The Worklife/progression trade-off

How flexible work arrangements relate to job satisfaction and career success

Phoebe Murabula

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AUT Business School, Department of Management

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Abstract

This study examines flexible working arrangements (FWAs) and work-life balance and how these relate to employees' job satisfaction and career progression in New Zealand. This thesis investigates teleworking, flexi-time, part-time employment, and job sharing. Research suggests FWA positively impacts both employees and organisations (Thompson, Payne, & Taylor, 2015; Casper & Harris, 2008). Other studies show compelling evidence of the impact that flexible working arrangements have on employee engagement and attraction to the job and its significance on organisational performance (Dineen & Allen, 2016). As Thompson, Payne, and Taylor (2015) state, to be an employer of choice, the ability to offer flexible working arrangements is central to attracting job seekers who are in a position to choose.

However, as well as benefits, we found that some negatives come with flexibility and remote work, based primarily around isolation, visibility, and promotion opportunities (Cooper & Kurland, 2002; Cohen & Single, 2001). By drawing on the available research and official statistics and exploring individuals' work experiences through interviews, the study analysed the positive and negative sides of flexible working arrangements. Twelve people were interviewed for this study. Face-to-face interviews were conducted using semi-structured questions. This study is qualitative and analysed through a thematic method using NVivo software. Interviews were transcribed, and data was analysed through thematic analysis. Analysing the data produced themes to answer the research questions: RQ1. In what context, by what means does the use of flexible work arrangements improve the well-being of employees? RQ2. What are the sacrifices and downsides for New Zealand employees in terms of visibility and career progression when using flexible work arrangements?

The findings indicate that flexible working arrangements are associated with work-life balance. Work-life balance is also a vital intermediary which helps employees balance their work and personal commitments and this correlates to employees' job satisfaction.

Most studies leave out the aspect of employees' input and independence in flexible working arrangements. This study will fill a knowledge gap and provide a rare local source for many New Zealand organisations. The findings can also act as a trigger for future research opportunities.

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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 be a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Phoebe Murabula

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Ethical Approval

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) approved this research on 22nd August 2019. Ethics application number 19/295.

Chapter 1 : Introduction

Currently, many organisations are gradually adopting flexible work arrangements (FWAs) to respond to social-demographic changes (Masuda, et al., 2012). According to Al-Habil and Al-Rajudi (2013), FWAs offer organisations and their employees the capability to make choices about when, where, and when work-related activities can be accomplished. Furthermore, Masuda et al. (2012) agree that FWAs are employer supported benefits that allow employees some level of control over when and where they work outside the typical workday. Consequently, Masuda et al. (2012) agree that FWAs are needed because more women, dual-earner couples, single-parent families, and employees assume elderly care responsibilities in the workplace.

On the other hand, Timms et al. (2015) observe that impeding organisational cultures illustrate strong signals to employees who are seeking FWAs. It is stated that this may have repercussions in their career progression and also causes extra workload for their colleagues, leading to team discontent.

This research will only focus on the four most commonly used FWAs: telework/home-based work, part-time work, flex-time, and job sharing.

1.1 Background

Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) are not just a trend. Many organisations have directed their attention to flexible working arrangements (FWAs), including flexitime, working from home, part-time work and job sharing (Avgoustaki & Bessa, 2019). Maxwell, Rankine, Bell, and MacVicar (2007) define flexible working as "any policies and practices, formal or informal which permits employees to vary when and where work is carried out". FWAs are generally used as an arrangement that enables employee flexibility, thus allowing employees to balance the demands of their work and non-work more effectively, to improve, adjust the amount, timing or location of their work, and to improve the organisation's performance (De Menezes & Kelliher, 2017; Avgoustaki & Bessa, 2019).

