The ideas underpinning the dominant work–life literature can help explain this finding somewhat. As mentioned, ‘conflict’ is said to occur when employees face difficulties managing their behaviours to suit the expectations of different roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). In the context of this research finding, it can be asserted that certain behaviours from my Participating Experts’ ‘life’ roles (underpinned by their identities as Māori), do sometimes conflict with the expectations of employing organisations. However, the discordance experienced in these cases cannot be fully explained by work–life literature that overlooks the complex underlying socio-historic-economic drivers of such conflict, such as capitalist/Western organisational structures.

As mentioned, in an insightful study exploring work–life balance experiences, Clouston (2014) identified what she called a “potent link” (p. 508) between neoliberal capitalism and work–life ‘imbalance’. Clouston (2014) asserted that performance-led organisational cultures, developed in response to the pressures caused by neoliberalism, have created workplaces in which employees are expected to achieve ‘more with less’ and social structures that value individual success and personal responsibility. Although

¹⁶ Economic efficiencies focus on increasing employee outputs, enlarging profits, and reducing operational costs.

the negative impacts of neoliberalism affect employees from all cultural backgrounds, it can be argued that these effects are more pronounced for Indigenous employees who value collective success and collective responsibility. Māori share a cultural worldview that sometimes clashes with their employing organisations, therefore the impacts of neoliberal capitalism on work–life balance for Māori employees can be intensified.

Tangihanga and Bereavement Policies

My Participating Experts identified not being allowed leave for the duration of the tangihanga when an extended family member died as a major source of work–life tension. Friction emerged between employers and employees when the narrow, Western definition of family that is privileged in New Zealand’s bereavement leave legislation (i.e., the Holidays Act, 2003¹⁷) was followed. Because they value the wellbeing of their wider whānau collective, my Participating Experts are keenly motivated to fulfil their responsibilities around tangihanga. They spoke vividly of the stress and anguish they experienced when unable to fulfil this responsibility, with some Participating Experts expressing their whakaaro that their extended family is just as important to them as their immediate family. This issue has been raised in other studies with Māori employees (Hooker, 2015; Stewart, 2011), as well as those with Indigenous employees from Canada (Julien et al., 2017).

This is a very salient issue, with my Participating Experts expressing concerns that not fulfilling this cultural obligation may cause an important Māori tradition to become lost. This issue highlights the ongoing impact of colonisation: while a number of laws/policies that overtly and intentionally suppressed Māori VB&Ps have now been repealed or banned¹⁸, some, such as those pertaining to bereavement leave, still continue to erode the VB&Ps of Māori. Bereavement laws/policies that do not account for important whānau needs and obligations exert a powerful, if unintentional, force upon Māori to assimilate. Therefore, the existing New Zealand bereavement laws/policies can marginalise some Māori employees, and have significant implications for the

¹⁷ In New Zealand, the Holidays Act (2003) outlines minimum bereavement leave entitlements for employees. Employees are entitled to paid leave of three days if they suffer from the bereavement of a: spouse/partner, parent, child, brother/sister, grandparent, grandchild, the parent of a spouse/partner, miscarriage/stillbirth. Employees are entitled to paid leave of one day if the employer accepts that they have suffered from the bereavement of anyone else. To qualify for bereavement leave under the Holidays Act (2003), employees need to have 1) completed at least six months continuous employment with the organisation, or 2) worked for the organisation for six months for an average of 10 hours per week, or at least one hour in every week or 40 hours in every month.

¹⁸ Examples of laws/policies that have now been repealed or banned include the Tohunga Suppression Act 1907 (which intended to stop Māori from using traditional healing practices), and the punishing of children for speaking te reo at school.

permanency of a collective Māori identity that is maintained by the active practice of cultural traditions.

It is important to note that some Participating Experts reported they *are* supported by their employing organisations to fulfil cultural obligations regarding extended whānau tangihanga. Despite bereavement laws, these organisations are adopting policies that do allow their employees to support for the duration of extended whānau tangihanga. Therefore, these organisations are helping facilitate good work–life balance for their Māori employees and need to be commended. The ability, or perhaps willingness, of these organisations to support their employees in this way demonstrates that, despite various constraints, it is possible for at least some employing organisations to accommodate the need for ‘tangihanga leave’. It would be valuable for future research to investigate how these organisations are managing to accommodate for extended whānau tangihanga and harness the findings to facilitate better work–life balance outcomes for more Māori employees.

