Just be yourself: Exploring employees' authenticity and well-being in a professional services firm

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Abstract

Authenticity is being self-aware and living true to one's self. Prior research has linked authenticity to important well-being outcomes, prompting a growing number of empirical studies on authenticity in workplace settings. Professional services firms provide a novel context to analyse the authenticity and well-being link, as these organisations are traditionally white, male-dominated environments and may promote an inauthentic climate for employees from marginalised groups. This study explores the associations between authenticity and well-being outcomes in a New Zealand (NZ) law firm and compares the authenticity of those from the dominant ethnic culture (NZ European) with those from other ethnicities. In addition, this research assesses whether gender and ethnicity intersect to create a double barrier for women from ethnic minorities, preventing them from being authentic at work. This study used an opportunistic mixed-methods approach and a cross-sectional research design to analyse secondary data collected in an online survey in March 2021 (N=181). Quantitative results revealed significant positive relationships between authenticity and both work engagement and job satisfaction. However, there was no support for the association between authenticity and mental health. Although ethnicity did not moderate the relationships between authenticity and well-being outcomes, NZ Europeans reported behaving more authentically at work than other ethnicities. There was no difference in authenticity by gender and no evidence of a double barrier preventing women employees from ethnic minorities to behave authentically at work. However, the supplementary qualitative analysis revealed potential challenges to authenticity among some women employees. Findings support the importance of enabling authenticity in the workplace for employee well-being. Theoretical and practical implications of these findings are discussed.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signature: _____

Date: 25/01/2023

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Ethics Approval

My dissertation is based on data collected as part of a longitudinal study led by Associate Professor Rachel Morrison and supported by Professor Helena Cooper-Thomas. The original AUTEC application was approved on the 17th of September 2019, AUTEC Reference number 19/338 (see Appendix A).

Chapter 1. Introduction

As employees navigate organisational settings, they often receive the advice to "just be yourself" to achieve success and happiness at work (Cha et al., 2019). The idea that individuals should strive to be authentic has been advocated for centuries by philosophers from Socrates to Heidegger, and psychologists such as Maslow and Rogers (Cha et al., 2019; Harter, 2002; Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Authenticity is a subjective experience that is defined as an individual's ability to know and act in accordance with their true self (Cable et al., 2013; Harter, 2002; Lenton et al., 2013; Metin et al., 2016). The concept of authenticity has received considerable attention in scholarly literature and relates to a broad range of psychological topics, including life satisfaction (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Kifer et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2008), well-being (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Robinson et al., 2013), the self and identity (Kernis, 2003; Roberts et al., 2008), self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1991), and more recently, the workplace and work-related outcomes (Cable et al., 2013; Emmerich & Rigotti, 2017; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015; Ménard & Brunet, 2010; Metin et al., 2016; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014a, 2018a).

In recent years, authenticity research has flourished in management and organisational scholarship and fostering an authentic work environment has emerged as one of the key challenges and opportunities within organisations (Cha et al, 2019; Knoll et al., 2015; Metin et al., 2016). Scholars suggest several reasons for this surge in interest, such as the emergence of research showing how behaving true to one's self at work is associated with positive outcomes, including occupational well-being, engagement and performance (Cable et al., 2013; Cha et al., 2019; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014a; 2018a). Other studies identify that customers value the authenticity of customer service staff and being authentic at work can improve service performance, ultimately benefitting the organisation (Gabriel et al., 2016; Grandey, 2003; Sharp, 2015; Yagil & Medler-Liraz, 2013b). Moreover, scholars observe a trend for new employees to seek and expect work that enables them to pursue authentic goals (Freidman & Lobel, 2003). However, empirical evidence focusing on the role of authenticity in workplace settings remains limited (Ariza-Montez et al., 2017; Knoll et al., 2015; Metin et al., 2016) and underexplored within the context of professional services organisations.

Other scholars argue that the increased academic interest in this area may be due to contextual antecedents, such as specific work-related pressures and organisational features which may hinder employees' authentic self-expression at work (Cha et al., 2019; Hewlin et al., 2020; Sutton, 2020). There is empirical evidence that individuals are less authentic at work than in other contexts (Robinson et al., 2013; Sheldon et al., 1997) due to the requirement to "act professional", which can contradict being "real". Employees are expected to conform to role and organisational expectations that are not necessarily consistent with their beliefs, values, and feelings (Cable et al., 2013; Emmerich & Rigotti, 2017). In addition, organisations are characterised by predetermined rules and norms and involve socialising into roles and organisational cultures that are not primarily designed for individual expression, but rather for a collective goal (Emmerich et al., 2020). Professional services employees, for example, are commonly expected to conform to a dominant (often male) culture and formal codes of conduct (Harris, 2002; Haynes, 2012; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2012). These contextual standards may reduce the likelihood of being authentic in this work setting, particularly for those individuals outside of the dominant demographic.

Other research suggests there are additional factors inhibiting authenticity in the workplace. For example, the privileging of the cis-gendered white male may significantly limit the ability of women and ethnic minorities to feel authentic at work (Cha et al., 2019; Madera et al., 2012; Roberts et al., 2009; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014b). However, there is scant empirical evidence investigating differences in authenticity at work between genders and ethnicities (Sharp et al., 2015; Roberts et al., 2014). Roberts et al. (2009) suggest that people from minority groups may be less authentic at work because they want to avoid conflict, fit in, increase their status, or protect their image. Relatedly, Cha et al. (2019) posit that women and ethnic minorities may suppress their authentic selves to avoid employment discrimination or obtain more equitable treatment.

There is an intriguing paradox in authenticity research examining cultural influences, because, on the one hand, inauthenticity among ethnic minorities may lead to lower levels of well-being. For example, Asian American journalists who avoided referring to their ethnic identities at work reported lower life satisfaction (Roberts et al., 2014). On the other hand, research has found a negative association between authenticity and well-being in those from collectivist cultures, who may prefer to conform and can find it aversive to stand out (Datu & Reyes, 2015). Therefore, scholars have indicated a need for more research investigating the

differences in authenticity at work between those from diverse backgrounds (Cha et al., 2019; Kifer et al., 2013; Madera et al., 2012; Sutton, 2020), specifically comparing the majority ethnic culture with ethnic minorities, whose cultural backgrounds may affect their authenticity at work (Boucher, 2011; Datu & Reyes, 2015; Slabu et al., 2014).

Because of the complex interplay of contextual factors on authenticity at work, professional services firms provide an interesting context to explore the relationships between authenticity and indicators of employee well-being. Therefore, the current study aims to investigate authenticity as it relates to well-being within a professional services firm, and to compare the authenticity of employees from the dominant culture and those from marginalised groups. This dissertation uses survey data collected in March 2021 to: (1) analyse the relationships between authenticity at work and three well-being outcomes (job satisfaction, engagement, and mental health), (2) assess if these relationships are moderated by ethnicity, (3) determine if there are differences in authenticity at work between NZ Europeans and those from other ethnicities and (4) to determine if gender and ethnicity form a double barrier to authentic self-expression at work. The research questions (RQs) are:

RQ1. Are there associations between authenticity and work engagement, job satisfaction and mental health for employees in a professional services firm?

RQ2. Does ethnicity moderate the associations between authenticity and well-being outcomes for employees in a professional services firm?

RQ3. Is there a difference in authenticity between the dominant ethnic culture (NZ European) and employees from ethnic minorities in a professional services firm?

RQ3.1. Is there a double barrier of ethnicity *and* gender to behaving authentically at work in employees from a professional services firm?

This research contributes to the existing knowledge regarding authenticity at work in three ways. First, by simultaneously examining the relationships between employee authenticity and well-being outcomes, findings will extend the body of research that demonstrates how authenticity is associated with work engagement (Grandey et al., 2005; Grandey et al., 2012; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014a,b; Yagil. 2012), job satisfaction (Ménard & Brunet, 2011; Toor & Ofori, 2009; Van den Bosh & Taris, 2014b), and mental health

(Emmerich & Rigotti, 2017; Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Second, this study complements the extant literature focussing on the link between authenticity and well-being by offering a contextualised view of authenticity within a professional services firm. There is no prior research linking authenticity and well-being in the novel context of professional services firms. The assessment of authenticity is particularly important in this context due to roles and organisational cultures being shaped by professionalism and customer service (Harris, 2002; Scarduzio, 2011). In addition, professional services firms may be gendered and ill-fitting for marginalised groups due to exclusionary social and cultural norms embedded in these organisations, which may obstruct the authenticity of women and ethnic minorities (Haynes, 2012; Haynes & Grugulis, 2013). Therefore, this research will determine if the benefits that are associated with authenticity extend to this work context. Third, this study contributes to the authenticity literature by examining the differences in authenticity when comparing those employees from NZ's dominant ethnicity and those from other ethnicities. Extending on this contribution regarding ethnic differences, this study applies an intersectional lens to authenticity at work, examining both gender and ethnicity as a potential double barrier to authenticity. Therefore, by analysing these differences in a professional services firm, this research adds a new, contextualised perspective to the conversation regarding whether the advice to "just be yourself" is always beneficial in the workplace.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This chapter reviews prior research on authenticity at work and the various ways authenticity affects individuals and organisations. First, the concept and measures of authenticity are introduced and linked to individual and organisational outcomes. Second, the three work-related well-being outcomes analysed in this study (job satisfaction, work engagement and mental health) are described and linked to authenticity in the workplace. Third, professional service firms are described, with attention to the specific organisational characteristics that may affect employee authenticity. Fourth, the cultural dimension of authenticity is examined and linked to employee well-being. Finally, the potential barriers to authenticity at work among women and ethnic minorities are outlined and explored. These themes lead to hypotheses that provide the framework for the present study.

2.1 Authenticity

Numerous conceptualisations of authenticity in the literature to date have led to some ambiguity surrounding the construct (Knoll et al., 2015; Lenton et al., 2013). Authenticity can be traced as far back as the Ancient Greeks' interest in knowing and living in accord with one's true self and has developed through essentialist and existentialist philosophy (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Lehman et al., 2019; Sutton, 2020). An essentialist perspective views authenticity as a process of self-discovery, involving feeling and behaving in ways that reflect the true self; whereas an existentialist perspective emphasises self-creation, actively choosing how to live and taking responsibility for that choice (Pugh et al., 2017; Sutton, 2020). Heidegger (1962), for example, describes an authentic person as being fully engaged and committed to making their life their own, while for Sartre (1956), being authentic involves taking full responsibility for one's life and choices. Drawing on these philosophical conceptualisations, humanistic psychologists in the 1950s and 1960s regarded authenticity as the congruence between one's self-concept and immediate experiences (Rogers, 1961) or the attainment of self-actualisation (Maslow, 1968). Referring to Rogers (1961) and Maslow (1968), Kernis and Goldman (2006) observe that "psychological authenticity can be conceptualised as a dynamic set of processes whereby one's full inherent nature is discovered, accepted, imbued with meaning, and actualised" (p. 134). More recent concepts of authenticity draw from self-determination theory, which emphasises that being authentic is related to high levels of intrinsic motivation, the prototype of self-determined actions (Deci & Ryan, 2000;

Ryan & Deci, 2001). These early philosophical and psychological understandings of authenticity underlie much of the psychological research into authenticity to this day.

Psychological conceptualisations of authenticity fall into two broad approaches. The first approach holds that personality traits represent our true selves and tend to construe authenticity as the consistency of these traits across time and situations (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2018; Wood et al., 2008). For example, Kernis and Goldman define authenticity as "the unobstructed operation of one's true- or core-self in one's daily enterprise" (2006, p. 294). Many other definitions of authenticity emphasise the alignment between one's true self and outward behaviour (Erickson, 1995; Harter, 2002; Kernis & Golman, 2006; Rogers 1961; Wood et al., 2008). Lenton et al. (2014) noted that this dispositional view of authenticity has been the primary narrative in extant literature. However, some scholars argue that being authentic does not necessarily mean a self-concept that is rigid across different roles and situations (Boucher, 2011; Jongman-Sereno & Leary, 2019; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). Indeed, research has confirmed that feeling authentic does not mean behaving the same way across all situations (Reinecke & Trepte, 2013; Sutton, 2018). This is particularly true for individuals from collectivist cultures, who value conformity to serve interpersonal harmony and adjust their behaviour depending on the context, demonstrating that cultural elements that play into understandings of authenticity (Boucher, 2011; Datu & Reyes, 2015; Sutton, 2020; Slabu et al., 2014; West et al., 2018; Zhang et al, 2017). These considerations have led scholars to view authenticity through a situational or "state" lens (Lenton et al., 2014; Sutton, 2020), which emphasises a more contextual and dynamic definition of authenticity.

A state approach holds that authentic expression can vary depending on the particular role or situation someone is in (Lenton et al., 2013; Sheldon et al., 1997). According to this view, to be authentic in a role involves behaving in a way that feels personally expressive (Waterman, 1993) or self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Indeed, subjective feelings of authenticity are central to this approach, which is emphasised across the state authenticity literature (Heppner et al., 2008; Lenton et al., 2013; Slabu et al., 2014; Sheldon et al., 1997). In addition, previous research supports the idea that authenticity varies depending on complex situational factors (Heller et al., 2009; Sheldon et al., 1997; Robinson et al., 2013; Sutton, 2020). For example, Robinson et al. (2013) found that people were more authentic with their partners or friends than with parents and were less authentic in their work roles.

Relatedly, Heller (2009) found that people were less extroverted in the workplace than at home. Therefore, there is empirical evidence that applying a state approach is more appropriate when assessing authenticity (Boucher, 2011; Metin et al., 2016; Sutton, 2020), especially in an organisational context where work environments (e.g., roles or tasks) are subject to change (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2018b). Consistent with a state approach, this study uses Sutton's (2020) definition of authenticity as the "degree to which one feels true to self" (p. 2).

There are few validated measures of authenticity, and most employ a trait approach to measure personality consistency across roles and situations. For example, the Authenticity Scale (Wood et al., 2008) and the Authenticity Inventory (Kernis & Goldman, 2002) are widely used measures of dispositional authenticity (Cha et al., 2019; Sutton, 2020). However, trait approaches to measuring authenticity have been criticised in recent research, as they may be subject to self-presentational biases and poor elicitation of social roles (Sutton, 2018; Sutton, 2020). Conversely, employing a state approach allows for varying behaviour across work roles and situations, and behaviour only becomes inauthentic if experienced as such. In light of this, studies have taken a variety of approaches to measure state authenticity at work (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014a), authentic self-expression at work (Cable et al., 2013) and authenticity in relationships (Wang, 2016). Consistent with Cable et al.'s (2013) approach, the present study employed Waterman's (2005) Eudaimonic Well-being Questionnaire to measure authentic self-expression (meaning behaviour that is guided by the true self). As previous studies tend to adopt a hedonic perspective of well-being (i.e., pursuing happiness and life satisfaction), this measure incorporates a less restrictive view of well-being and broadens the scope of the findings by encompassing eudaimonic aspects of wellbeing (i.e., finding purpose and meaning in life) (Ménard & Brunet, 2011; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 2010). Therefore, the definition and measure used in the present research are suitable for analysing authenticity in the workplace.

2.2 Authenticity and workplace outcomes

While there has been no empirical research linking authenticity and workplace outcomes in a professional services context, studies in other work contexts reveal numerous benefits at an individual and organisational level. When employees feel authentic at work, they are more able to draw from their full range of personal resources and attribute their behaviour

to internal drivers, resulting in higher levels of autonomous motivation and engagement (Cha et al., 2019; Leroy et al., 2013). Empirical studies have found that experiencing authenticity at work has been positively associated with well-being outcomes including satisfaction, engagement, self-esteem, happiness, positive affect, and healthy psychological functioning (Cable et al., 2013; Emmerich & Rigotti, 2017; Kifer et al., 2013; Ménard & Brunet, 2010; Metin et al., 2016; Sheldon et al., 1997; Van den Bosch & Taris, 201b4; 2018a). Perhaps unsurprisingly, workplace authenticity is also associated with fewer depressive symptoms, less anxiety, and lower emotional exhaustion compared with being unable to be authentic (Emmerich & Rigotti, 2017; Goldberg & Grandey, 2007; Zapf, 2002). In addition, workplace authenticity has also been linked to higher levels of customer satisfaction and employee retention (Cable et al., 2013; Grandey, 2003; Yagil, 2012; Yagil & Medler-Liraz, 2013b). Thus, by encouraging employees to be their authentic selves at work, organisations can positively impact their well-being, satisfaction, performance and commitment (Cable et al., 2013; Emmerich et al., 2020; Oc et al., 2020; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2018).