Flexible work arrangements allow employees to adjust the hours or times they work, where they work, the tasks of work, and the direct caregiving and health benefits they may gain. Examples include child care, elderly care or caring for a partner (Fursman & Zodgekar, 2009; Townsend, McDonald, & Cathcart, 2017). Thus, flexible working arrangements (FWAs) can be defined as working arrangements that allow employees to vary the amount, location, or timing of their work (Kelliher & De Menezes, 2011; Allen, Johnson, Kiburz, & Shockley, 2013; Avgoustaki & Bessa, 2019). Idris (2014) defines flexible work practices (FWPs) as formal and informal organisational strategies that facilitate employees to break loose from the regular 9-to-5 work schedules in order to help them achieve a better work-life balance. These methods typically involve flexible working practices (FWP) such as teleworking, flexitime, part-time and job sharing (Idris, 2014). Maxwell et al. (2007) agree that there are many flexible working practices (FWP), such as flexitime, working from home, teleworking, part-time work, job sharing, and all

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FWAs support WLB. Conversely, Idris (2014) continues by saying that much of the literature on these noticeably different practices are categorised under the universal term of flexible working. Similarly, Avgoustaki and Bessa (2019) state that FWAs are working practices (FWPs) that permit employees to control how, where, and when work is done. These practices include working from home, compressed hours, and flexi-time and how much or continuously work is done; these include part-time work and job sharing (Kossek & Lautsch, 2018).

In recent years flexible working demand has increased in New Zealand and internationally (Fursman & Zodgekar, 2009; De Menezes & Kelliher, 2017). According to De Menezes and Kelliher (2017), many businesses offer some of these flexible working arrangements to their employees, and many employees are taking advantage of these opportunities. For example, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development CIPD (2012) surveyed more than 1,000 employers and 2,000 employees in the United Kingdom (U.K). The survey results showed that the vast majority of employers in large, small and micro-sized organisations offer a wide range of flexible working arrangements to some employees, and the 'right to request' extended to all employees. The survey results also showed that part-time working arrangements are the most widely offered type of flexibility with a lead of (88%). Working from home regularly was the second most commonly offered flexible working option (54%).

According to Fursman and Zodgekar (2009) and Rasmussen and Corbett (2008), the research on flexible working arrangements suggests that the changes and trends result from significant transformations to labour markets and social, economic and demographic changes. This is likely to continue as more people participate in further education and training, an increasing number of solo-parent families, skills shortages, an extended

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retirement age, and millennial employees. These changes mean there will be a more diverse workforce with varying needs who wish to manage work and non-work demands (Chandola, Booker, Kumari, & Benzeval, 2019; Chen & Fulmer, 2018).

In their review of research on teleworking, Rasmussen and Corbett (2008) found that unsettled labour markets and skills shortages prompted employers, unions, and academics to advocate for a balance between organisational and employee flexibility. Similarly, Burgoon and Raess (2009), in their review on globalisation and working time, found that working time is a much-debated aspect of working life for employees in terms of conditions and more flexibility throughout the industrialised world. Burgoon and Raess (2009) also observed that the policymakers who link globalisation and worktime developments are crucial to the productivity and equity of market economies that use offshore workers to gain a competitive advantage.

This study was done pre COVID-19 pandemic. However, reports and surveys have shown that COVID-19 took the whole world by surprise, triggering a great deal of uncertainty and raising issues and challenges (Pastakia, Kilpatrick, Kearsey, & Moir, 2020). This means that the COVID-19 pandemic may challenge organisational cultures, how work is distributed, and how organisations organise and engage their workforce (Pastakia, Kilpatrick, Kearsey, & Moir, 2020). Given the importance of human capital to every organisation, organisations will need to respond to their employees' requirements during the evolving challenges (Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), 2015).

According to the International Labour Organization (2020), a report on teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond shows that although the number of people teleworking part-time or full-time has gradually increased over the years, the COVID-19 pandemic has entirely accelerated the implementation of teleworking modalities by employers. Additionally, Lott (2020) points out that due to the COVID -19 pandemic risk in the 2020 lockdown, the recent digital technological advancement has made autonomous work arrangements available to more employees; the world has adapted extremely quickly to the lockdown.