Māori-led Organisations and Māori Identity

This study found that a Participating Expert working for a Māori-led entity reported a weak alignment with the organisation in terms of what it means to be Māori. This sentiment has been echoed in other studies. For example, Stewart (2011) found that, despite working for Māori-led organisations, some Māori employees reported not feeling supported by the organisation in a culturally appropriate way. Furthermore, Hooker (2015) reported that some Māori employees think their Māori-led employers struggle to support their personal cultural values due to pressures regarding workloads and time.

Hence, we cannot assume the Māori identity of employees naturally aligns with that of Māori-led employers. Given that being able to enact their identities as Māori within the workplace was important to my Participating Experts, any non-alignment may cause significant work–life tensions for some Māori employees. Therefore, Māori-led employers should not assume that, just because they are ‘Māori’ organisations, they are allowing their employees to enact their personal identities as Māori on their own terms. All employing organisations need to proactively address this issue if they are wanting to better support the work–life balance of their Māori employees.

The weak alignment reported in this current study is likely influenced by the ongoing impact of colonisation on Māori organisations. This is a very complex issue. How can Māori organisations operate ‘in a Māori way’, when the laws they are

subjected to and the wider society in which they operate are still capitalist and Western? What does operating ‘in a Māori way’ look like in our contemporary world?

Furthermore, how can Māori-led employers articulate their identities in a way that is aligned with the expectations of their Māori employees? Indeed, it can be argued that Māori-led employers face unique challenges compared to their Pākehā-led counterparts.

Tokenism

Another important finding to emerge from this study is that employing organisations need to avoid making tokenistic efforts to embrace Māori culture. Tokenism is likely to have adverse work–life balance implications for some Māori employees, based on how important Māori identity was to how my Participating Experts understood and experienced this phenomenon. My Participating Experts shared that, their patronising experience of tokenism within both Pākehā-led and Māori-led organisations has a negative impact on their perceptions of the given organisation. In Pākehā-led organisations, examples of tokenism were often described as ‘dial-a-Mawree’, ‘tick-box’ approaches to embracing Māori culture. In Māori-led organisations, the organisation’s delivery of Māori values in practical terms was deemed tokenistic when the actions were incongruent with employee perceptions of what it means to be Māori.

The negative implications of tokenism for Māori employees has also been revealed in other studies. For instance, Stewart (2011) found that tokenism was a source of occupational stress for her Māori participants. In this study, some Māori employees experienced similar stress, reporting feeling exploited for organisational ‘tick-box’ objectives, and mentioning feeling ‘used’ as touchstones for Māori consultation with little reciprocity. Furthermore, Hooker (2015) reported that even though many organisations used Māori values to underpin their organisational vision, some Māori employees believed these values were not usually actioned in a way that enhanced cultural wellbeing. Indeed, tokenism can cause distress, particularly in cases when Māori consultation or ‘dial-a-Mawree’ requests add to workloads without being reciprocated, rewarded, or recognised.

From an equity perspective, perhaps the most problematic issue that can arise from adopting superficial approaches to embracing Māori culture is that underlying cultural inequalities are unable to be addressed in any meaningful way. When employing organisations implement tokenistic approaches, the veneer of cultural inclusivity can delay the making of any substantive change. Although these

organisations may have genuinely good intentions to embrace Māori culture, ‘tick-box’ approaches overlook the deeply rooted causes of the social inequalities which exist in workplaces and continue to disadvantage Māori. These social inequalities stem from systemic factors including those discussed in this thesis, such as the erosion of cultural values, discrimination, capitalism, hegemony, power imbalances, marginalisation, and cultural biases. Tokenistic approaches ultimately create shortcuts that divert people from addressing differences for impactful, and genuine, collaboration and change.

Recommendations for Organisational Practice

This section provides recommendations for organisational practice based on the conclusion from this research that allowing Māori employees to enact their identities as Māori on their own terms helps facilitate good work–life balance. These recommendations are also realistic and achievable within the current socio-economic-political context in Aotearoa. In other words, these recommendations are cognisant that organisations operate within a capitalist/Western society, but challenge employers to combat entrenched mindsets which have led to poor understandings of colonisation and marginalisation.