On an organisational level, there is empirical research to suggest that employees' well-being and performance are affected by their teammates' and leaders' authenticity. Working among authentic teammates reduces communication and collaboration barriers, thus facilitating the development of resources that buffer against work demands and ultimately increase engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Emmerich et al., 2020). For example, Emmerich et al. (2020) found that teammate authenticity was positively related to work engagement and negatively related to emotional exhaustion. Authentic leaders have similar positive effects on employee well-being and performance. For example, qualitative reviews report that authentic leadership (as evaluated by employees) is positively related to employee performance, organisational commitment, and intention to stay in an organisation (Gardner et al., 2011; Gill & Caza, 2015). Other studies have found that authentic leaders increase the authentic self-expression of their teams and enhance interpersonal trust among employees (Avolio et al., 2004; Kim et al., 2022; Xiong et al., 2016). Conversely, inauthentic behaviour among organisational members obstructs reciprocal self-disclosure and invites misunderstandings or even conflicts, resulting in interpersonal distance, lower social satisfaction, and lower social support (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Sheldon et al., 1997). Hence, an abundance of empirical literature supports the importance of authenticity in the workplace.

In contrast, there is an emerging body of research to highlight that, in some contexts, authenticity may have detrimental workplace outcomes. Indeed, scholars have indicated that behaving authentically in the workplace can elicit mixed responses from others, especially when the authentic expression does not conform to social or organisational norms (Cha et al., 2019, Ostermeier et al., 2021). For example, Madera et al.'s (2012) study on individuals with devalued social identities, such as certain sexual orientations, ethnicities and religious beliefs, found that authentic behaviour can negatively affect interpersonal outcomes. Others argue that sharing personal identities outside a prescribed work role identity can make individuals vulnerable to social rejection (Yagil & Medler-Liraz, 2013a). In addition, previous research suggests that strong ethnic identification in the workplace is related to negative evaluations of ethnic minorities (Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009). For example, Opie and Phillips (2015) found that Black women with Afrocentric hairstyles were perceived less favourably in terms of their professionalism and dominance because they did not meet social and work norms. These social and work pressures may hinder employees' ability and willingness to express themselves authentically at work (Cha et al., 2019; Sutton, 2020).

In a similar vein, scholars suggest that there is a 'dark' side to employee authenticity, referring to the expression of socially undesirable personality traits, offensive beliefs or negative emotions in the workplace that can have damaging effects on employees (Buckman, 2014; Cha et al., 2019; Emmerich et al., 2020; Lehman et al., 2019). For example, authentic teammates with low competence or bad manners may hinder team performance (Emmerich et al., 2020). Similarly, authentic self-expression that angers, frustrates or distresses others is likely to reduce one's influence in the workplace (Cha et al., 2019). Authentic behaviour and traits that oppose social norms and standards risk negative repercussions, ranging from social condemnation to a reduction in career opportunities to even being fired from their roles (Ariza Montez et al., 2017; Cha et al., 2019). For example, Buckman (2014) found that employees perceived to be authentic but highly narcissistic were rated poorly by their supervisors regarding their work performance and overall value to the company compared with their less narcissistic counterparts. Likewise, employees have been dismissed from their jobs after authentically expressing their opinions through social media in ways that were offensive to their organisations (Goode, 2021; Hauser, 2017). These findings suggest that not all authentic self-expression is treated equally, and those with socially undesirable behaviours may not reap the same benefits of bringing their "true selves" to work as their colleagues.

While being authentic but unappealing has negative implications, so too does being inauthentic (Cha et al., 2019; Lehman et al., 2019; Ostermeier et al., 2021). Studies highlight that inauthenticity may adversely affect employee well-being and work-related outcomes (Madera et al., 2012; Roberts et al., 2014; Sutton, 2020). Roberts et al.'s (2014) study, for example, found that Asian American journalists who avoided referring to their ethnicity at work reported lower life satisfaction. Similarly, Madera et al. (2012) reported that suppression of a minority identity negatively impacted job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Further, feelings of alienation and being out of touch with one's true self at work tend to be associated with higher levels of burnout (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014b). Therefore, there has been a growing interest among organisational scholars and practitioners to analyse the authenticity and well-being link among those with diverse social identities, such as women and ethnic minorities. One of the key aims of this study is to determine differences in authenticity and well-being between NZ Europeans and minority ethnicities; the results are important for organisations and may inform future research into the association between authenticity and well-being among minorities.

Employee inauthenticity is a predominant theme in emotional labour research, which examines the expression of emotions mandated by the norms of the organisation, that is not always consistent with employees' internal feelings (Hochschild, 1983). Emotional labour encompasses two authenticity-related behaviours, deep acting and surface acting, both considered emotion regulation strategies used by employees to comply with their role expectations of emotional expressions (Cha et al., 2019; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Specifically, deep acting involves modifying emotions to behave authentically in accordance with expected emotional displays; whilst surface acting involves behaving inauthentically in order to conform to emotional display expectations (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Some scholars argue that there is a business case for inauthentic behaviour at work, such as customer services organisations encouraging employees to hide their authentic emotions and display those that facilitate positive customer experiences, potentially boosting organisational performance (Cha et al., 2019; Grandey, 2003; Ostermeier et al., 2021). These rules are communicated to employees in various ways, such as organisational mission statements and values, explicit policies, reinforcement from managers, and tacit norms (Gabriel et al., 2016; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). As such, employees display a false sense of self that matches the shared organisational values rather than expose their individual differences (Hewlin, 2003).

However, literature has highlighted that both deep and surface acting restrict employees from behaving authentically in the workplace, resulting in decreased well-being (Mehta, 2021). Indeed, there is compelling evidence that surface acting has a strong negative association with aspects of well-being, including stress, job satisfaction and work engagement (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013; Martinez et al., 2017; Mehta, 2021; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2011). In a 2011 meta-analysis (n = 23,574), researchers found that surface acting was associated with increased job burnout and physical symptoms of stress (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). Mechanisms proposed to explain this finding included resource depletion from the draining effort required to 'fake' emotions and the concealment of negative emotions that continue to be experienced by the employee below the surface (Cha et al., 2019; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). Similarly, deep acting reduces personal resources through the energy used to convert negative emotions into positive emotions (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). However, research suggests this resource depletion is offset by the personal resources it creates, such as coping mechanisms and the development of a positive mindset (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). Therefore, although employees may experience beneficial outcomes from authentically expressing themselves at work, within some contexts, they may also perceive job requirements and social pressures to conceal certain aspects of their true selves, leading to decreased well-being.

2.3 Authenticity and well-being outcomes

Authenticity and job satisfaction

Job satisfaction, defined as a "positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (Locke, 1976, p. 1304), is a key indicator of employee well-being and has been positively associated with numerous health and performance outcomes. For example, a large meta-analysis found that high levels of job satisfaction were strongly related to higher levels of mental health, and lower levels of satisfaction were associated with higher levels of burnout, anxiety, depression, and lower levels of physical health (Faragher, 2005). In addition, job satisfaction is an important construct for workplace researchers, as it has been associated with work engagement (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014a), job performance (Judge et al., 2001), and organisational commitment (Froese & Xiao, 2012). Conversely, employees dissatisfied with their jobs are more likely to experience turnover intentions than those who are

satisfied (Madera et al., 2012; Nyberg, 2010). For example, a meta-analysis found a strong relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover (Harter, 2002), which has important implications for businesses.

Several studies have found a positive association between employee authenticity and job satisfaction (Ménard & Brunet, 2010; Martinez et al., 2017; Ostermeier et al., 2021; Toor & Ofori, 2009; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014a). Scholars assume that, since people spend a large part of their lives at work, having a job that matches one's internal beliefs, values, and characteristics will lead to increased levels of job satisfaction (Ménard & Brunett, 2011; Metin et al., 2016; Van Beek et al., 2011). This positive association also extends to those with devalued social identities. For example, research indicates that expressing one's stigmatised identity in the workplace is associated with higher job satisfaction (Griffith & Hebl, 2002; Law et al., 2011; Martinez et al., 2016). In one study, gay and lesbian employees that disclosed their sexual orientation at work experienced high job satisfaction and less anxiety than those who did not (Griffith & Hebl, 2002). Additionally, earlier research centred on person-organisation fit found that congruence between an individual's values and the values of their organisation positively related to job satisfaction (O'Reilly et al., 1991). In this way, when individuals identify strongly with the values of their organisation, they are more likely to experience enhanced well-being when engaging in tasks associated with the organisation (Van Dick et al., 2008). There is also meta-analytic evidence to suggest that individuals' identification with their organisation is linked to job satisfaction (Riketta, 2005). Therefore, although the processes underlying this relationship are not entirely clear (Metin et al., 2016), it seems that when individuals have their needs met and can express their true selves at work, they are more likely to be satisfied in their jobs.

Authenticity and work engagement

Work engagement is described as a positive, fulfilling state of mind at work that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption (Schaufali & Baker, 2010). Vigour refers to high levels of mental resilience and energy; dedication is characterised by pride, enthusiasm, and challenge; and absorption relates to being engrossed in and "pulled" towards one's work (Schaufeli et al., 2006). More recently, engagement has been defined as a positive, affective-motivational state of mind resulting from an optimal fit between work

characteristics (e.g., job demands and resources) and personal characteristics (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2018b).

Engagement is primarily associated with beneficial well-being and work-related outcomes. In regards to the experience of employees, engagement is linked to improved physical and psychological well-being (Bakker et al, 2011; Bakker et al., 2008; Cesário & Champel, 2017; Gross & John, 2003) and job satisfaction (Judge & Bono, 2001). Organisations also reap benefits from employees who are engaged in their work. For example, previous studies show that engagement coincides with high levels of creativity, task performance, proactive behaviours, organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) and client satisfaction (Bakker et al., 2014; Cesário & Champel, 2017; Salanova & Schaufali, 2008). A meta-analysis found that engagement relates to increased safety behaviours and product quality, reduced absenteeism, and increased organisational productivity and profitability (Harter et al., 2009). Research also indicates that engagement is particularly important in a professional services context due to its influential effects on service outcomes (Yalabik et al., 2014), such as positive customer service evaluations and loyalty intentions (Yagil, 2012; Yagil & Medler-Liraz, 2013b). For example, Yalabik et al. (2014) found that engagement was positively associated with employees' organisational, team, and client commitment in a professional services firm. Therefore, facilitating engagement is critical for service organisations to retain their employees and customers.

The literature suggests that authentic behaviour at work may promote engagement in two key ways. Firstly, the alignment of one's behaviour with one's true self may foster engagement by enabling people to leverage the full range of their personal resources (e.g., energy and strength) at work (Cha et al., 2019; Cable et al., 2013). Conversely, inauthentic behaviour is assumed to deplete energy resources due to the effort required to conceal the authentic self, leading to decreased levels of engagement (Reis et al., 2016). Secondly, authenticity may promote engagement through workers' internal attributions of their own behaviour (Leroy et al., 2013). For example, research that draws on self-determination theory indicates that, when people are authentic at work, they are more likely to attribute their behaviour to internal drivers, resulting in higher levels of autonomous motivation and work engagement (Cha et al., 2019; Leroy et al., 2013; Reis et al., 2016). Consistent with these views, several studies have found authenticity to be positively associated with engagement (Cable et al., 2013; Metin et al., 2016; Reis et al., 2016; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014b).

Drawing on these research findings, it is expected that authenticity at work will be positively associated with work engagement.

Authenticity and mental health

Mental health is an integral component contributing to overall well-being, yet empirical evidence linking workplace authenticity and mental health is scarce. The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2018) defines mental health as "a state of well-being in which every person realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community." Scholars posit that mental health tends to derive from two distinct perspectives: hedonic well-being and eudaimonic well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993). Whilst hedonic well-being refers to emotional components of mental health, eudaimonic or psychological well-being concerns human functioning and the achievement of self-realisation (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman et al., 2010). The latter occurs when people's lives are congruent with their true selves, that is when people are authentic (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Both perspectives contribute to "optimal psychological functioning and experience" (Ryan & Deci, 2001, p.142). Mental health is often subjective: the degree to which a person reports experiencing positive affect, life satisfaction and absence of negative affect (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The present study incorporates valid measures that assess both hedonic and eudaimonic domains of mental health; thus, this research will analyse the associations between authenticity and both positive affect and psychological functioning.

Two main arguments have been proposed to explain the link between authenticity and mental health. First, it is believed that living in accord with one's true self satisfies an innate human need to self-actualise, express ourselves, utilise our capabilities, and live to our full potential (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Rogers, 1961). Satisfying the need to self-actualise results in positive emotions, while need frustration may produce negative emotions (Baumeister, 1998; Waterman, 1900). Relatedly, other scholars have drawn on self-determination theory to explain the relationship between authenticity and need satisfaction. They propose that authentic behaviour is self-determined by nature (as its source is the true self) and meets psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness and, thus, enables people to thrive (Emmerich & Rigotti, 2017; Golman & Kernis, 2002; Leroy et al., 2013; Leroy et al., 2015; Metin et al., 2016; Reis et al., 2016). A second argument proposes that living authentically promotes high

self-esteem, facilitating mental health (Cha et al., 2019; Kernis & Goldman, 2006). When individuals are guided by their internal sense of self, their feelings of self-worth are higher because they derive from the authentic self, rather than being dependent on validation from external influences (Kernis, 2003; Wood et al., 2008). For example, authentic individuals will not feel the need to modify their behaviour to merely please a potential evaluator. In this way, individuals do not need to protect their feelings of self-worth through ego-defensive behaviours, which can obstruct healthy functioning (Kernis, 2003).

Supporting the view that being authentic at work contributes to mental health, Emmerich and Rigotti (2017) reported a positive association between employee authenticity and healthy psychological functioning (i.e., lower depression levels) after six months. Other studies have linked workplace authenticity to life satisfaction (Kifer et al., 2013) and meaning, promoting happiness (Ménard & Brunett, 2010). Similarly, authenticity in other contexts has been positively associated with mental health (Robinson et al., 2013), subjective well-being (Goldman & Kernis, 2002; Kifer et al., 2013; Schlegel & Hicks, 2011), and other positive psychological outcomes such as self-esteem, positive affect and a flow state (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Lenton et al., 2013; Reinecke & Trepte, 2014; Wenzel & Lucas-Thompson, 2012). Conversely, the inability to be authentic has been linked to stress, burnout, anxiety, psychopathology and emotional labour (Metin et al., 2016; Schmid, 2005; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014a). Therefore, workplace authenticity is expected to be positively associated with mental health.

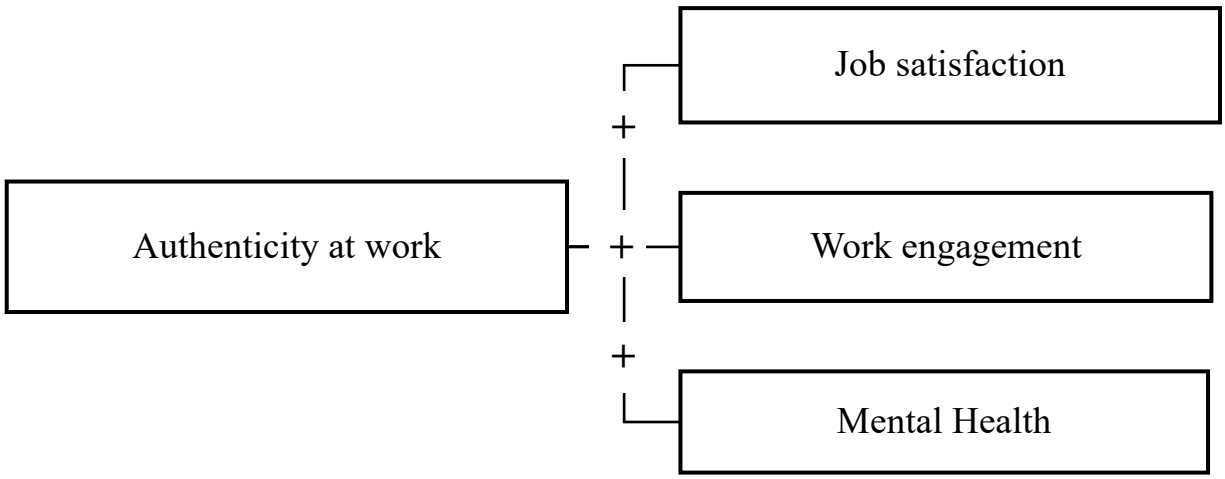
Drawing on the above review of the associations between authenticity and work engagement, job satisfaction, and mental health, the following hypotheses are proposed below. Figure 1 outlines the expected relationships between employee authenticity and well-being outcomes.