According to Spurk and Straubb (2020), the COVID -19 pandemic signifies emergencies that have affected human life in numerous ways worldwide. For example, social distancing and businesses shutting down, visible shifts in work arrangements, workloads, work motivations such as commitment and job mindsets, work relationships, work-life balance for employees within flexible employment.

The term "flexible working practices (FWP)" is defined by Bihani and Dalal (2014) as practices that allow employees and supervisors to adapt work schedules, work arrangements, and work responsibilities to accommodate family responsibilities, other personal situations, and the employer. The article goes on to suggest that in order to survive, organisations must utilise FWPs to attract skilled workers and diverse talent.

According to Bamber et al. (2016), business institutions such as multinational firms (MNEs) and standardised production systems that frequently operate across national borders have led some to believe that national differences have been eroded in how work is organized and managed (p. 2).

Although there is evidence that many organisations now offer more flexibility, studies show that this differs significantly across countries. There have been protections put in place in OECD nations (Rasmussen, Foster, & Farr, 2016). For example, Bamber, Lansbury, Wailes, and Wright (2011) note that some of the OECD's protections included individual employee rights in critical areas such as minimum employment standards, anti-discrimination practices, and employment protection. More recently, Bamber et al. (2016) found that national employment relations institutions continue to produce significantly different outcomes among countries.

1.2 The motivation for researching this topic

The desire to engage in this research stems from my lack of knowledge around the flexible working arrangements that already existed and how common these were when I first arrived in New Zealand ten years ago. When we first came to New Zealand from Kenya as a family of four, my two boys were still young, which meant that I had to take care of the family. Although Kenya is an English-speaking country, it was a big culture shock for my family when we arrived. I got a job and worked part-time or reduced hours for six months. During the period that I worked part-time, I did not know that any other flexible working arrangements were available. Working part-time was the only option that l knew, and finding information regarding other flexible working arrangements was very limited. My experience spiked my urge and interest to research the topic of flexible working arrangements, particularly in New Zealand.

In order to better understand flexible working arrangements, it was thought it would be helpful if the research included the employees' lived experiences, thereby allowing them to explain their experiences concerning flexible working arrangements in their own

words. Hearing their stories might provide a better understanding of how they feel, what they believe, and what they know about flexible working arrangements. Additionally, they can give employees a better understanding of how flexible working arrangements align with their career progression and work-life balance.

1.3 Contribution

The findings and analysis gained from this research study will contribute to the body of academic literature on flexible working arrangements in organisations, its impact on employees' career progression opportunities, and well-being. Much of the research on flexible working arrangements and work-life balance focuses on those employers that offer different work arrangements. The assumption in some studies points to a significant association between competitive advantages and recruiting and retaining employees. For instance, work-life balance continues to be one of the priorities; many employees, especially millennials, will wish to have this type of work balance in their organisations. The influence is growing, and many organisations have adopted it or are expanding their existing flexible work arrangements policies (The Institute of Management New Zealand, 2020). Most studies leave out the aspect of employees' input and independence in flexible working arrangements.

This study will fill a knowledge gap and will provide a rare local source for many New Zealand organisations. The findings can also act as a trigger for future research opportunities.

1.4 Thesis Structure

This thesis is conventionally structured into six chapters. Chapter one introduces the topic by providing a brief overview of the background, followed by the researcher motivation for researching the topic and how the research contributes to the literature.

Chapter two provides an overview of interdisciplinary literature relevant to a study of four types of Flexible working arrangements: Teleworking, Flexitime Part-time work and Job-sharing, their benefit and challenges for employees and employers. The literature informs the research questions:

- RQ1. In what context, by what means does the use of flexible work arrangements improve the well-being of employees?

- RQ2. What are the sacrifices and downsides for New Zealand employees in terms of visibility and career progression when using flexible work arrangements?

Chapter three introduces the research methods used in this study. Research philosophy is then explained to explain how assumptions influence how a researcher understands research questions, methods, and the interpretation of the findings. The approach used in the research is then explored, along with the methodology employed. In Chapter four, the findings are summarised using the key themes derived from the twelve interviewees experiences. Several themes emerged from the analysis, such as their reasons to choose flexible working arrangements, their experiences with technology management, their perceptions of career progression opportunities, productivity and efficiency, and their understanding of work-life balance. The fifth chapter discusses the findings and the COVID-19 pandemic, the limitations of the study, and a summary. The sixth chapter

concludes and lays out the direction for future research contributions and theoretical implications.