Pākehā-led Employing Organisations

To help overcome tokenism, Pākehā-led employers must critically evaluate their approaches to cultural inclusivity. It is commendable that some employers are taking steps to embrace Māori culture, however, they need to critically reflect upon their intentions for doing so. Do they genuinely want to espouse biculturalism? Or, in reality, are they merely approaching it as a ‘tick-box’ exercise? To authentically embrace Māori culture, employers must identify and address biases within their organisational systems, practices, and culture, that may impede efforts of inclusivity. Equally, Pākehā-led employing organisations will need to educate their internal stakeholders (e.g., managers, employees, trustees/directors) on important Māori values, beliefs, and practices (VB&Ps) in contemporary Aotearoa. Some of these VB&Ps have been discussed in this thesis, such as whakapapa, whakawhanaungatanga, tapu/noa/rāhui, mana, and tangihanga. To genuinely understand Māori VB&Ps requires that people not only know how these VB&Ps are actioned in practical terms, but also appreciate the Māori worldviews which inform them. Crucially, people need to be educated on how capitalist/Western organisational structures affect the ability of Māori employees to enact their identities as Māori in the workplace. With education comes knowledge, with

knowledge comes understanding, and with understanding comes acceptance, all of which are critical to creating an organisational environment that embraces cultural inclusivity.

Even small efforts, such as learning to pronounce Māori words properly, can help support cultural inclusivity. It is likely that, as their organisations progress in their efforts to be truly inclusive, Pākehā-led employers will call upon Māori employees for advice on matters pertaining to Māori. In such cases, employers need to recognise and reward these employees accordingly. It is unfair to burden Māori employees with increased workloads and not acknowledge their efforts.

Māori-led Employing Organisations

Māori-led employers will benefit from doing some critical reflection on their own identities as Māori. This process should involve all internal stakeholders and adopt a collective and inclusive approach that promotes transparency, to help ensure internal stakeholders are ‘on the same page’ regarding the Māori identity of the employing organisation. Stakeholders should consider both aspects of Māori identity discussed in this thesis: *discursive identity* (evident, for example, in how organisational values are defined), and *practical identity* (how Māori identity is incorporated into workplace practices). These two aspects of Māori identity should be congruent, however, as is the case for individual Māori employees, Māori-led organisations will likely face barriers in their efforts to enact their cultural identity. Therefore, Māori-led organisations need to identify and critically evaluate how a range of factors – societal, cultural, political, economic, and internal – influence how they articulate and enact their own identities as Māori organisations. Ideally, this process of critical reflection would occur continuously, with understandings and practices evolving and improving through organisational learning and feedback.

All Employing Organisations

To achieve better work–life outcomes for Māori employees, all employing organisations should take a more flexible approach to bereavement leave policies. Although the Holidays Act (2003) allows three days paid bereavement leave for ‘immediate family’¹⁹ and one paid day if the employer accepts the employee has suffered from the bereavement of anyone else, these are *minimum* requirements. Therefore, although this legislation defines ‘family’ narrowly, employing organisations

¹⁹ As noted, ‘immediate family’ in the Holidays Act (2003) is conceptualised as a spouse/partner, parent, child, brother/sister, grandparent, grandchild, the parent of a spouse/partner, and miscarriage/stillbirth.

are able to be more flexible to help Māori employees meet their whānau/cultural needs and obligations. Whetu, for example, said that her employer allows her to attend for the duration of extended family tangihanga, explaining to me afterwards that they pay one day bereavement leave, and then allow her to use annual leave or accumulated time off in lieu. In some instances, it may not be possible for employers to provide a great deal of flexibility around bereavement leave, but if they care about the wellbeing of their Māori employees, they need to at least try. Accommodating for the tangihanga of extended family may require creativity, as well as extra time and effort. However, as evidenced by Whetu's kōrero, employing organisations who find ways to support their staff in this way can benefit from having employees who are more appreciative, content, and loyal.