Hypothesis 1a. Authenticity at work is positively related to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1b. Authenticity at work is positively related to work engagement.

Hypothesis 1c. Authenticity at work is positively related to mental health.

Figure 1 Authenticity at work and well-being outcomes



2.4 Authenticity in professional services firms

The present study aims to explore the relationships between authenticity and indicators of well-being in a professional services firm and to determine if the benefits of authenticity extend to this novel work context. Professional services firms are organisations in the service sector that apply specialist technical knowledge to solve clients' problems (Empson et al., 2015; Haynes & Grugulis, 2013). Indeed, the core output of these organisations is the provision of services or particular expertise rather than a manufactured product, meaning that professional services firms are typically characterised by knowledge-intensive work and high human resource dependency (Von Nordenflycht, 2010; Yalabik et al., 2014). Traditionally, the term 'professional services' applies to firms working within formally regulated professions, such as law and accounting. However, it may also extend to those working within consulting, advertising, and engineering (Haynes & Grugulis, 2013; Von Nordenflycht, 2010). Professional services firms compete based on the delivery of high-quality services and expertise; therefore, encouraging and enabling employees to fully leverage their skills is critical to these organisations' success (Powers et al., 2022; Yalabik et al., 2014). However, the requirement to act professionally and provide exceptional customer service may contradict acting according to one's true feelings and values; this makes professional service firms an interesting and appropriate context to examine authenticity as it relates to well-being.

Being authentic at work may contradict the work-related standards and norms that are traditionally associated with many professions. For example, in professional services firms, the term 'professional' precedes the industry type, generating assumptions that workers must behave professionally (Empson et al., 2015; Von Nordenflycht, 2010). Moreover, the characteristics attached to professionalism, such as commitment, autonomy, assertiveness, and self-discipline (Haynes, 2012; Lewis, 2011), may conflict with an individual's internal propensities and result in emotional labour. This is especially true for individuals not adhering to dominant (cis, white, male) social norms with which these 'professional' characteristics are historically and socially associated, resulting in women and minorities either being excluded or engaging in inauthentic behaviours to fit in (Haynes, 2012; Kumra & Vinnicombe, 2008; Lewis, 2011; Opie & Phillips, 2015). One study analysing gender and identity in professional services firms found that women made a conscious effort to alter their dress, demeanour and attributes to embody professionalism and fit more successfully into the masculine culture of the firm (Haynes, 2012). Similarly, in Morrison and Smollan's (2020) study, women described

feeling both “exposed” and “more accountable” in a professional services environment and adjusted their work-related behaviour accordingly. Another study found that Black women may wear Eurocentric, rather than Afrocentric, hairstyles to conform to a standard of professionalism in the workplace (Opie & Phillips, 2015). Finally, in a qualitative study by Kumra and Vinnicombe (2008), women professionals described having to “fit the mould” to advance in their firm – referring to adopting dominant male characteristics of senior leaders. These findings suggest that professional services firms are gendered and promote an inauthentic climate for anyone not within the dominant masculine culture.

Another way authentic expression may be hindered in the context of professional services firms is through developing a professional identity: commonly formed in two ways. For professional services firms within established professions, such as law and accounting, developing a professional identity may require years of education, professional training, formal qualifications, and accreditation (Empson et al., 2015). Employees in these firms draw on a professional knowledge base; they are required to self-regulate their behaviour and are subject to a professional code of practice to legitimise their professional identity (Yalabik et al., 2014). In other words, the “activities and behaviours of professionals are governed by widely disseminated, formalised (often ethical) codes which prescribe universally adopted standards” (Harris, 2002, p.544). Lawyers, for example, must adhere to the strict rules of conduct established by state bar associations whilst also ensuring their actions are profitable for their employer (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2012), thereby restricting authenticity (Harris, 2002). Adhering to professional and ethical standards may not align with an individual’s inner values and beliefs, leading to tensions between their professional and individual identities.

Some professional services firms rely on formal socialisation into professional norms of behaviour. For example, firms commonly offer in-house courses and training programmes to inculcate and reinforce professional identity (Haynes, 2012). This socialisation process may cause internal conflict between employees’ behaviour and sense of self as organisations strive to align organisational values with individual values (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2012). This is seen by divestiture socialisation practices which discourage employees from expressing their beliefs, encouraging the expression of the organisation’s values (Ashforth & Saks, 1996). Such pressures can result in perceptions of ethical conflict. For example, Kammeyer-Mueller et al. (2012) found that divestiture socialisation of early-career lawyers encouraged some employees to behave unethically by overbilling clients, which resulted in ethical conflict and emotional

exhaustion. In addition, social pressures in firms may also conflict with the standard ethical principles acquired in formal education, leading to feelings of frustration among employees (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2012). Thus, through both organisational norms and socialisation practices, employees are encouraged to display appropriate behaviours that align with the firm, which has become an equally important component of professional identity as the possession of qualifications and technical skills.

Other scholars have drawn on emotional labour literature to explicate the inauthentic behaviours of professional service workers (Anleu & Mack, 2005; Harris, 2002; Scarduzio, 2011). As described earlier, emotional labour is the regulation or production of emotions so that emotional displays in the workplace comply with organisational and role expectations (Hochschild, 1983). Previous studies have found that emotional labour, such as surface acting, can negatively impact employee well-being by increasing emotional exhaustion and burnout in various work contexts (Cha et al., 2019). However, there is comparatively little research that analyses emotional labour in a professional services context (Harris, 2002; Scarduzio, 2011), even though it is evident that professional work requires regulated behaviour and emotional suppression (Anleu & Mack, 2005; Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007; Scarduzio, 2011). As explained previously, the emotional expression of professionals is regulated through socialisation, formal codes, and "through the self-governed professional bodies that control admission and licensing" (Harris, 2002, p. 575). However, customer-oriented emotional labour is also encouraged within these professions, as professional service workers are expected to provide outstanding customer service and maintain client relationships (Powers et al., 2022). For example, lawyers are expected to manage their emotions to gain their clients' trust and compliance, which may be through inauthentic emotional displays (Powers et al., 2022). Other studies have also found that professional workers commonly employ inauthentic emotional displays to serve and please their clients (Anleu & Mack, 2005; Harris, 2002; Scarduzio, 2011) and their employers (Lively, 2002). Moreover, scholars suggest that service workers not only require friendly and prosocial behaviour (e.g., "service with a smile"), but can also require negative or neutral emotions (e.g., judges, bill collectors), which similarly promotes emotional labour in the form of surface or deep acting (Grandey et al., 2018).

However, another line of emotional labour research argues that professional services firms differ from front-line customer service settings because professional services work usually entails higher degrees of self-regulation, autonomy, power, and status (Scarduzio,

2011; Von Nordenflycht, 2010). Further, employees in professional services firms usually have close working relationships with their clients and provide highly customised services, which differ from many standardised, high-frequency customer contact roles in the broader service industry (Sharp et al., 2015; Yalabik et al., 2014). Emotional labour within the professional services context is more complex and value congruent than in the largely formulaic enactment of "service with a smile" (Kempster et al., 2018). For example, professional workers, such as lawyers and doctors, may have more freedom to deviate from emotional rules than front-line staff, who are expected to conform to management-driven emotional display rules (Harris, 2002; Othman et al., 2008; Scarduzio, 2011). Depending on their position and status, some professionals may have more autonomy to deviate their behaviour from organisational norms. For example, Scarduzio (2011) found that Municipal Court Judges employ emotional deviant behaviours, such as nonverbal emotional displays of anger and frustration (e.g., eye-rolling, lack of eye contact, hand gestures) because of the power and status that this professional role implies. Although this study does not apply to all professional services roles, it does highlight certain characteristics of professional services work, such as autonomy and self-regulation, which may allow employees more freedom to behave congruently with their internal sense of self than in other service settings. In sum, the literature implies that there are work-specific factors that both discourage and promote authenticity at work. Whilst the masculine culture and development of professional identity may obstruct authenticity among some employees; there is an alternative view to suggest that, depending on your role and power within the firm, there may be more opportunities to behave authentically than in other service contexts.

2.5 Diversity and authenticity: examining ethnicity and gender

Another aim of this research is to explore authenticity, as it relates to well-being, comparing those from the majority ethnic group (NZ European) with those from other ethnicities. In addition, this study also adopts an intersectional approach to authenticity at work, examining the potential double barrier of ethnicity and gender. This section first covers the association between authenticity and well-being across different ethnicities (Hypotheses 2a-c) and then looks more directly at the discrimination that may reduce authenticity at work among women and ethnic minorities to form the final hypotheses (Hypotheses 3a and b).

Ethnic differences in individualism versus collectivism

Although authenticity has been linked to an array of benefits, scholars propose that it may not be equally beneficial for all individuals (Cha et al., 2019; Sutton, 2020). For example, research suggests that people from collectivist cultures may not experience the positive outcomes of authenticity to the same extent as those from individualist cultures (Datu & Reyes, 2015; Slabu et al., 2014; Sutton, 2020). This may relate to how people from different cultures see themselves: people from individualistic cultures tend to possess a relatively independent view of the self, emphasising self-sufficiency, uniqueness, and stability. Those in collectivist cultures, on the other hand, possess a relatively interdependent self-construal, prioritising harmonious relationships, group achievement and social duties (Datu & Reyes, 2015; Robinson et al., 2013; Slabu et al., 2014; Suh, 2002; Suh, 2007). One outcome of this difference is that those from collectivist cultures prioritise maintaining order and harmony in interpersonal relationships over their personal feelings, desires, and beliefs. In this way, authenticity may be a less important determinant of subjective well-being among ethnicities from collectivist cultures (Datu & Reyes, 2015). Consistent with this view, researchers have found that authenticity has a weak (Boucher, 2011; Church et al, 2011; Suh 2002) or even negative (Datu & Reyes, 2015) relationship with the happiness and well-being of employees from collectivist cultures. Relatedly, a recent meta-analysis found that individualism significantly moderated the relationship between authenticity and well-being, concluding that those from more collectivist societies experience a weaker relationship between authenticity and well-being (Sutton, 2020). Therefore, the benefits associated with authenticity – such as higher levels of engagement, satisfaction and mental health – may be more apparent for those belonging to individualistic cultures, while those from collectivist cultures may experience well-being if they instead fit in or conform with the group. Researchers argue that organisations need to understand how culture affects employees, businesses and outcomes (Brougham & Haar, 2012; Findler et al., 2007).

In a New Zealand context, scholars have observed a general trend towards individualism (Fagenson-Eland et al., 2004; Hofschede et al., 2010; Oyserman et al., 2002), often without considering the ethnicities of participants. However, New Zealand is a multicultural society with a large migrant population. According to a 2018 census, the population of New Zealand comprises NZ European (70%), Māori (16.5%), Asian (15.1%), Pacific Islander (8.1%), and Middle Eastern, Latin American, and African (MELAA) (1.5%)

(Statistics New Zealand, 2019). Therefore, analysing ethnicities separately in terms of their collectivism-individualism in the present study may reveal differences in the associations between authenticity and well-being outcomes. Supporting this notion, the few studies that have compared ethnicities within NZ regarding their collectivism-individualism report significant differences (Podsiadlowski & Fox, 2011; Shulruf et al., 2007; Tassell et al., 2010). For example, prior studies have found indigenous Māori to be highly collectivist, placing great importance on embeddedness and interconnectedness with the whanau (family) and the iwi (tribe) (Brougham & Haar, 2012; Durie, 1995; Harrington & Liu, 2002; Tassell et al., 2010). Another study investigating individualistic and collectivist orientations of the various ethnic groups within NZ found that Asians were the most collectivist and noted close comparisons between Māori and Pacific participants in terms of collectivism (Shulruf et al., 2007). Finally, in the study by Podsiadlowski and Fox (2011), NZ Europeans were found to be significantly less collectivist than their non-European counterparts (Māori, Chinese, and Pacific Islanders) with regard to their value orientations and behavioural preferences. In accordance with prior research, and acknowledging this is a generalisation, NZ European participants in the present study will be considered individualistic, whilst those from other ethnicities (Māori, Pacifica, Asian, Indian, Middle Eastern, Latin American, and African) will be categorised as collectivistic. Consistent with previous findings, we can expect the positive associations between authenticity and well-being outcomes to be stronger for NZ Europeans, as individualists, compared with those from other ethnicities, as collectivists.

Hypothesis 2a. The relationship between authenticity and job satisfaction is stronger for NZ Europeans than for those from other ethnicities.

Hypothesis 2b. The relationship between authenticity and work engagement is stronger for NZ Europeans than for those from other ethnicities.

Hypothesis 2c. The relationship between authenticity and mental health is stronger for NZ Europeans than for those from other ethnicities.

Differences in authenticity between ethnicities

Because the benefits associated with authenticity may be heightened for those from individualist cultures, it makes sense that people from collectivist cultures (the ethnic

minorities in this study) are comparatively less likely to bring their true selves to work. Indeed, there is empirical evidence to suggest that those from the ethnic majority are more authentic at work than those from ethnic minorities. For example, Sharp (2015) reported significant differences in authenticity at work between NZ European and Māori service workers. Similarly, English and John's (2013) study found that Asian Americans were more likely to suppress their emotions at work and feel less authentic than their White American counterparts. Although some scholars attribute these findings to the theoretical assumption that people from collectivist cultures value relationship harmony over self-interest (Datu & Reyes, 2015; English & John, 2013), others have highlighted other barriers that may hinder ethnic minorities and marginalised groups from authentically expressing themselves in the workplace (Cha et al., 2019; Kock, 2020; Roberts et al., 2009, 2014). These barriers include discrimination, stereotyping and prejudice against ethnic minorities and women.

Discrimination of ethnic minorities and women

The mechanisms that hinder ethnic minorities from not being fully authentic have been investigated in a workplace context (Cha et al., 2019; Roberts et al., 2014; West el., 2018). For example, Roberts et al. (2014) posit that ethnic minorities may feel inclined to conceal their authentic selves at work to protect their image, avoid conflict or increase their status. Similarly, Cha et al. (2019) and West et al. (2018) suggest that minorities may feel pressured to suppress their authentic selves at work to fit in with the dominant culture and to reduce negative stereotyping and discrimination. For example, an American study reported that Black (minority) service employees engaged in more emotional labour strategies (i.e., amplifying positive emotions) than their White counterparts to avoid the "angry Black man" racial stereotype (Grandey et al., 2018). Moreover, the discriminatory practices embedded in hiring processes may obstruct authentic self-expression among ethnic minorities. For example, those from ethnic minorities commonly endure microaggressions (Holder et al., 2015; Sue, 2010), are excluded from networking opportunities and disadvantaged in promotion decisions (Dreher & Cox, 2000; Powell & Butterfield, 1997), receive negative performance and leadership evaluations (Ford et al., 1968; Heilman & Welle, 2006), and experience higher levels of turnover than their White counterparts in the United States (Shurn-Hannah, 2000). Possibly concealing (or not displaying) their authentic selves may be seen as a way for ethnic minorities to avoid these negative outcomes. Consistent with this notion, we can expect that employees

from the dominant NZ European culture are more likely to behave authentically at work compared with ethnic minority employees.

There are also instances of women experiencing discrimination for not fitting in with dominant workplace norms. For example, as noted in the previous section, there is empirical evidence to suggest that women professionals are subject to gender discrimination and face various barriers to entry and career advancement in professional services firms (Haynes, 2012; Kumra & Vinnicombe, 2008; Nicholson, 2005). This is due to a number of issues, including stereotypical assumptions about parenting (Hagan & Kay, 1995), the combination of work and family commitments (Johnson et al., 2008), and the requirement to fit a prevailing masculine model of success (Jonnergård et al., 2009). Some women cope with discrimination by concealing certain aspects of their identities and embodying masculine attributes. For example, in Hayne's (2012) study, women reported altering their dress, voice and self-presentation to fit into the masculine culture of their firm. In another study, women described concealing their early-stage pregnancy to reduce the likelihood of negative stereotyping (Little et al., 2015). Therefore, there is empirical evidence to suggest that women and ethnic minorities perceive a devaluation of the diversity that they bring to the workplace. As a result of this devaluation, these marginalised employees often feel unable to behave authentically at work, and many conceal aspects of their personal lives that are not considered acceptable within their organisations (Hewlin, 2003; Roberts et al., 2009).

Intersecting ethnicity and gender

Considering the discrimination of both women and ethnic minorities in the workplace, scholars have more recently proposed an intersectional approach to authenticity (Castro & Holvino, 2016; Kock, 2020; Ryan & Briggs, 2019). Intersecting ethnicity with gender creates another level of complexity, as individual and structural factors (for example, ethnic identity, economic status, acculturation, and family support) combine to negatively impact ethnic minority women's work experiences and career progression (Atewologun & Singh, 2010; Kamenou, 2007; Kock, 2020). Indeed, studies report that individuals with intersecting, marginalised identities tend to engage in more identity work (managing and maintaining an identity as a form of inauthenticity) than their non-marginalised counterparts (Atewologun & Vinnecombe, 2015; Atewologun & Singh, 2010; Kock, 2020; Ryan & Briggs, 2019). However, empirical evidence of this 'double barrier' in authenticity research is lacking. Few studies in the identity management literature reveal that women professionals from a minority culture

engage in perpetual identity work and adopt various identity strategies to adjust to the workplace (Atewologun & Vinnecombe, 2015; Atewologun & Singh, 2010). More recently, authenticity scholars have suggested that belonging to more than one marginalised group would act as a 'double barrier' for these individuals to behave authentically at work (Kock, 2020; Ryan & Briggs, 2019). Consistent with this view, the present study hypothesises that there is a double barrier that prevents women from ethnic minorities to behave authentically at work compared with men and those from the dominant NZ European culture.

Hypothesis 3a. Employees from the dominant NZ European culture report higher authenticity than ethnic minority employees.

Hypothesis 3b. There is a two-way interaction such that women who are also ethnic minority employees report lower authenticity compared with men and those from the dominant NZ European culture.

Chapter 3. Methods

3.1 Participants

Participants for this study comprised employees from a large, well-established New Zealand law firm. An online survey was distributed to 245 employees within the firm and a total of 181 surveys were completed and returned: A response rate of 74%. Of those providing gender information, 65% were women (n = 117) and 27% were men (n = 49). Age was collected by birth decade. The age spread reflected the professional working population. Of the 181 participants, 84% were born in the 1980s and 90s, being between 21 and 41 years of age at the time of data collection (n = 152), 15% were older and born in the 1970s or earlier (n = 27), and 1.2% were born later than 2000 (n = 2). The majority (69.9%) of participants were NZ Europeans (n = 127). The minority ethnicities comprised 9% Asian (n = 16), 4% Māori (n = 8), 3.6% Pacifica (n = 7), 1.8% Indian (n = 3) and 0.6% Middle Eastern/ Latin American/ African (MELAA) (N = 1). Regarding work roles, 75% of participants worked in legal roles and 25% in professional service (support) roles. The remaining 10.4% selected 'other' (n = 19), indicating that they were a mix of other ethnicities, including mixed heritage. The majority (58%) of participants had at least five years of post-qualification experience or work experience, 35% had two to four years of work experience, and the remaining 8% had less than two years of work experience.

3.2 Procedures and design

The design of the present study is cross-sectional using secondary data collected in an online survey. The postgraduate researcher was given access to the survey, which was conducted in March 2021 as part of a larger research project focused on employee well-being. Employees received an email invitation (Appendix B) asking them to participate in a confidential survey regarding their workplace well-being and other work experiences. Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed that the survey was anonymous. Employees who wished to participate were provided with an information and consent form outlining the research aims, data collection and use, ethics approval, and the possibility of the anonymous data being used by postgraduate students of the named researchers (Appendix C). The survey comprised 39 open- and close-ended questions and took approximately 15 minutes to complete (see Appendix D for the survey format). The survey was separated into five distinct work-related sections: well-being, relationships, experiences, stress and support, authenticity,

and demographic information. For the purposes of this research, only the well-being and authenticity sections were used. For each survey scale, further open-ended questions were also asked ("What can *anonymous law firm* do to enable you to bring your whole self to work?") to allow participants to elaborate on their responses should they wish to do so. The survey was administered via Qualtrics survey software which maintains respondent anonymity. The anonymous data were downloaded and imported into SPSS for analysis.

3.3 Measures

All variables were measured using self-report survey methods and employed reliable, validated scales of items. Each item was phrased as a question or statement. The survey utilised 5-point Likert-type scales anchored at 1 "strongly disagree" and 5 "strongly agree". A list of survey items from the sections analysed can be seen in Appendix D.

Authenticity at work

Following Cable et al.'s (2013) work, authenticity was measured using a modified, 6-item version of Waterman's (1993; 2005) Eudaimonic Well-being Questionnaire Scale (QEWB). For example, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with items such as "In this job, I feel authentic", "In this job, I can be who I really am", and "In this job, I don't need to hide who I really am." Previous internal consistency is excellent with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .91 (Cable et al., 2013).

Job Satisfaction

Following Judge et al. (2000), job satisfaction was measured using a shortened, 5-item version of Brayfield and Rothe's (1951) measure. Participants were instructed to indicate the extent to which they disagreed or agreed with statements such as "I feel fairly satisfied with my present job", "I find enjoyment in my work", and "Most days, I am enthusiastic about my work". Two of the items in the scale are reverse scored, including "Each day at work seems like it will never end" and "I consider my job rather unpleasant". Various studies have found the scale is a reliable measure with good to excellent internal consistency with a coefficient α between .86 and .92 (Judge et al., 2000; Judge et al., 2006; Simone et al., 2018; Sinval & Marôco, 2020).

Work engagement

Work engagement was evaluated using Schaufeli et al.'s (2006) 9-item work engagement scale (UWES). Example items are vigour, "At my work, I feel bursting with energy", dedication "I am enthusiastic about my job" and absorption "I am immersed in my work". Previous findings have shown very good to excellent internal consistency according to Cronbach's alpha of .89 and .91 (Sonnentag, 2003; Simone et al., 2018) including a study across ten countries (α = .85–.92; Schaufeli et al., 2006).

Mental Health

To evaluate mental health, Goldberg and Williams' (1988) 12-item General Health Questionnaire was used (GHQ-12). The GHQ-12 is an extensively used tool to measure general mental health and is frequently used in occupational settings (Jackson, 2007). Evidence indicates that the GHQ-12 is a reliable instrument, indicated by Cronbach's alpha which has ranged from .78 to .95 in previous studies (Daradkeh et al., 2001; Jackson, 2007; Politi et al., 1994). Participants were instructed to consider their general well-being (not just at work) for the past three months when responding. Six items in the scale were reverse scored, including "in the past three months, how often have you, "been feeling unhappy or depressed", "been losing confidence in yourself", "felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties", "been thinking of yourself as worthless", "lost sleep over worry" and "felt constantly under strain".

Demographics

Participants were also asked to provide their gender, age by birth decade, ethnicity, work role, and years of post-qualification experience or work experience. These measures were collected to ascertain demographic information. Ethnicity and gender are the demographic variables of interest in this study. Participants were asked to select which of the following ethnic groups they belonged to: NZ European, Māori, Pacifica, Asian, Indian, and MELAA (Middle Eastern, Latin American, African), and Other, for which participants could write their ethnicity, with many comments showing mixed heritage. Due to the majority of participants identifying as NZ European (69.9%), ethnicity was recoded into two categories: NZ European (1) and non-NZ European (2). Participants that selected 'Other' and stated their ethnicity were grouped into one of the two groups accordingly. Participants that did not state their ethnicity or gender were treated as missing values.

3.4 Data analyses

All statistical analyses were calculated using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 28. Before commencing data analysis, data were cleaned and screened following both Pallant's (2020) and Tabachnick & Fidell's (2013) guidelines. Descriptive statistics were run on each variable to identify missing values and items phrased negatively were reverse coded. Preliminary data analyses involved factor analyses to assess the validity of the scales and descriptive and correlational statistics to examine the relationships between variables. Internal reliability was assessed using Cronbach's coefficient alpha.

Hypotheses 1a-c were tested using Pearson's correlation analyses to examine the strength and direction of relationships between authenticity and well-being variables. Prior to correlation analyses, scores from the scales were aggregated for variables of interest (work engagement, job satisfaction, mental health, and authenticity). Gender and ethnicity were recoded into two groups: men/women and NZ European/non-NZ European. In accordance with Cohen's (1988) effect sizes, I considered effect correlations (+/-) between .10 to .29 to be weak, correlations between .30 and .49 to demonstrate a moderate correlation and values at .50 or greater to demonstrate a strong relationship. Data were tested for the assumptions of correlation analysis, including normality, linearity, and absence of outliers.

Hypotheses 2a-c were tested using moderated multiple regression to assess whether ethnicity (categorised as collectivist or individualist) influenced the relationships between authenticity and work engagement, job satisfaction and mental health. Based upon a power analysis for moderation analysis outlined by Preacher et al. (2007), the study's sample size (n = 168) was sufficient to find significant medium effect sizes (B = 0.39, recommended N = 100), but not large enough to find significant small effect sizes (B = .14, recommended N = 200-500). Thus, effect sizes at $p = .10$ were considered marginally significant, at $p = .05$ were approaching significance and at $p < .05$ were deemed significant.

To test Hypotheses 3a, a one-way ANOVA was used to determine if significant differences existed in the authenticity means across the two groups clustered by ethnicity, comparing the majority NZ European group with employees from other ethnicities. Hypothesis 3b was tested using a two-way between-groups ANOVA to explore the impact of both ethnicity and gender

on levels of authenticity at work. Assumptions of normality, outliers and homogeneity of variances were checked prior to ANOVA analyses.

Chapter 4. Results

4.1 Preliminary analyses

Cleaning and screening of the data

Checks for the accuracy of the data revealed no values outside of the ranges specified in the Likert scales, and the means, standard deviations and variable correlations appeared feasible. Referring to the criteria set out by Pallant (2020) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), 13 cases with missing data points were removed for factor analyses (n = 168). A further 11 cases were removed for the correlation, regression, and ANOVA analyses due to several participants not providing demographic information (ethnicity n = 157; gender n = 152). In each case, I checked whether using the smaller or larger sample size made a difference to the results and, in most cases, it did not. Therefore, I decided to retain maximum sample sizes for each statistical analysis, enabling more accurate parameter estimates. Sample sizes for analyses proceeding factor analyses (n = 168) are as follows; correlation analyses n = 157, regression analyses n = 157, one-way ANOVA n = 157, two-way ANOVA n = 148). Sample sizes were assessed for appropriateness for each statistical technique.

Factor Analysis: Assessing the validity of established scales

The use of established scales meant that confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was appropriate for the four constructs measured by multiple-item scales (Harrington, 2009). Job satisfaction and work engagement are similar constructs that measure positive affect at work (Newman et al., 2010; Nimon et al., 2016), and it was anticipated that the items from these scales might load on the same factor. Therefore, principal axis factoring was used with (1) forced factor extraction to assess whether the number of factors matched those anticipated from the measures, comparing four- and three-factor solutions; and (2) direct oblimin rotation to aid the interpretation of factor loadings, which allows for the anticipated correlation between factors, in this case, job satisfaction and work engagement. A total of 32 items from the employee well-being scales and authentic self-expression scale were included in the factor analysis. This included 9 work engagement items, 5 job satisfaction items, 12 mental health items and 6 authenticity items. Several considerations were made prior to conducting factor analysis.

Firstly, the sample size relative to the number of variables was adequate according to Tabachnick and Fiddell's (2013) recommendation of five cases for each item: 32 items would require a sample size of 160 and the participant sample size for this analysis was 168. Secondly, the factorability of the data was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of 0.3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.9, exceeding the recommended value of 0.6 (Pallant, 2020). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity reached statistical significance ($p < 0.05$), supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix. All the variable combinations satisfied the requirements for factor analysis.

Three criteria for item inclusion into a factor were set. The first criterion was simple structure; items needed to load onto a single factor. The second criterion was loading strength; items were selected if they loaded onto a variable fairly well, at 0.40 and above (Comrey & Lee, 1992). The third criterion was scale internal reliability; measuring the extent to which items are measuring the same construct (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2013). Items were included for a variable where the scale internal consistency was higher than the standard 0.7 Cronbach's alpha value (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2013).

Tables 1 and 2 provide a summary of the three- and four-factor analysis results including factor loadings, eigenvalues, and percentage variance explained, as well as Cronbach's alpha values. The factors are labelled according to the content of the loading variables and factor loadings less than 0.3 are suppressed for ease of interpretation, thus retaining loadings between 0.3 and 0.4 to show potentially problematic cross-loadings. Items that did not meet the three criteria for factor inclusion are discussed below.

Three and four-factor analysis comparison

Four-factor solution

A CFA with four-factor extraction was conducted, explaining 61.6% of variance in the data (see Table 1 below). The rotated solution revealed that all four factors contained several strong loadings, and almost all items loaded substantially on only one factor. As expected, most of the work engagement and job satisfaction items loaded on the same factor. Regarding the inclusion criteria, all the authenticity variables met the three criteria. All but one item from each of the job satisfaction and mental health variables met the inclusion criteria. These two items were both reversed items which have been reported to decrease internal consistency and

load on different factors in previous research (Barnette, 2000). The reversed job satisfaction item "Each day at work seems like it will never end" did not load above 0.3 on any factor. The reversed mental health item "How often have you felt constantly under strain?" revealed cross-loading with three factors and only loaded at an acceptable level on a different factor: the item loaded 0.39 on the expected factor and its strongest loading was -.40 on a different factor. Four work engagement items were identified as problematic and did not meet the first and second inclusion criteria. One work engagement item "I feel happy when I am working intensely" did not load above 0.3 on any factor and another item "I get carried away when I am working" loaded on a different factor. Two absorption items within work engagement cross-loaded with other factors. These included "I am proud of the work that I do" and "I am immersed in my work". The six items that did not meet the first and second inclusion criteria may be considered for inclusion into further analysis, considering that the cross-loadings were above 0.4 on the intended factor, except for one mental health item that was very close to the 0.4 criterion at 0.39 on the intended factor.

The cross-loading of items and overlapping constructs affected the scale's internal consistency for one of the four factors. Specifically, Cronbach's Alpha based on the loadings of the four-factor solution was very low (0.45) for work engagement due to the cross-loading of the mental health item "how often have you felt constantly under strain", as well as the overlap of work engagement with job satisfaction items. Cronbach's Alpha based on the loadings of the four-factor solution for the three other factors (job satisfaction, authenticity, and mental health) showed very good to excellent scale internal reliability (0.93, 0.96, 0.88) (Nunnally, 1994). Cronbach's alphas based on the loadings in the present analysis versus the intended loadings based on the validated scales are reported in Table 1.

Three-factor solution

Following the CFA with four-factor extraction, a three-factor extraction was conducted, explaining a total of 56.9% of the variance in the data (see Table 2. below). The three-factor solution revealed a cleaner structure compared with the four-factor solution, with fewer problematic items and cross-loadings. All the authenticity variables met the inclusion criteria. One mental health item "How often have you felt that you are playing a useful part?" revealed cross-loading with another factor. As anticipated, most of the work engagement and job satisfaction items overlapped on a single factor. This factor was labelled 'positive affect at work' to reflect the interrelatedness of the two constructs. Two job satisfaction items and two

work engagement items were identified as problematic and did not meet the inclusion criteria. The work engagement item “I feel happy when I am working intensely” did not load above 0.3 on any factor. Another work engagement item “when I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work” loaded on a different factor. One of the job satisfaction items “I feel fairly satisfied with my present job” revealed cross-loading with another factor, and another reversed item “each day at work seems like it will never end” loaded on a different factor and, at 0.33, was below the criterion of 0.4.

Items that did not meet the first and second inclusion criteria are considered for inclusion in further analysis, acknowledging that; (a) two of the cross-loadings were above 0.4 on the intended factor and (b) the reversed job satisfaction item that loaded on the mental health construct is reversed from other items and therefore is known to be problematic (Barnette, 2000). The work engagement item and mental health items did not meet the first and second inclusion criteria. However, scale internal consistencies based on the loadings in the three-factor solution were all above 0.7 (0.83, 0.96, 0.87), indicating very good to excellent reliability (Nunnally, 1994). The results of the three-factor analysis and scale of Cronbach’s alphas are presented in Table 2.