Employing organisations should also incorporate tikanga into workplace practices. The previous chapter provides compelling examples of how this can be done well via both organisational-driven and employee-driven initiatives. Organisational-driven initiatives implemented by the Halberg Foundation provide another excellent example of how this can be done well. The Halberg Foundation developed an internal plan to weave tikanga throughout the organisation that involved appointing a dedicated advisor and forming a rōpū to lead the implementation of a Māori strategy (Diversity Works New Zealand, 2021). As part of this strategy, all new staff are welcomed to the organisation with a mihi whakatau, and staff are encouraged to embrace tikanga in meetings and at Halberg events (Diversity Works New Zealand, 2021). Incorporating tikanga into workplace practices in authentic ways helps create a workplace environment where Māori employees feel supported to enact their identities as Māori.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The size and location of this study's sample are limitations of this research. The findings of this study reflect the perspectives of a small number of Māori employees who are securely enculturated in their worldviews as Māori. Because such Māori perspectives are notably absent in the work–life discourse, this thesis was intentionally positioned to capture the voices of Māori employees who are firmly grounded in their identities as Māori. As noted, however, the Māori population is diverse and affected by colonial assimilation to varying degrees. Future research could, for example, explore the work–life balance experiences of Māori employees with varying levels of connection with te ao Māori. Exploring the conceptualisations and experiences of a wider number

and range of Māori employees would likely provide a more nuanced understanding of this construct.

This addition of Māori voices would, ideally, also reveal the perspectives of Māori employees situated within other communities. As mentioned, Māori comprise an impressive 65.7 per cent of the population in the Wairoa district, which is nearly four times the national average (Statistics New Zealand, 2018a, 2018c). Having lived in Wairoa most of my life, I am acutely aware that our community is probably more receptive to and accepting of important Māori values and beliefs than other communities, and more likely to put them into action. The cultural orientation as well as the size and closeness of our community is likely to have influenced how my Participating Experts have understood and experienced work–life balance. By exploring this phenomenon as it is perceived within other locations, convergences and divergences can be examined to provide insights into the ways that the local community context affects the work–life balance experiences of Māori employees.

In and of itself, this thesis is not enough to bring about the transformative change needed to improve work–life balance for Māori employees. This is, therefore, an additional limitation. It is my hope that organisations would use these research findings as a starting point from which to develop workplace policies and practices that better suit the needs of their Māori employees. In order to get ‘buy-in’ from employing organisations, future research should highlight how organisations can benefit from genuinely addressing the cultural needs of employees in terms of productivity outcomes. Such research could perhaps further draw upon the ideas and findings from the diversity and inclusion literature, to help develop a ‘business case’ (Merelo, 2019) for embracing Māori perspectives of work–life balance. To achieve transformative change, much more research is required. More research, that continues to challenge the dominant narrative and encourage us as researchers to broaden our conceptual and methodological approaches to studying work–life balance.

Contributions of this Thesis

To the best of my knowledge, this thesis is the first to explore Māori perspectives of work–life balance using a Kaupapa Māori Research approach. Adopting a Kaupapa Māori Research approach allowed the worldviews of my Participating Experts to be privileged, and provided a space where their kōrero was heard, respected, and embraced. Consequently, this study was able to learn how some Māori employees

understand and experience this construct from their own perspectives, without confining them to pre-existing work–life theoretical concepts. This led to the emergence of unique key findings that provided valuable insights into work–life balance for Māori employees that had been unexplored. From these findings, this study has been able to provide recommendations for organisational practice derived directly from the needs of some Māori employees.

This thesis has also drawn attention to larger structural issues that affect work–life balance for Māori employees. With its ‘bottom up’ and interpretative analytic focus, the thesis was able to delve into these deeper issues and highlight obstacles faced by my Participating Experts, when their Māori worldviews came into conflict with capitalist/Western organisational structures. Although these structures are identified as problematic, changing them to facilitate a more equitable society is no easy feat with no ‘quick fix’ solutions. However, by drawing attention to specific problems that arise when Māori employees try to enact their identities at work, this study adds to a wider critical narrative that will hopefully contribute towards transformational change of these systems.