Table 1

Results of the four-factor analysis for the work engagement, job satisfaction, mental health, and authenticity variables, with scale internal consistencies reported

	Job Satisfaction	Authenticity	Mental Health	Work Engagement
At my work, I feel bursting with energy	.74			
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous	.73			
I am enthusiastic about my job	.84			
My job inspires me	.88			
I feel happy when I am working intensely				
I am proud of the work that I do	.47			.42
I am immersed in my work	.47			.57
I get carried away when I am working				.47
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	.60			
I feel fairly satisfied with my present job	.63			
Each day at work seems like it will never end*				
I find real enjoyment in my work	.76			
I consider my job rather unpleasant*	.69			
Most days I am enthusiastic about my work	.72			
How often have you felt capable of making decisions about things?			.67	
How often have you been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?			.69	
How often have you been able to face up to problems?			.62	
How often have you: been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered?			.66	
How often have you been able to concentrate?			.49	
How often have you felt that you are playing a useful part?			.43	
How often have you been feeling unhappy or depressed?*			.52	
How often have you been losing confidence in yourself?*			.64	
How often have you felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties?*			.72	
How often have you been thinking of yourself as worthless?*			.69	
How often have you lost sleep over worry?*			.57	
How often have you felt constantly under strain?*	.30		.39	-.40
In this job, I can express myself		-.72		
In this job, I don't feel I need to hide who I really am		-.92		
In this job, I can be myself		-.93		
In this job, I don't have to act like someone I'm not		-.94		
In this job, I feel authentic		-.91		
In this job, I can be who I really am		-.96		
Eigenvalues	11.63	3.63	2.95	1.52
Percentage variance explained	36.33	11.36	9.21	4.75
Cronbach's Alpha** based on the loadings above	0.93	0.96	0.88	0.45
Cronbach's Alpha** based on the validated scales	0.83	0.96	0.88	0.87

Note: N = 168. Many of the intercorrelations between items were above 0.3, the KMO value was 0.89 and the Bartletts Test of Sphericity reached statistical significance. Factor loadings < 0.3 are not presented and loadings > 0.4 are in bold. *Reversed items. **Cronbach's Alpha including loadings ≥0.40 for each factor. Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 19 iterations.

Table 2

Results of the three-factor analysis for the work engagement, job satisfaction, mental health, and authenticity variables, with scale internal consistencies reported

	Mental Health	Authenticity	Positive affect at work
At my work, I feel bursting with energy			-.59
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous			-.63
I am enthusiastic about my job			-.81
My job inspires me			-.87
I feel happy when I am working intensely			
I am proud of the work that I do			-.64
I am immersed in my work			-.70
I get carried away when I am working			-.38
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	.33		-.55
I feel fairly satisfied with my present job	.31		-.51
Each day at work seems like it will never end*	.33		
I find real enjoyment in my work			-.80
I consider my job rather unpleasant*			-.57
Most days I am enthusiastic about my work			-.76
How often have you felt capable of making decisions about things?	.52		
How often have you been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?	.68		
How often have you been able to face up to problems?	.42		
How often have you: been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered?	.72		
How often have you been able to concentrate?	.48		
How often have you felt that you are playing a useful part?	.33		-.34
How often have you been feeling unhappy or depressed?*	.64		
How often have you been losing confidence in yourself?*	.64		
How often have you felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties?*	.79		
How often have you been thinking of yourself as worthless?*	.65		
How often have you lost sleep over worry?*	.69		
How often have you felt constantly under strain?*	.63		
In this job, I can express myself		-.70	
In this job, I don't feel I need to hide who I really am		-.92	
In this job, I can be myself		-.93	
In this job, I don't have to act like someone I'm not		-.92	
In this job, I feel authentic		-.90	
In this job, I can be who I really am		-.94	
Eigenvalues	11.63	3.63	2.95
Percentage variance explained	36.31	11.36	9.21
Cronbach's Alpha** based on the loadings above	0.83	0.96	0.87
Cronbach's Alpha** based on the validated scales	0.89	0.96	0.93

Note: N = 168. Positive affect at work combines Work engagement and Job satisfaction items. Factor loadings > 0.4 are in bold. Loadings < 0.3 are not presented. *Reversed items. **Cronbach's Alpha including loadings >.40 for each factor. Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

Evaluating the three- verses four-factor solutions

In summary, the confirmatory factor analysis technique of principal axis factoring was used to assess scale reliability and relationships between variables. Both three and four-factor extractions were conducted acknowledging items from the work engagement and job satisfaction scales were likely to overlap. Based on the criteria, the three-factor structure fits the data better than the four-factor structure. As anticipated, there was significant overlap on one factor due to work engagement and job satisfaction being similar constructs representing positive affect at work and thus, the three-factor solution showed a cleaner structure.

The decision as to whether to retain both variables and all scale items in further analysis or use different scales based on the factor analyses involves a trade-off. On the one hand, work engagement and job satisfaction are shown to be similar constructs and likely to correlate highly because they share high amounts of variance (Newman et al., 2010; Nimon et al., 2016). On the other hand, there is empirical evidence to suggest these well-being measures are distinct (Christian et al., 2011; Rich et al., 2010; Saks, 2006) and both have been studied independently in relation to work-related variables, including authenticity at work (Van Den Bosch & Taris, 2014a, b; Van Den Bosch et al., 2018a). Moreover, the correlation matrix (Table 3) shows that although strongly correlated ($r = 0.78$) job satisfaction and work engagement are distinct and do not exceed the benchmark of 0.80 to suggest multicollinearity (Pallant, 2020). Notably, these two variables are not used together in this study's analyses, so the variable overlap will not affect analyses relating to the hypotheses.

I have decided to retain all scale items, based on the four-factor solution, into further analysis based on two further reasons. First, all items are from established scales that have been validated and used in previous studies that are comparable to this one (Sharp, 2015; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014a, b; Van den Bosch et al., 2018b). Second, scale internal consistencies when all intended items are included on their expected factor are all above 0.7 (based on validated scales) (0.83, 0.96, 0.88, 0.87) indicating very good to excellent reliability (Nunnally, 1994). Therefore, in spite of the shortcomings indicated by the factor analyses, I have decided to retain both variables and all scale items in further statistical analyses.

4.2 Statistical analysis and results

The following section provides the results of the research. The relationships between variables are assessed, statistical procedures are explained, and findings related to the hypotheses are reported.

Correlation analyses: Exploring the associations between authenticity and well-being

Two-tailed bivariate Pearson correlations were conducted to investigate the interrelationships between variables, including the strength and direction (positive or negative) of relationships and the statistical significance. Mean scores for authenticity and well-being variables were calculated and ethnicity and gender were each recoded into two comparison groups: NZ European/non-NZ European and men/women. Preliminary analyses were performed to assess whether there were any violations of the assumptions of normality and linearity. Analysis of histograms and normal probability plots showed no deviations from normality. Scatterplots showing relationships between variables revealed no curvilinear relationships and no outliers. The sample size for authenticity and well-being variables was 168. Due to missing data for ethnicity (n = 157) and gender (n = 152), correlation analyses for these demographic variables were conducted separately, ensuring the maximum sample size was retained to maintain power.

The correlation matrix is presented in Table 3, along with the variable means, standard deviations, and reliabilities. There were low to moderate positive correlations between all three well-being variables and authenticity at work, however, only work engagement and job satisfaction reached statistical significance. As expected, work engagement and job satisfaction were highly correlated ($r = 0.78$, $n = 168$, $p < .001$) and shared 62% of variance, which demonstrates a significant conceptual overlap between the two variables. However, these variables are not multicollinear ($r = > 0.80$) in accordance with Pallant's (2020) guidelines.

Work engagement and job satisfaction showed a moderately positive relationship with authenticity at work (work engagement: $r = 0.43$, $n = 168$, $p = <.001$; job satisfaction: $r = .44$, $n = 168$, $p = <.001$), with high levels of authenticity at work being associated with high levels of work engagement and job satisfaction. Mental health showed a non-significant relationship with authenticity ($r = 0.10$, $n = 168$, $p = 0.22$) These correlations support Hypotheses 1a-b

because there is evidence that authenticity at work is positively related to job satisfaction and work engagement. However, Hypothesis 1c. was not supported. Ethnicity was significantly correlated with authenticity, showing a weak, negative relationship (r = -.25, n = 157, p = 0.001), highlighting differences between NZ Europeans and other ethnicities in authenticity. Gender was not significantly correlated with authenticity (r = -.12, n = 152, p = 0.15), showing that men and women did not differ in terms of their authenticity at work.

Table 3

Correlation matrix with means, standard deviations, reliabilities and intercorrelations of study variables

Scale	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Authenticity	3.86	.88	(.96)					
2. Work engagement	3.58	.69	.43**	(.87)				
3. Job Satisfaction	3.66	.82	.44**	.78**	(.83)			
4. Mental Health	3.15	.33	.10	-.07	-.11	(.89)		
5. Ethnicity[1]			-.25**	-.02	-.11	-.51	-	
6. Gender[2]			-.12	-.03	-.06	.00	.15	-

Note: N = 168. Due to missing data, sample sizes are [1]ethnicity N = 157; [2]gender N = 152. Gender was coded men = 1, women = 0. Ethnicity was coded NZ European = 1, Other ethnicities = 0. **Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Multiple regression analyses: Assessing the moderating effect of ethnicity

To test Hypothesis 2a-c, a hierarchical multiple regression with moderation analysis was conducted to investigate whether ethnicity moderates the relationships between authenticity at work and the three well-being outcomes. Three different regression models were run for each of the dependent variables (work engagement, job satisfaction and mental health). The predictor variable for each analysis was authenticity, and the dichotomous moderator variable was ethnicity (NZ European versus non-NZ European). Before performing the analysis, authenticity was standardised (mean-centred) to decrease the likelihood of multicollinearity and an interaction term using the ethnicity and authenticity variables was created.

The data were then tested for the assumptions of sample size, linearity, multicollinearity and singularity, normality, outliers, and homoscedasticity of residuals. Preliminary analyses indicated that all assumptions of regression were met, as follows. Sample size was checked using Tabacknick and Fiddell's (2013) formula: n = 50 + 8m, where m = the number of

independent variables. Thus, this assumption was satisfied as the sample size for this analysis was 157 (n = 50 + 8(2) = 66). The correlation matrix showed that the correlation coefficients between the predictor variables (ethnicity and authenticity at work) were far less than 0.80 (r = -.29), and collinearity diagnostics showed that the tolerance value was > 0.1 and the variance inflation factor (VIF) was < 10 for the predictor in all models, therefore there was no evidence of multicollinearity (Pallant, 2020). Inspection of residuals probability plots and scatterplots indicated that the assumptions of normality, linearity, and independence of residuals were satisfied. Visual inspection of the scatterplot of residuals revealed no signs of heteroscedasticity. Although the scatterplots revealed three potential outliers, in accordance with Tabacknick and Fidell's guidelines (2013), Cooks Distance did not exceed 1.00 for any of the models (M = 0.36; 0.13; 0.16), indicating that outliers did not have a disproportionate influence on the regression equation.

In relation to Hypotheses 2a-c, Table 4 shows the moderated regression results for the moderating effects of ethnicity on the relationships between authenticity and the three well-being outcomes (work engagement, job satisfaction and mental health). In each of the three analyses, authenticity and ethnicity were entered in at step 1 of the model and the interaction term (authenticity x ethnicity) was entered in at step 2. Testing Hypotheses 2a and 2b, results show that ethnicity did not moderate the relationships between authenticity and work engagement or job satisfaction, as evidenced by a non-significant increase in total variation explained of 1% or less (work engagement $\Delta R^2 = .01$, $F(1, 153) = 1.25$, $p = 0.27$; job satisfaction $\Delta R^2 = .00$, $F(1,153) = 0.14$, $p = 0.71$). Testing Hypothesis 2c, the moderating effect of ethnicity on the relationship between authenticity and mental health did not show a statistically significant moderation effect, however considering Preacher et al.'s (2007) recommendations stated above, it was deemed as approaching significance ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $F(1,153) = 3.40$, $p = 0.07$). Therefore, results show that the relationship between authenticity and work engagement, job satisfaction and mental health is not different for NZ Europeans and non-NZ Europeans and Hypotheses 2a-c are not supported.

Table 4

Hierarchical multiple regression of the moderating effect of ethnicity on the relationships between authenticity and work engagement, job satisfaction, and mental health

Steps and variables	B	SE B	β	sr	Δ R^2	R^2	Adjusted R^2	df	F
Model 1: Work engagement									
Step 1.					.22***	.22	.21	154	21.75**
Constant	3.72	.11							
Authenticity	.34	.05	.49***	.47					
Ethnicity	-.18	.12	-.11	-.11					
Step 2.					.01	.22	.21	153	14.94
Constant	3.67	.12							
Authenticity	.23	.12	.32	.15					
Ethnicity	-.13	.12	-.08	-.08					
Authenticity x Ethnicity	.14	.13	.18	.09					
Model 2: Job satisfaction									
Step 1.					.20***	.20	.19	154	19.57**
Constant	3.67	.13							
Authenticity	.38	.06	.45***	.44					
Ethnicity	.00	.15	.00	.00					
Step 2.					.00	.20	.19	153	13.02
Constant	3.66	.14							
Authenticity	.34	.14	.39***	.18					
Ethnicity	.02	.16	.01	.01					
Authenticity x Ethnicity	.06	.16	.06	.03					
Model 3. Mental health									
Step 1.					.01	.01	-.01	154	.48
Constant	3.13	.06							
Authenticity	.02	.03	.04	.06					
Ethnicity	.02	.06	.03	.03					
Step 2.					.02	.02	.01	153	1.46
Constant	3.09	.06							
Authenticity	-.08	.06	-.24	-.10					
Ethnicity	.06	.07	.08	.08					
Authenticity x Ethnicity	.12	.07	.33	.15					

Note: N = 157 ***p <.001, *p <.10 sr = semi-partial correlation coefficient. Ethnicity = moderator. Authenticity x Ethnicity = interaction term.

ANOVA: Examining the differences in authenticity between NZ Europeans and non-NZ Europeans

Pearson's correlation coefficient indicated that ethnicity was significantly correlated with authenticity at work (r = -.25). To test Hypothesis 3a, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare average authenticity scores between NZ Europeans and those from other ethnicities. Residual analysis was performed to test for the assumptions of one-way ANOVA. Visual inspection of Normal Q-Q Plots for each group indicated normality. A few (n = 3) outliers were detected in the NZ European groups' boxplot and were identified as unusual data points rather than measurement or data entry errors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The three cases detected as outliers were observed as low authenticity scores from European women (1.83, 1.67, 1.33). These outliers were not identified as extreme outliers (3 box lengths away from the edge of the box as marked by an asterisk [Pallant, 2020]) and were not expected to materially affect results. However, in line with Weisberg's (2014) recommendations, I decided to analyse the data both ways and repeated the data analysis without outliers to examine the difference this made to the results. A non-significant Levene's Test for equality of variance indicated homogeneity of variance both with outliers (p = 0.39) and without (p = .18). The sample size for analysis was 157 including outliers and 154 without outliers. Table 5 shows the results of the one-way ANOVA with and without outliers included in the analysis.

Results showed that there is a significant difference in mean authenticity scores between NZ Europeans (M = 4.02, SD = 0.83) and non-NZ Europeans (M = 3.49, SD = 0.81, F (1, 155) = 10.6, p = 0.001) with NZ Europeans reporting higher levels of authenticity at work than other ethnicities. In accordance with Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the magnitude of differences in the mean difference = 0.53, 95% CI [0.21, 0.85]) was moderate (eta squared = 0.06), with 6% of the variance in authenticity at work explained by ethnicity. Therefore, hypothesis 3a was supported as NZ Europeans had significantly higher authenticity scores than non-NZ Europeans. After the removal of three outliers (n = 154), results showed a minor increase in mean scores for NZ Europeans (M = 4.08, SD = 0.74) which was a significant difference F (1, 152) = 15.4, p = <0.001, and variance increased to 9% (eta squared = 0.09), thus justifying the removal of outliers. As seen in Table 5, the results were very similar.

Table 5

One-way ANOVA of mean differences in authenticity at work between NZ Europeans and other ethnicities

	NZ European			Non-NZ European			Mean Difference	95% CI		df	F	p	η_p^2
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD							
Authenticity[1]	124	4.02	0.83	33	3.49	0.81	0.53	0.21	0.85	155	10.6	.001	0.06
Authenticity[2]	121	4.08	0.74	33	3.49	0.81	0.59	0.29	0.88	152	15.4	<.001	0.09

Note: [1]N=157 with outliers, [2]N=154 without outliers. η_p^2 = partial eta squared.

ANOVA: Assessing the impact of ethnicity and gender on authenticity at work

To test Hypothesis 3b, a two-way between-groups ANOVA was conducted to explore the impact of both ethnicity and gender on levels of authenticity at work. Data were checked for assumptions of two-way ANOVA, including normality, outliers, and homogeneity of variances. Visual observation of Normal Q-Q Plots for each group indicated normality, and outliers were detected by visual inspection of box plots (addressed below). Levene's test for equality of variances indicated that the homogeneity of variance assumption was satisfied (p = 0.80). Due to a small number of participants not providing complete demographic information, the sample size included in the analysis was 148.

The results of the two-way ANOVA (see Table 6 below) showed that the interaction effect between gender and ethnicity predicting authenticity scores was not statistically significant, F (1, 144) = 3.04, p = 0.08, and Hypothesis 3b was not supported. As already established in testing Hypothesis 3a, there was a statistically significant main effect for ethnic group, F (1, 144) = 12.50, p = <.001, partial η^2 = 0.08. The main effect for gender did not reach statistical significance F (1, 144) = 0.61, p = 0.44, showing that women and men did not differ in terms of their authenticity at work.

Due to the detection of minor outliers in the data, the preliminary checks and analysis were repeated with outliers removed (Levene's test without outliers: p = 0.55; n = 145). The two-way effect results were similar for this approach F (1, 141) = 2.78, p = 0.10, as seen in Table 6 below. In sum, the results of the ‚ANOVA analyses showed that there was a significant

difference in authenticity scores between NZ Europeans and other ethnicities, however there was no evidence of a two-way interaction of gender and ethnicity on authenticity at work.

Table 6

Two-way ANOVA results of the impact of gender and ethnicity on authenticity at work showing results with and without outliers

	N	df	Mean square	F	p	η_p^2
Ethnicity	148	1	8.14	12.50	<.001	0.08
Gender	148	1	0.40	0.61	0.44	0.00
Ethnicity*Gender	148	1	1.98	3.04	.08	0.02
Ethnicity	145	1	9.18	17.02	<.001	0.10
Gender	145	1	0.65	1.21	0.27	0.01
Ethnicity*Gender	145	1	1.51	2.78	.10	0.02

Note: N = 148, N = 145 without outliers. η_p^2 = partial eta squared.

4.3 Supplementary qualitative analysis

In order to provide additional context to the survey data, responses to open questions were analysed using qualitative content analysis. Specifically, narrative comments relating to employees' experiences with (in)authenticity were analysed to (1) provide a deeper understanding of employee authenticity and the relationships with well-being within the context of a professional services firm and (2) explicate the finding that some women in the study could not be fully authentic at work (as suggested by outliers in the data: see ANOVA above). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2006) refer to this research approach as 'opportunistic' which they describe as a research design that evolves as the researcher follows up on leads that develop as data are collected and analysed.

Respondents were asked to describe a time when they could not authentically express themselves in the organisation (see Appendix D). Twenty-eight participants provided detailed comments. These responses were then coded and classified into themes based on similarities that were observed in the data, following Schreier's (2012) qualitative content analysis strategy. This procedure resulted in the emergence of two main themes relating to both organisational culture and the nature of professional services firms.

Theme 1: Masculine organisational culture

The most prominent theme to emerge from the respondents' descriptions of their work experiences (i.e., a time when they could not be fully authentic), was the masculine culture within the firm. Of the 28 respondents, 11 employees (39%) commented on the masculinised organisational culture as a hindrance to their authentic self-expression at work. Many of the culture-related comments (62%) highlighted the "white, male, privileged" organisational culture that excludes those that do not fit this mould. For example, one woman commented:

> If you don't drink and laugh with the boy's group, you're an outsider. Outsiders are ostracised and made to feel they are inferior. In my area of work, there is a gender separation between the boys and the others (mostly female) who don't join that group. When I do the work I do, I am criticised for being too much like myself, and I should be more like the men.

Another similarly commented on the suppression of authenticity to avoid gender discrimination and prejudice:

> When you are working with seniors who might not have been through what you've been through so you can't fully express how hard things might be. For example, if someone hasn't taken the time off for parental leave and has worked long hours to get to their senior position. This makes it feel hard to express the difficulties in managing a work-life balance and the desire to not have to sacrifice family time in order to progress and be successful at work.

Finally, another employee commented on her fears of sharing her pregnancy with senior managers: "in the early stages of pregnancy when I worried about how my managers would take it." These comments similarly reflect the dominant masculine culture within the firm that prevents women employees from bringing their true selves to work.

Theme 2: Characteristics of professional services firms

The second common theme to emerge from the open-ended comments concerned the nature of professional services firms. Of those that responded, 11 employees (39%) commented on the characteristics of these organisations that may hinder authenticity in the workplace. For example, respondents indicated that the requirement to uphold professionalism and maintain professional identity within the specific work role promoted inauthentic behaviours at work.

One respondent commented: “in court, it's a necessary part of our job to put on a bit of an act and in some cases, it wouldn't be appropriate to express self authentically because that's not our role”, and another stated that “sometimes it feels we are expected to hide the impact that our work has on us (both in terms of confronting material and the strain of hours).”

Other respondents highlighted that they felt they had to conceal signs of stress and burnout, one stating that they felt “reluctant to complain about workloads” and another commented that they “often feel like social side and humour are not welcome due to baseline levels of stress and busyness around the office.” Similarly, a few respondents reflected on the “long hours” and “high workload” culture within the organisation in which they felt they needed to conceal their stress and frustration. In addition, one respondent commented on the pressure to engage in inauthentic behaviour to please clients, stating that:

> Clients will occasionally make comments with which I strongly disagree, and with which I am confident the partner disagrees, but the partner will agree with and support the client, making it clear that even in uncomfortable circumstances we're expected to indulge the client to promote our relationship with them.

Overall, the majority of open-ended comments refer to the dominant masculine culture and pressure to uphold professionalism that hinders authentic expression at work among employees. Many of the respondents linked their experiences to negative outcomes, such as being ostracised, criticised, pressured, overworked, and prevented from pursuing a work-life balance for the sake of fitting in.

4.4 Summary of results

Overall, the results suggest positive associations between authenticity and work-related well-being in a professional services firm. In support of Hypothesis 1a and b, results showed strong and significant positive relationships between authenticity and both work engagement and job satisfaction. However, there was no significant association between authenticity and mental health and Hypothesis 1c was not supported. Regarding Hypotheses 2a-c, these were not supported, with multiple regression analyses revealing no moderating effect of ethnicity on these relationships. These results demonstrate that the positive relationships between authenticity and well-being variables are not experienced differently for NZ Europeans versus other ethnicities. In support of Hypothesis 3a, the one-way ANOVA revealed significant differences in authenticity means for NZ Europeans compared with other ethnicities. This

shows that NZ Europeans, as the ethnic majority, are more likely to express themselves authentically at work than ethnic minorities. Following this, a two-way ANOVA revealed no significant differences in authenticity at work between women and men. Further, there was no significant impact of ethnicity and gender on authenticity at work, and thus no support for Hypothesis 3b. Therefore, there is no evidence of a double barrier that prevents women from ethnic minorities to express themselves authentically in the workplace. Although not supported by some of the quantitative findings, the supplementary qualitative content analysis revealed two prominent themes – the masculine culture and the nature of professional services firms – that potentially obstruct employee authenticity, particularly among women. Taken together, these findings provide empirical evidence of the authenticity and well-being link within professional services firms and reveal important insights into the various factors that may impact employee authenticity.

Chapter 5. Discussion

Organisational and scholarly interest in authenticity at work has gained momentum in recent years due to the links between authenticity and work-related well-being outcomes. To extend this realm of research, the associations between employee authenticity and well-being indicators in a professional services firm were evaluated, and the differences in authenticity were assessed when comparing those employees from NZ's majority ethnic culture (NZ European) with those from other ethnicities. Additionally, authenticity at work was examined through an intersectional lens, focusing on ethnicity and gender. This study is one of the few to empirically examine these associations in the context of a professional services firm and to investigate the differences in authenticity and well-being between the dominant ethnic culture and ethnic minorities. Further, this study developed novel predictions about how authenticity at work can be influenced by several factors, including cultural background, organisational features, and intersecting marginalised identities.

The following section is separated into four parts. First, the key contributions of this study to the authenticity at work literature are outlined. From these theoretical contributions, a series of practical implications for businesses and professional services firms are proposed, strengths and limitations of the present study are discussed, and finally, several future research avenues are proposed.

5.1 Research contributions

Contribution one: Support for the associations between employee authenticity and job satisfaction and work engagement in a professional services firm

The preliminary aim of this study was to examine the direct relationships between employee authenticity and job satisfaction, engagement and mental health in the context of a professional services firm. As hypothesised, results indicate that employees who feel true to themselves at work experience higher levels of work-related well-being, comprising job satisfaction and engagement. This supports prior research findings that employees working in positions that align with their core values will be engaged in and satisfied by their work (Metin et al., 2016; Reis et al., 2016; Cable et al., 2013; Leroy et al., 2013; Menard & Brunet, 2011; Metin et al., 2016; Reis et al., 2016; Sharp, 2015; Sutton, 2020; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014a, b). Notably, the relationships between authenticity at work and job satisfaction ($r = 0.43$), and

work engagement (r = 0.44) were significant, indicating that authenticity in the workplace is associated with well-being and may provide a key intervention point for organisations seeking to improve these employee outcomes. This study also extends prior research by contextualising authenticity in organisation-specific research. Indeed, results from the current study provide empirical evidence of the employee authenticity and well-being link within a professional services firm and contribute to a scarce body of literature exploring authenticity and well-being outcomes in this context.

Contrary to hypothesis 1c, results suggest that employee authenticity is not associated with mental health. This relationship contradicts previous studies that have found positive associations between authenticity at work and healthy physiological functioning (Emmerich & Rigotti, 2017) and life satisfaction (Kifer et al., 2013). The association between authenticity and mental health may have been non-significant for a few reasons. Firstly, the measure used in the current study is a general index of recent positive mental health and asked participants to consider their general well-being in recent months, not just in relation to the workplace. As numerous factors can contribute to general mental health and well-being (Jackson, 2007), it may have been difficult for this scale to accurately measure the direct associations between authenticity at work and mental health. Moreover, to the best of my knowledge, this was the first study to use the general health questionnaire to measure mental health as it relates to authenticity, and therefore this study is not directly comparable with previous research. A second reason may be that general well-being is not impacted by work-related authenticity. Indeed, although there is robust evidence linking authenticity to work-related outcomes, such as engagement and satisfaction (Cable et al., 2013; Menard and Brunet, 2011; Metin et al., 2016; Reis et al., 2016), few studies have linked authenticity to aspects of general well-being, such as mental health. Therefore, the benefits associated with authenticity may be restricted to the work context and future studies should look at the domain-specific effects of authenticity as there is little research about the potential compensatory effects across life domains (Emmerich & Rigotti, 2017). Nonetheless, these findings support the notion that there are positive associations between employee authenticity and indicators of work-related well-being and contribute to the current research in this area. Accordingly, authenticity at work relates to engagement and job satisfaction but is not predictive of mental health outcomes for the respondents in the current study.

Contribution two: Employees of both NZ European and non-NZ European backgrounds benefit equally from bringing their authentic selves to work

The second aim of this study was to investigate the moderating effect of ethnicity on the relationships between authenticity and well-being outcomes (engagement, satisfaction, and mental health) because previous research has indicated that people from collectivist cultures may not experience well-being benefits from authenticity as much as those from more individualistic cultures (Boucher, 2011; Church et al., 2011; Datu & Reyes, 2015; Robinson et al., 2013; Suh, 2002). This study used moderation regression analysis, with ethnicity as the moderator variable, to explore the potential effect of ethnic culture on these relationships. Of the two groups, those from the majority ethnic group (NZ European) were assumed individualist, and those from other ethnicities (non-NZ European) were assumed collectivist.

As discussed in Chapter 2.5, it was hypothesised that the benefits associated with authenticity at work – such as higher levels of engagement, satisfaction, and mental health – would be stronger for employees from individualistic cultures. Equivalently, we hypothesised a weaker relationship between authenticity and well-being for those from the non-NZ European sample. However, results from the present study did not support the hypothesis as ethnicity did not moderate the relationships between authenticity and any well-being variables. These results suggest that employees from collectivist cultures do not experience authenticity differently from their individualistic counterparts. Accordingly, employees of both NZ European and non-NZ European backgrounds benefit equally from bringing their true selves to work.

These findings contradict past research regarding the moderating effect of cultural background on the relationships between authenticity and well-being. For example, empirical studies demonstrate a negative correlation between collectivism and the relationship between authenticity and well-being (Boucher., 2011; Datu & Reyes, 2015). Likewise, Sutton (2020) provides meta-analytic evidence that individualism significantly moderates the relationship between authenticity at work and well-being, in that individualists show stronger positive associations between authenticity and well-being outcomes than collectivists. However, the results of the present study are consistent with one prior study, which found that state (in)authenticity outcomes were more similar than different across cultures (Slabu et al., 2014). This study examined the differences in both trait and state authenticity between those from collectivist and individualist cultures (as discussed in Chapter 2.1). Interestingly, when

authenticity was operationalised in terms of values consistent with individualism (i.e., trait authenticity), then people from these cultures appeared more authentic than those from collectivist cultures. However, when defined in a manner relevant to those in collectivist cultures (i.e., state authenticity), all cultures experienced authenticity similarly (Slabu et al., 2014). Therefore, it is particularly important to note that the definitions and measures of authenticity, which include reference to personality consistency across roles (i.e., trait authenticity), are less suited to the values of collectivist cultures and may affect findings across studies.

One reason the present study did not find differences in well-being outcomes between NZ Europeans and the other ethnicities may be that the measures used did not account for the cultural nuances within the non-NZ European sample. For example, respondents in this group belonged to various ethnicities, including Māori, Pacifica, Asian, Indian, and MELAA (Middle Eastern, Latin American, African), all of which differ with respect to their cultural values and degree of collectivism (for example, independence–interdependence, analysis-holism, and other socio-historical factors) (Boucher et al., 2011; Datu & Reyes, 2015). For example, Slabu et al. (2014) found that Singaporeans scored lower on the collectivism continuum regarding their interdependence and higher in terms of their holism than other East Asian cultures. In this way, clustering minority ethnicities and their associated cultures may have affected results, given that they also differ in terms of where they sit on the collectivism-individualism continuum. In addition, participants in this study were all residents of NZ and may be more culturally Western despite identifying with an ethnicity attached to a collectivist culture. As this study did not measure the degree of collectivism nor individualism among participants, the categorisation of ethnicities into two groups may not have been an accurate representation of the cultural differences in experienced authenticity. Notwithstanding this issue, the findings of the present study support the positive relationship between employee authenticity and well-being, suggesting that the benefits associated with authenticity are experienced regardless of cultural factors, at least for these employees in a professional services firm.

Contribution three: Employees belonging to the dominant ethnic culture are more authentic at work compared with other ethnicities

The final aims of the current research were to assess the differences in authenticity between employees in the majority ethnic culture and other ethnicities, and to determine if a

double barrier of ethnicity and gender exists, preventing ethnic minority women employees from being authentic. Firstly, the difference in authenticity between NZ European employees (the majority ethnic group) and employees from other ethnicities was examined using a one-way ANOVA.

Based on previous findings that employees from the dominant ethnic culture are more authentic at work (English & John, 2013; Sharp, 2015), it was expected that the NZ European employees would report feeling more authentic at work. Consistent with this notion, the current study found that, on average, NZ European employees reported higher levels of authenticity than employees from minority ethnicities. Overall, these findings suggest that employees from minority ethnicities are not as authentic at work as their NZ European counterparts, which may be due to cultural differences (English & John, 2013; Slabu et al., 2014) or as a result of potential discriminatory barriers that obstruct authentic self-expression at work (Cha et al., 2019; Kock, 2020; Roberts et al., 2009, 2014), as discussed in Chapter 2.5. These results extend the literature in this realm of authenticity research by providing empirical evidence of the ethnic differences in authenticity at work. To the best of my knowledge, this is one of the few studies to analyse differences in authenticity between dominant and minority ethnic groups and supports the findings of Sharp (2015) who observed differences in authenticity between NZ Europeans and Māori service workers. Additionally, this is one of the first studies to explore these differences in a professional services firm – an organisational context where the discrimination of minority employees is amplified and less conducive to authenticity (Haynes, 2012; Kumra & Vinnicombe, 2008; Ryan & Briggs, 2019). Finally, this study answers scholarly calls for research to empirically examine cultural differences in authenticity at work (Cha et al., 2019; Sutton, 2020) and extends the workplace authenticity literature on minority professionals.