This thesis contributes to the growing body of Kaupapa Māori Research. As a distinct and unique research approach, Kaupapa Māori Research is gaining considerable “intellectual grunt” across a wide range of academic disciplines (G. H. Smith, personal communication, September 2, 2021). This is crucial for Māori, given that Kaupapa Māori Research aims to create spaces that allow Māori to regain control of investigations into their own lives (Bishop, 1995) that will benefit Māori in a number of significant ways. However, a majority of this research is being undertaken in areas such as education and health, with few studies investigating organisational-related issues. Indeed, when I discussed this thesis with Graham Smith, he commented that it was “great to hear” this research area was being investigated because it is currently underexplored in Kaupapa Māori Research (G. H. Smith, personal communication, September 2, 2021).

Finally, this thesis contributes to filling a significant gap in the work–life balance literature: the underrepresentation of Indigenous perspectives. It was able to do this by challenging, in order to enhance, academia’s narrow, Western-dominated understanding of this phenomenon. By challenging Western-centric discourses, new positions and new understandings are able to emerge and grow. Exploring a wider range of cultural perspectives can encourage us as academics, and as a society, to think more

broadly and inclusively about workplace issues. It is hoped that, by embracing different cultural perspectives of work–life balance, the wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples in the workplace can be improved and labour market inequalities reduced.

Personal Reflection

I have thoroughly enjoyed embarking upon this Master’s research journey. The topic resonated with me since its inception, as I noticed the lack of Indigenous voices in the work–life discourse, and in the field of Psychology more generally. This thesis created a space that allowed me to ponder the underlying colonial, economic, and societal ideologies that instigate and perpetuate power, privilege, and, by consequence, oppression, and marginalisation. I have come to the realisation that while research is an intellectual endeavour, it is also inevitably political. Therefore, despite what some attempt to proclaim, research never has been, and can never be, ‘objective’ or bias-free.

Undertaking this thesis has helped me to realise the transformative potential of research to facilitate better outcomes for Māori. This potential inspired me so much, that during the course of completing this thesis, I decided to change paths and pursue a career in research. Thankfully, the skills I have acquired during this thesis have helped open up new and exciting research opportunities for me which are aligned with my moemoeā of facilitating more equitable outcomes for Māori. While I now more fully understand that research has the power to affect positive change, I also know that, to realise this potential, it is necessary to engage and challenge the systems that perpetuate unequal outcomes for Māori. My tīpuna must have come to a similar realisation as they fought against the intersecting systems of oppression that nearly rendered Māori extinct.

Our values, beliefs, practices, and perspectives as Māori should not be pushed to the margins just because they are different from those of Pākehā.

We all deserve fairness, respect, and acceptance.

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Appendix A: Information Sheet and Formal Invitation



Te Kūnenga
ki Pūrehuroa

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Exploring Work-life Balance from a Māori Perspective

INFORMATION SHEET AND FORMAL INVITATION

Kia ora whānau, ko Ngaire tēnei. I am researching work-life balance as it is thought about and experienced by Māori employees, with a special focus on our experiences during New Zealand's 2020 (March/April) COVID-19 lockdown. This is in relation to our mahi, whānau, marae/papakāinga, hapū/iwi responsibilities, as well as our other important life priorities.

This research is part of my Master of Arts (Psychology) degree with Massey University.

Participants

I am formally inviting you to participate in this study because 1) you are a Māori employee working at least 20 hours per week, 2) you were an essential kaimahi during New Zealand's 2020 (March/April) COVID-19 lockdown, and 3) you are an active member of your papakāinga, marae, hapū, iwi, hapori.

As a small koha for your time and knowledge, I have a \$40 New World voucher to thank you.

Procedures/Kawa

- The research will involve an interview with myself - kānohi-ki-te-kānohi - at a location, date, and time, that suits you.
- The interview will take about 1 – 1.5 hours and will be audio recorded.
- Our interview will start and end with karakia, and will include a kapu tī and a light kai.
- To make sure that I have correctly captured your thoughts, views, and experiences, I will seek your feedback at various stages after our interview.

Data Management

- The data (our kōrero) from our audio recording will be put in written form (by me).
- All the information collected (e.g. your personal details, our audio recording) will be stored in a locked drawer for a maximum of five years, after which time I will securely dispose of it.
- To respect your privacy 1) a fictitious name will be used instead of your real name, 2) selected examples from your interview for the final report will not contain any information that may identify you and your employing organisation, and 3) your participation in this research will be kept private.
- Upon completion of this research project, you will be provided with a written feedback summary and (or) we can meet kānohi-ki-te-kānohi to discuss the research findings.