The current study also investigates possible gender differences in authenticity at work. Results found no difference in average authenticity scores between women and men employees. However, the difference in the results from including versus excluding outliers suggests that there were women employees (at the individual level) who certainly experienced authenticity issues. All outliers were identified as NZ European women who scored very low on the authenticity measure. After removing the outliers detected in the preliminary analyses, the difference in mean authenticity scores for NZ Europeans increased by 0.06 and variance in authenticity at work explained by ethnicity increased from 6% to 9%. Therefore, although there

was a non-significant finding overall, the outliers in the data suggest that a small number of women could not be fully authentic at work; however, these are obscured when we look at averages. These results, combined with the qualitative findings, provide evidence that some women employees did not feel that they could be authentic at work. These findings are discussed in detail below (see additional contributions).

Contribution four: No evidence of a double barrier of ethnicity and gender to authenticity at work

Following the one-way ANOVA, a two-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if ethnic minority women faced a double barrier to behaving authentically at work. Scholars have suggested that both women and ethnic minorities face certain barriers to authentic self-expression at work (Cha et al., 2019; Kock, 2020; Roberts et al., 2014; Ryan & Briggs, 2019). Thus, it was hypothesised that there would be a two-way interaction such that women who are also ethnic minority employees would report lower authenticity compared with men and those from the majority NZ European culture. Very few studies have applied an intersectional lens to authenticity in the workplace and this is one of the first studies to quantitatively examine this two-way interaction of ethnicity and gender. For example, prior research has mainly used qualitative approaches, such as the study by Antewologun and Singh (2010), which analysed the intersectional roles of ethnicity and gender in identity work amongst Black workers in the United Kingdom. Likewise, Kock (2020) provided an autoethnographic account of how their ethnic and sexual identities intersected to prompt continuous identity work in organisational settings. However, the results of the two-way ANOVA contradict the findings of prior studies and found no support for a double barrier of gender and ethnicity to authenticity at work.

The non-significant finding of the two-way ANOVA may be explicated in a few ways. First, the intersecting identities examined in the current study (ethnic minority women) differed from those in prior research. For example, previous studies have focused on the intersection of multiple minority identities (Atewologun & Singh, 2010; Atewologun et al., 2015; Kock, 2020). However, women in the current study were not a minority (65% of participants were women) and therefore, may not have been subject to the discrimination that is associated with a double minority status (Atewologun & Singh, 2010; Kock, 2020). Another reason could be related to the different research methods used in previous studies. Typically, previous studies have opted for qualitative methods to highlight the lived experiences of those with multiple marginalised identities, shedding light on how their experiences differ from non-

marginalised individuals (Atewologun & Singh, 2010; Atewologun et al., 2015). Moreover, scholars have suggested that qualitative methods are effective in exploring the complex and contextual enactment of intersectional identities (Narváez et al., 2009), and may better capture these nuances than quantitative methods. Therefore, the supplementary qualitative analysis in this study was used to obtain a richer understanding of the discrimination against women and ethnic minorities. In sum, although results of the two-way ANOVA do not support this double barrier, results from the one-way ANOVA support the notion that ethnic minorities are less authentic at work than the majority ethnic culture, which has significant implications for organisations and managers.

Additional contributions: Qualitative evidence suggests that the masculine organisational culture and requirement to uphold professional identity hinder some women employees' from behaving authentically at work

Although the primary aim of this research was to test statistical hypotheses, narrative comments from respondents were analysed, providing a richer understanding of employee authenticity and its relationships with well-being outcomes within the context of a professional services firm. In addition, the qualitative content analysis helped to explicate the low authenticity scores among some women in the study, which were detected as outliers in the preliminary data analyses.

Qualitative findings shed light on the dominant masculine culture and pressures to uphold professionalism that prevented some women employees from behaving authentically in the firm. Specifically, narratives highlighted the privileging of the cis-gendered, white male demographic within the firm that made women feel ostracised and pressured to behave more like men to fit in. These findings are consistent with previous studies analysing authenticity in professional services firms, which indicate that these organisations are gendered and promote an inauthentic climate for women and minority members (Ballakrishnen et al., 2018; Haynes, 2012; Kumra & Vinnicombe, 2008; Lewis, 2011; Opie & Phillips, 2015). Faced with professional norms that encourage masculine behaviour, women commonly modify their behaviour and networks to match those of their male colleagues (Ballakrishnen et al., 2018; Ramarajan & Reid, 2013). For example, women in this study felt the need to "drink and laugh with the boy's group" to be accepted and were constantly navigating work situations to reduce the effects of discrimination and prejudice from colleagues and managers. Relatedly, other

comments referred to the long-hours culture and lack of work-life balance within the firm, echoing the findings of previous research in this work context (Ballakrishnen et al., 2018; Haynes, 2012; Kumra & Vinnicombe, 2008). These findings relate to Acker's (2006), 'inequality regimes' which refer to the gendered norms and practices that are embedded in traditionally male-dominated organisations. For example, the long-hours work culture in the firm portrays that the working day and working obligations are better suited to the "ideal" male worker, free from household and childcare responsibilities (Acker, 2012, p. 215). Therefore, notwithstanding the nonsignificant effect of gender overall, qualitative findings reveal powerful insights into the potential barriers to authenticity within these firms among women.

Other qualitative findings suggest that the requirement to act professionally and maintain a professional identity within the firm may restrict authentic self-expression. As discussed in Chapter 2.4, these behavioural requirements are typical of professional services firms and have been linked to inauthentic behaviours in prior studies (Harris, 2002; Haynes, 2012). For example, respondents felt that it was part of their job to "put on a bit of an act" and hide the strain that their roles and responsibilities entailed. These findings resemble the work of Kammeyer et al. (2012) who linked divestiture socialisation (encouraging employees to act counter to their sense of right and wrong) to emotional exhaustion and distress in early career lawyers. Findings also indicate that employees are expected to display inauthentic behaviours to please their clients, echoing prior research in the professional services context (Anleu & Mack, 2005; Harris, 2002; Kammeyer et al., 2012; Scarduzio, 2011). In doing so, employees may engage in behaviour counter to their ethical beliefs, which may have detrimental consequences on their health and well-being (Kammeyer et al., 2012). Taken together, these qualitative findings provide valuable empirical evidence of the organisational culture and nature of professional services firms that may obstruct authenticity at work, especially among individuals who do not fit within the dominant male culture embedded in these organisations. Although not supported by some of the quantitative results, these narratives help us to obtain a richer understanding of the complex interplay of contextual and organisational factors that may hinder authenticity in the workplace and thus, contribute to the limited research in this field.

5.2 Practical implications

These findings have several practical implications for organisations. The findings were expected to elucidate whether organisations should be investing their time and resources in increasing workplace authenticity. Generally speaking, results show that authenticity is positively associated with employee well-being and that this relationship extends to the context of professional services firms. The following sub-section outlines the practical implications for organisations.

Regardless of contextual and cultural factors, organisations should strive to encourage and promote employee authenticity in the workplace. Emphasis should be on increasing authenticity among women and minority groups, including those minorities that were not the focus of this study (gay individuals, religious minorities, people with disabilities, and older people) who face additional barriers to bringing their true selves to work (Cha et al., 2019; Madera et al., 2012). Despite these potential difficulties, the results of the present research indicate that individuals and organisations may benefit substantially from an increase in authenticity in the workplace. The findings that authenticity is associated with satisfaction and engagement are consistent with previous studies across a range of work contexts, many of which used a broader sample, indicating a degree of generalisability to other work contexts (Cable et al., 2013; Metin et al., 2016; Reis et al., 2016; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2018). This relationship is clear and consistent, so addressing how organisations can promote greater authenticity at work should be at the forefront of organisational discourse. Scholars suggest that organisations wishing to increase employee authenticity should focus on fostering a culture and climate of authenticity where employees can express their individual opinions and values (Hewlin et al., 2020; Roberts et al., 2009; Ostermeier et al., 2021). Leaders must understand and earnestly communicate how diversity and authenticity are beneficial in the workplace, whilst organisational norms and practices should encourage authentic behaviour (Roberts et al., 2009). Drawing on the current research findings, key recommendations for organisations and, more specifically, professional services firms are outlined below.

1. Increase diversity and inclusion in the workplace

Firstly, to encourage employees (especially those from minorities) to bring their true selves to work, I recommend that organisations take action to create and support a diverse and

inclusive workplace. In other words, organisations should focus on directing their attention away from nurturing a homogenous workforce comprised of employees that share the same values and opinions (Schneider, 1987) and towards a more diverse workforce whose unique strengths and opinions are combined to achieve collective organisational goals. Approaches to increase diversity and inclusion should consider the individual needs of different cultural minority groups and integrate practices and policies to meet these needs accordingly (Roberts et al., 2009). For example, by providing employees with prayer rooms in their offices, or offering flexible work policies, organisations can support employees who are religious or may be juggling work and childcare responsibilities. Similarly, Phillips et al. (2018) recommend an informal mentorship system, in which more-experienced employees assist in facilitating social relationships for new staff, particularly minorities who may feel marginalised in the organisation. Assigning mentors to employees levels the playing field and helps people connect across differences (Phillips et al., 2018). Other examples of diversity and inclusion initiatives could include unbiased recruitment processes, diversity and inclusion-based training programs, merit-based promotions, the celebration of cultural events and activities at work and policies to support job autonomy and work-life balance. Regardless of the approach taken, practices should aim to communicate a clear message, that 'difference' is not a liability in the workplace, and that authentic self-expression is integral for well-being. Consequently, women and minorities may feel more inclined to authentically express themselves in the workplace and leverage their uniqueness for the better of the organisation.

2. Integrate authenticity into recruitment processes

Secondly, I recommend that organisations integrate authenticity into recruitment and selection processes. For example, when attracting job applicants, organisations should place greater emphasis on how authenticity can be enjoyed by working for them (Reis et al., 2017). Likewise, employers may adopt authenticity as a core value that guides their selection process. For example, companies such as Southwest Air hire employees based partially on their willingness to be authentic at work and solve problems by leveraging their unique strengths and perspectives (Cable et al., 2013; Hsieh, 2010). There is empirical evidence to suggest that job candidates value the opportunity to feel authentic at work over other benefits, including challenging work and a positive social environment (Reis et al., 2017). In addition, workplace authenticity has long been recognised as an important component in the development of meaningful professional careers (Craddock, 2010; Svejenova, 2005). Interestingly, in a recent

study, workplace authenticity was more highly valued among women and older professionals (Reis et al., 2017), which is particularly relevant to the qualitative findings from this research. Therefore, communicating an organisational commitment to authenticity may be pivotal in attracting and retaining a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

3. Provide educational resources to encourage authenticity

Thirdly, I recommend organisations provide training opportunities and educational resources to foster authenticity at work. Training initiatives should be directed at all levels of the organisation, as previous research highlights the positive effects of authentic leaders (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Cottrill et al., 2014) and authentic teammates (Emmerich et al., 2020) on employee well-being. Training should focus on the development of important authentic leadership skills, such as transparency, self-awareness, ethics, and the processing of diverse perspectives (Roberts et al., 2009). In practice, this could be holding diversity and inclusion workshops aiming to develop employees' self-awareness and inclusive attitudes. Leaders must also be educated on creating inclusive systems and structures that recognise and develop the unique strengths of their team members whilst also supporting the organisation's performance goals (Roberts et al., 2009). For example, by encouraging employees to share their unique opinions about organisational problems and potential solutions, recognising contributions, and facilitating open communication in their teams. Collectively, these measures will help to foster the conditions for employees to be more authentic in their roles and will ultimately enhance organisational functioning, employee inclusion, commitment, and self-esteem.

Beyond these three recommendations, the findings of the present study indicate that certain characteristics of professional services firms may obstruct authenticity at work. Therefore, two additional implications for professional services firms in particular are provided below.

4. Shift organisational culture

Qualitative findings indicate that there are ways in which professional services firms may prevent authenticity in the workplace. For example, respondents' comments highlighted that the masculinised organisational culture might be detrimental to the authenticity of employees and hinder attendant well-being benefits. However, some organisational cultures

are perpetuated long after the rationale for a cultural shift has been recognised (Cable et al., 2013). This may be particularly true for professional services firms, historically defined by a masculinised, long-hours working culture that is problematic for women and other minorities who do not 'fit the mould' (Haynes, 2012; Kumra & Vinnicombe, 2008; Lewis, 2011). Findings from the present study suggest that this 'white male' culture remains strong, so it is not surprising that minorities continue to face barriers to authentic self-expression at work. The inability to be authentic can lead to costly consequences in the mid- and long-term, such as reduced performance and well-being (Leroy et al., 2015). These findings imply that professional services firms may require additional efforts to successfully promote authenticity in the workplace and should focus on encouraging authenticity among women and minority employees. Successful reinforcement of employee authenticity in these firms would require a substantial culture shift strongly rooted in policies and practices focused on increasing diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace (such as the recommendations above).

5. Reconsider socialisation processes

Another way professional services firms may prevent authenticity at work is through the socialisation practices and maintenance of professional identity in these organisations. As discussed in Chapter 2.4, professional services firms invest considerable resources to socialise and train new employees to develop an organisational identity that aligns with the firms' values at the expense of worker authenticity (Harris, 2002; Haynes, 2012, Kammeyer et al., 2012; Lewis, 2011). Specifically, studies have found that a significant number of individuals entering the law profession feel pressured to act incongruently with their true beliefs and values (Kammeyer et al., 2012; Sheldon & Krieger, 2007), which may lead to ethical conflict, emotional exhaustion and burnout (Kammeyer et al., 2012). For organisations, these divestiture tactics may increase homogeneity in that similar employees are recruited, and then socialised towards similar values (Schneider, 1987). To avoid the homogeneity problem, organisations could adopt authenticity-centred socialisation programs that assist newcomers in recognising and applying their authentic selves in their new work roles (Cable et al., 2013; Mobasseri et al., 2021). For example, upon their entry into the organisation, newcomers could be given the opportunity to reflect on personalised questions such as, "What three words best describe you as an individual?", or encouraged to introduce themselves to new colleagues with titbits of personal information (Roberts et al., 2005). In testing this theory, Cable and colleagues (2013) found that organisational and employee outcomes are more positive when socialisation tactics

emphasise employees' personal identities over their professional identities. However, these tactics would need to be carefully implemented in some professional services organisations, such as law and accounting firms, where ethical and behavioural requirements are central to the profession (Kammeyer et al., 2013). In this case, socialisation tactics should be carefully designed to clarify and support newcomers' core beliefs and values whilst teaching them the overarching rules for the behaviour of the profession (Kammeyer et al., 2012). Thus, integrating authenticity into socialisation processes could be advised for professional services firms. As a result, in line with our findings, employees may become more satisfied and engaged. Moreover, authenticity-centred socialisation processes may solve the homogeneity issue in these organisations, as they not only support employees to express their authentic selves, but also encourage their unique opinions, values, and strengths to solve organisational issues (Cable et al., 2013). Integrating authenticity into socialisation processes may offer organisations a practical way to increase diversity, adapt, and maintain competitive advantage.

5.3 Strengths and limitations

The findings of this research contribute to the authenticity literature and inform a series of recommendations about ways that organisations and professional services firms can promote authenticity in the workplace. However, several methodological considerations need to be taken into account when interpreting these results.

First, this research used only self-report measurement methods, which can be problematic due to common method variance (CMV; variance that is attributed to the measurement method rather than the construct of interest; Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Podsakoff et al., 2003). Specifically, studies that include more than one self-report measure from the same respondent and examine the relationships between these self-report measures are subject to social desirability biases, such as CMV (Cooper et al., 2020). CMV can inflate the magnitude of relationships among variables, resulting in Type I error (Spector et al., 2019). However, Spector (2006) argues that it is wrong to assume that CMV among self-report measures always occurs. Additionally, there are a few reasons that the reader can be confident in the conclusions drawn. First, if CMV did affect our findings, this would have led to inflated correlations among study variables (Bozionelos & Simmering, 2021; Spector & Brannick, 2010). However, the differentiation and non-significance amongst the correlations (see Table 3.) indicate that the bias from CMV is at least relatively small (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Spector & Brannick, 2010).

Second, and measures used were reliable and valid (Cable et al., 2013; Daradkeh et al., 2001; Jackson, 2007; Judge et al., 2000; Judge et al., 2006; Simone et al., 2018; Sinval & Marôco, 2020), thus reducing the likelihood of CMV (Bozionelos & Simmering, 2021). Third, self-report methods are required for assessing individual perceptions and attitudes (Cooper et al., 2020; Spector & Brannick, 2010). For example, some individuals may be able to portray authenticity externally whilst not feeling authentic internally (Gardner et al., 2009). Accordingly, prior research has examined perceptions of authenticity from both others and self and found that others' perceptions predicted authentic self-expression but not authentic self-awareness (Knoll et al., 2015). This argument regarding individual perception holds also true for the other constructs measured in this study, referring to employees' levels of satisfaction, engagement and mental health, which are notoriously hard to objectively observe (Metin et al., 2016). Therefore, self-report measures are the most appropriate method to map out these subjective experiences and capture the multidimensionality of these constructs, such as authenticity at work. Although to avoid the potential impact of CMV, future studies may look to incorporate other non-self-report means, such as company performance records or customer ratings.

Second, the findings of this research are located in a single organisation and are supported by cross-sectional data. This creates problems with the generalisability of our results to other professional services firms either in New Zealand or elsewhere, and we cannot infer causality of the relationships between authenticity and well-being constructs. In addition, a cross-sectional approach does not allow an understanding of how authenticity and indicators of well-being change over time, for example, due to organisational changes and throughout career stages. Therefore, longitudinal data are needed to further validate the relationships between variables; although, it should be noted that the findings that link authenticity to both job satisfaction and work engagement are comparable with prior research across a range of work contexts (Cable et al., 2013; Menard & Brunett, 2011; Metin et al., 2016; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014a, b), including a meta-analysis that examined both longitudinal and cross-sectional studies (Sutton, 2020). In spite of this, it is recommended that future studies employ longitudinal and qualitative approaches, which may bring deeper insights.

Third, the sample was limited to the professional services context and findings are not generalisable to other work contexts or occupational groups. As discussed previously, the professional services context is particular in the consistency of role characteristics – involving

high degrees of self-regulation, autonomy, professionalism and customer orientation. Moreover, the professional services workforce is likely more homogenous in certain ways (for example, employees share similar occupational and educational backgrounds) compared with other work contexts, which restricts variance in results. A broader scope would have generated a larger sample and increased statistical power (Xantholpolou et al., 2013). However, scholars note that other service contexts entail different work characteristics which may affect the relationships between authenticity and work outcomes (Sharp, 2015; Xanthopolou et al., 2013). For example, the mass services context (e.g., supermarkets and retail stores) is characterised by high standardisation and frequent customer contact, which may lead to different authenticity outcomes (Sharp, 2015). Therefore, future studies should aim to include a larger sample within the professional services context, such as accounting, consulting and law firms.

With further regard to the sample, a key strength of the study was the high response rate (74%). Moreover, the demographic samples were mostly representative of the organisation and the industry (New Zealand Law Society, 2021). Almost 70% of respondents were NZ Europeans and more than half (65%) of respondents providing gender information were women, which is slightly above the average proportion (53.9%) of women in these firms in New Zealand (New Zealand Law Society, 2021). The results of this study indicate that the NZ European sample was more authentic compared with other ethnicities and that women and men are similar in terms of their authenticity at work. However, a higher representation of women in this firm may have accounted for the gender finding. For example, a higher number of women may have contributed to a less gendered work environment and culture within the firm analysed. Although, qualitative results contradicted this finding and revealed gender-based issues regarding authenticity at work. Therefore, whilst quantitative methods were used to measure gender differences in authenticity and contributed to answering RQ3.1, qualitative methods may be more appropriate in gathering new or deeper insights into the potential barriers to authenticity among women employees. Regarding ethnicity, due to small samples, ethnic minorities in the study were clustered into one group and compared with those that identified as NZ European. Therefore, cultural distinctions between the groups may have affected moderation results, and it cannot be assumed that all ethnic sub-groups within the non-NZ European sample experience authenticity similarly. Future studies should aim to obtain clearer identification of ethnicity which may illustrate these cultural distinctions.

5.4 Recommendations for future research

While research examining authenticity in the workplace has been gaining momentum in recent years, several research avenues are still to be explored. As the findings of this research show positive correlations between authenticity and work-related well-being, further research using longitudinal and even intervention designs could illuminate whether there are causal relationships between authenticity and well-being outcomes. Exactly how authenticity contributes to satisfaction and engagement and the extent to which it promotes positive outcomes or buffers against negative outcomes, also warrant future study. In addition, these findings are consistent with previous research including a meta-analysis (Sutton, 2020), suggesting a clear link between authenticity and work-related well-being. Future studies could explore additional contextual and cultural antecedents and outcomes of authenticity at work. For example, an interesting research avenue could be to examine links between authenticity at work and other variables, including intrapersonal (e.g. personality traits, motivation), interpersonal (e.g. work relationships, social support) and organisational variables (e.g. job demands and resources) to elucidate authenticity's nomological framework.

These findings suggest that authenticity is equally important for the well-being of all employees, regardless of cultural background. Contrary to this finding, there is meta-analytic evidence to show a weaker relationship between authenticity and well-being in collectivist cultures (Sutton, 2020). However, similar to Sutton's (2020) approach, participants were categorised as collectivist or individualist based on prior research (e.g., Podsiadlowski & Fox, 2011; Shulruf et al., 2007; Tassell et al., 2010) rather than using actual scores from participants. It is acknowledged that this is only a proxy and not necessarily an accurate measure of the collectivism/individualism scores of the sample analysed. Therefore, the non-significant moderating effect of culture is only an indication rather than a definitive conclusion, warranting further research in this area. Future studies should aim to precisely measure levels of collectivism-individualism and other cultural dimensions that may affect authenticity.

Notably, the findings of this research indicate that authenticity is salient to the well-being of professional service workers. However, these findings, combined with written responses from respondents, revealed that the organisational features of this law firm may be less conducive to authenticity in the workplace than suggested by the scale data, especially among minorities. Therefore, future studies should look to, first, replicate this research within other

professional services firms to validate the finding that minorities are less likely to be authentic in these organisations and, second, identify and measure the organisational features and contextual antecedents that may obstruct authenticity at work, such as organisational culture or discriminatory practices and policies. Indeed, because of the nature of professional services firms, future research may look at how to achieve the 'right mix' of authenticity and conformity in these firms and how to ensure authentic self-expression among all employees whilst simultaneously promoting a culture of professionalism. The contradictory gender findings from the quantitative and qualitative analyses also warrant future research. For example, narrative comments from respondents highlighted barriers to authenticity among a number of women in the firm, contradicting the non-significant quantitative result for gender. Future studies may opt for a qualitative approach to examine gender differences in authenticity at work, especially within traditionally masculine organisations, to gather a deeper understanding of potential barriers to authenticity in these contexts among women. In addition, the question of how individuals and organisations can promote authenticity in this work context (especially among minorities) represents an important avenue for further research.

Recently, scholars have shed light on the dark side of authenticity in the workplace, suggesting that it is not always beneficial to bring your true self to work (Cha et al., 2019). For example, Buckman's (2014) work shows that those with undesirable traits, such as low self-esteem and high narcissism, experienced negative consequences in the form of social repercussions from being authentic in the workplace. Therefore, another research avenue could be to explore the potential limits, caveats, and boundaries of authenticity at work (Schlegel & Hicks, 2011). This may be a particularly interesting avenue in the professional services context, which involves historically gendered organisations that tend to favour traits and behaviours of assertiveness, authority, power and aggression (Haynes, 2012). Therefore, an organisation-specific lens exploring this notion is recommended.

5.5 Concluding remarks

Authenticity's long-established association with health and well-being has prompted researchers to investigate its positive effects in workplace settings. The present study was among the first to empirically examine authenticity in the novel context of a professional services firm and link organisation-specific research with authenticity research. Findings reveal positive associations between authenticity and employee engagement and satisfaction,

supporting previous research across a range of work contexts. However, the association between authenticity and mental health was not supported. Contradicting prior research to suggest that those from collectivist cultures will benefit less from being authentic at work, findings demonstrate that ethnicity did not moderate the relationships between authenticity and well-being outcomes. However, NZ Europeans reported behaving more authentically than those from other ethnicities. Whilst quantitative findings indicated that women and men did not differ regarding their authenticity at work, additional written responses shed light on the challenges that women and minorities may face in bringing their true selves to work. There was no quantitative evidence of a double barrier that prevented women from ethnic minorities from behaving authentically in the firm.

Findings indicate that employees who show higher levels of authenticity at work also show higher levels of engagement and satisfaction in their roles. Past research shows that these well-being outcomes have benefits for performance, organisational commitment and financial return (Cesário & Chambel, 2017; Xanthopolou et al., 2009; Yalabik et al., 2014). Given the clear link between authenticity and positive business outcomes, it is recommended that organisations take actionable steps to promote authenticity among employees. Researchers argue that the best approach to foster authenticity is to create cultures and environments where employees are not required to "fit in" or adhere to strict expectations but are rather provided with the autonomy to freely express themselves and conduct their roles in a way that feels authentic (Grandey et al., 2012; Cable et al., 2013). Organisations wishing to increase authenticity should consider educating all employees, particularly senior staff, on the importance of authenticity in the workplace and test and implement policies and practical interventions aimed at increasing employee authenticity. Finally, these findings should lead organisations to focus on supporting their ethnic minority and marginalised members to be authentic at work. As a result, organisations will reap the full benefits of their employees' skills and a culturally diverse, global workforce.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Ethics approval

Original AUTEC approval for larger, longitudinal research project

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

Auckland University of Technology
D-88, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316
E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

17 September 2019

Rachel Morrison & Helena Cooper-Thomas
Faculty of Business Economics and Law

Dear Rachel and Helena

Re Ethics Application: **19/338 Moving to activity-based work: The move to activity based offices and flexible working at *Anonymous Law firm***

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 17 September 2022.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research and as approved by AUTEC in this application.
2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using the EA2 form.
3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using the EA3 form.
4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form.
5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
7. It is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management approval for access for your research from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted. When the research is undertaken outside New Zealand, you need to meet all ethical, legal, and locality obligations or requirements for those jurisdictions.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

For any enquiries please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz. The forms mentioned above are available online through http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics

Yours sincerely,

Kate O'Connor
Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Appendix B – Participant invitation

Work and well-being survey - 2021

An Invitation

My name is Rachel Morrison, and I am an Associate Professor at AUT. Along with my colleagues Helena Cooper-Thomas and Roy Smollan, I conduct research into worker well-being and satisfaction and the physical work environment. Participation in this study is voluntary.

What is the purpose of this research? This research will contribute to understanding well-being, work relationships and the ways that people work. The findings of this research will be fed back to *anonymous law firm* and may be used for academic publications and presentations. All information will be anonymised. The anonymised data may also be used by postgraduate research students supervised by Rachel, Helena and/or Roy.

How was I identified, and why am I being invited to participate in this research? To be included in this research, you need to be an employee of *anonymous law firm* (including contractors and casual employees).

How do I agree to participate in this research? Completing the online survey will be taken as consent to participate. Your participation in this research is voluntary and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you.

What will happen in this research? Are there discomforts and risks? The survey will take about 10-15 minutes to complete. You may complete the survey during work time. The survey alerts you if you miss a question on a particular page; however, if you do not wish to answer a question, you are free to miss the question and continue. If you wish, you may stop completing at any point until your responses have been submitted, but that once this has occurred your data can neither be identified or withdrawn.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated? The data collected will available only to the research team of Rachel Morrison, Helena Cooper-Thomas, Roy Smollan and possibly their future postgraduate research students. All records will be stored in a password locked file at AUT University. Responses are anonymous, and respondents cannot be identified in any way. If fewer than five people identify as being from a particular work area, their responses will be combined with a functionally similar one, to avoid any possibility that individuals can be identified.

What are the benefits? This research will contribute to better understanding of worker well-being. A report on the findings will be provided to *anonymous law firm* and all employees, and there will also be academic outputs.

How will my privacy be protected? Responses to the survey are anonymous; all information will be kept confidential. Data will be stored in a locked file at AUT or, for survey data, secure within the Qualtrics data collection site. *Anonymous law firm* will not have access to this data. No one, other than the researchers and future postgraduate research students, will have access to the anonymous information provided by employees. You will be asked to provide a unique identifier at the end of the survey. This is only used to match responses from one survey to responses in another; it will not be used to identify you.

What are the costs of participating in this research? There are no direct costs to you associated with this research. The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. If you have decided to participate, you can withdraw if you wish to do so without giving a reason. Your organisation has given permission for you to participate in the research during work time if you choose to do so.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation? You have two weeks to decide whether or not you wish to participate.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research? A report summarising the findings will be made available to employees of *anonymous law firm*.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research? Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Rachel Morrison Rachel.Morrison@aut.ac.nz.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Carina Meares, ethics@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research? Please feel free to keep this Information Sheet for your future reference. You are also able to contact Rachel at the address below.

Appendix C – Participant information and consent form

The health and wellbeing of our staff is crucial to us at *anonymous law firm*. There are all sorts of pressures in any workplace, but particularly for us because of the services we provide, the expectations we carry, and the material we are sometimes subject to.

It is important for us to know if our health and wellbeing programme is effective, and in order to do this, we need a better appreciation of where we are now (a baseline), what is helping and what isn't.

This survey is designed to provide that understanding and inform us about how we can improve.

The questions on this survey relate to a variety of aspects of your employment at *anonymous law firm*, including:

1. Aspects of wellbeing, including engagement, job satisfaction, and mental health.
2. Relationships at work, including social support and negative relationships.
3. The work you do at *anonymous law firm*; autonomy, workload, constraints, and work-life balance.
4. Stress (including dealing with confronting material) and organisational support.
5. Authentic self-expression at *anonymous law firm*

Many of these issues will be assessed again to see if we have improved. You will be asked to provide a unique identifier at the end of the survey. This is only used to match responses from this survey to responses in another; it cannot be used to identify you.

Please note – this survey is completely anonymous. This is important to us – we want you to feel comfortable providing your answers.

Associate Professor Rachel Morrison (Faculty of Business, Economics, and Law, AUT) is administering the survey; *anonymous law firm* will not have access to the data. *Anonymous law firm* will be provided with a summary report, and respondents will not be identified in any way.

A report summarising the findings will also be made available to employees of *anonymous law firm*. If fewer than five people identify as being from a particular work area, their responses will be combined with a functionally similar one, to avoid any possibility that individuals can be identified.

Data may also be used within the wider workplace research we are conducting alongside AUT. The summary report we receive will feed into our overall WELL programme, which we will be rolling out later this year, and will be part of our WELL certification application.

The survey takes about 10-15 minutes and can be completed on any device, but the layout is best on a computer screen. We think it will take you less time to complete on a computer than a smartphone or tablet. Completion of the survey will be taken as informed consent to your data being collected.

Appendix D – Survey questions

Work-related wellbeing (engagement, satisfaction)
Thinking about your experience of work at *anonymous law firm* in a typical week, to what extent do you disagree or agree with each of the following statements? Please select the response that best represents your view for each item.
(1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

Work engagement (UWES)

1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy
2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous
3. I am enthusiastic about my job
4. My job inspires me
5. I feel happy when I am working intensely
6. I am proud of the work that I do
7. I am immersed in my work
8. I get carried away when I am working
9. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work

Job satisfaction (SIJS)

1. I feel fairly satisfied with my present job
2. Each day at work seems like it will never end (r)
3. I find real enjoyment in my work
4. I consider my job rather unpleasant (r)
5. Most days I am enthusiastic about my work

Mental health (GHQ-12)
Thinking about your general wellbeing (not just at work), please answer the questions below thinking about the previous 3 months. How often have you:
(1= never, 5 = almost always)

1. Felt capable of making decisions about things
2. Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities
3. Been able to face up to problems
4. Been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered
5. Been able to concentrate
6. Felt that you are playing a useful part
7. Been feeling unhappy or depressed (r)
8. Been losing confidence in yourself (r)
9. Felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties (r)
10. Been thinking of yourself as worthless (r)
11. Lost sleep over worry (r)
12. Felt constantly under strain (r)

Authenticity at work
To what extent do you disagree or agree with each of the following statements?
(1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

1. In this job, I can express myself
2. In this job, I don't feel I need to hide who I really am
3. In this job, I can be myself
4. In this job, I don't have to act like someone I'm not
5. In this job, I feel authentic
6. In this job, I can be who I really am

Open-ended questions (for qualitative analysis)

1. Can you describe a time when you felt free to express yourself authentically at *anonymous law firm* (i.e., to bring your whole self to work)

_____

2. Can you describe a time when you felt you could not express yourself authentically at *anonymous law firm*? (i.e., to bring your whole self to work)

_____

Demographic questions

1. What is your role within the firm?
2. What is your gender?
3. In what decade were you born?
4. What is your ethnicity?
5. What practice group are you in?
6. Please indicate your post-qualification experience (PQE) or, if you are not a lawyer, indicate your years of work experience.

Note: (r) = reverse coded.