Your Rights

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

- Kōrero Māori at any time (I may need to seek clarification or interpretation at times);
- Decline to answer any particular question;
- Withdraw from the study at any time;
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- Provide information on the understanding that your name, and the name of your employing organisation, will not be used;
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded;
- Ask for the recording equipment to be turned off at any time during our interview.

Project Contacts

Researcher – Ngaire Sparkes, [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

Chief Project Supervisor – Dr Natasha Tassell-Matamua, N.A.Tassell-Matamua@massey.ac.nz

Secondary Project Supervisor – Dr Jocelyn Handy, J.A.Handy@massey.ac.nz

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named in this document are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director – Ethics, telephone 06 3569099 ext 85271, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix B: Consent Form



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

PARTICIPATING EXPERT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

Exploring Work-Life Balance from a Māori Perspective

I have read (or have had read to me) and understand the Information Sheet relating to the above-mentioned research.

I have had the details of the study explained to me, any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I have been given sufficient time to consider whether I want to participate in this study. I also understand that 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 wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.
3. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Declaration by Participating Expert:

I _____ hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C: Personal/Employment Details

Personal/Employment details to be collected (and held confidentially)

Date: _____ **Pseudonym:** _____ **Participating Expert No:** _____
 Works more than 20 hours p/week? Self-identified as Māori?
 Lives in the Wairoa District? Active member* of marae/hapū/iwi/hapori?
 Essential worker during 2020 (Mar/Apr) lockdown? *at least five hours (voluntary) per week

Name:	Age:	Gender:
_____	_____	_____
Employing organisation name:	Employing organisation type:	
_____	_____	
Current role/position:	Current length of employment (with this organisation):	
_____	_____	

Ethnicity:	Iwi affiliation/s:
_____	_____
Distance lived from main marae:	

Relationship status: (married/partnered, single, divorced, widowed)	Number of financial dependents (if applicable):
_____	_____

Phone number:	Address:
_____	_____
Email:	

Appendix D: Data Collection Questions

Data Collection questions:

1. What are some of the things (roles) that are really important in your life?
Prompt: (for example) mahi, tamariki, whānau, your marae/papakāinga, your hapū/iwi, hapori, volunteering, study, et cetera.

2. Can you please tell me about some of these (roles) in more detail?
Probing questions: What do these roles mean to you? Why are they important to you?

3. How would you describe what an ideal balance between your mahi and other life commitments looks like to you?
Probing question: What are your understandings of work–life balance?

4. How does ‘being Māori’ impact the way you prioritise and evaluate the important things in your life?
Probing question: How do your values as Māori influence this?

5. Did the COVID-19 pandemic make you reconsider and/or re-evaluate the priorities in your life?
If so, how? If not, why?
Probing questions: How did this make you feel? What happened next?

6. What are some of the unique challenges to achieving and maintaining work–life balance that you experience as a Māori employee?
Probing questions: What are your obligations to your whānau and hapū/iwi? How do these obligations impact upon your ability to balance your mahi and other life priorities?

7. What were some of the unique challenges to achieving and maintaining work–life balance that you experienced as an essential worker during the 2020 (March/April) COVID-19 lockdown?
Probing question: How were some of the unique challenges to achieving balance [identified in 6] further highlighted/exacerbated by the lockdown?

8. What do you think are some of the unique resources/supports/skills et cetera we have as Māori that help to achieve and maintain work–life balance?
Probing questions: What are the privileges or benefits of whānau and hapū/iwi membership in terms of managing your mahi and other life priorities?

9. How was your ability to access these unique resources impacted by the 2020 (March/April) COVID-19 lockdown?
Probing questions: How did this make you feel? What happened next?

10. What were some of the coping strategies and supports you used during the 2020 (March/April) COVID-19 lockdown (to help you balance your work and other life priorities)?
Probing questions: What are some of your personal coping strategies/techniques? How did your whānau help you with this?

11. Generally speaking, how does your employing organisation support you to achieve good work–life balance?

Probing questions: How have your past employing organisations supported you to achieve good work–life balance?

12. More specifically, how did your employing organisation support you to achieve good work–life balance while you were an essential worker during the 2020 (March/April) COVID-19 lockdown?

Probing questions: How did this make you feel? What happened next?