Chapter 2   Literature Review

2.1 Flexible work arrangements

This section of the report discusses flexible work arrangements (FWAs), followed by a description of sources and a brief conceptualising of flexible work arrangements. Next, it discusses the four types of flexible work arrangements: Teleworking, flexi-time, Part-time and Job Sharing, and their benefits and challenges for employees and organisations. How teleworking and remote working are linked to job satisfaction is then discussed.

2.2 Introduction

Many countries worldwide face rapid demographic changes, such as the entrance of a new generation of employees, the so-called Generation Y, and the ageing of the workforce (Bal & De Lange, 2015). According to the authors, as the generation born between 1946 and 1965, known as baby boomers, grows, older birth rates have reduced, resulting in a workforce that will slowly comprise more senior employees and fewer younger employees. Thus, Bal and De Lange (2015) suggest that organisations have to invest more effort into being attractive employers for younger and older employees. Bal and De Lange (2015) further say that the key to retaining an ageing workforce is offering workplace flexibility.

 Similarly, Idris (2014) agrees that the recent trends in the labour market show that the labour force is ageing and that other demographic factors, such as the growing involvement of women in the workforce, primarily mothers with young children, are involved. These rapid changes pose challenges for organisations when planning their employee retention strategies. Thus, Idris (2014) observes that the increased importance

of flexible working arrangements (FWAs) and policies that promote family-friendly environments has been driven by the requirement for employees to maintain a balance between work and personal life. Therefore, to compete with other organisations for the best employees, flexible working practices (FWPs) are primarily used (Idris, 2014). Idris (2014) defines FWPs as formal and informal work that allows employees to have options besides the traditional, 9-to-5 work schedules. Broadly, the dimension of flexible practices includes teleworking/ telecommuting (de Vries, Tummers and Bekkers (2019), flexi-time (Lee and DeVoe 2012; Wheatley, 2017), job sharing (Lazar, Osoian and Ratiu 2010; Wood and Wattus, 1987) and part-time work Wheatley (2017).

There have been several literature reviews on flexible working arrangements and the significant workplace flexibility they allow in areas such as part-time working, job sharing, compressed work weeks, flexi-time, and teleworking (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Menezes & Kelliher, 2011; Wheatley, 2017). Menezes and Kelliher (2011) state that most frequently flexible working arrangements are linked to an organisation's ability to hire the required number and quality of staff by broadening the recruitment pool and looking at retention and improved employee relations. Similarly, workplace flexibility also is linked to enhanced employee relationships, loyalty, and commitment even though the employer may not have introduced FWA in other organisations (Maxwell, Rankine, Bell, & MacVicar, 2007). However, flexible work arrangements and human resource policies designed to help balance work and family responsibilities are often underutilised by the employees and are usually unsupported by prevalent corporate cultures; thus, they may not decrease work-family conflict or increase organisational success (Kossek & Ozeki, 1999).

There is evidence that many organisations worldwide face competition to attract and retain staff (Onken-Menke, Nüesch, & Kröll, 2018). Demands are increasing for businesses to offer flexible working practices arrangements that allow workers some degree of choice in how they work (Kelliher & Anderson, 2008). Campbell, Coff, and Kryscynski (2012) point out that an organisation's competitive advantage is typically derived from its staff's skills. Therefore, organisations need to attract and keep the most skilled employees.

According to Ugargol and Patrick (2018), rapid workforce diversity changes the global nature of work and how a position is designated and accomplished. Thus, organisations need to increase the need to ensure employee engagement, a central tool to sustain and retain dedicated and productive employees.

Flexible working practices have increased attachment to organizations and decreased turnover intention (Onken-Menke, Nüesch, and Kröll, 2018). Finally, an essential advantage of flexible work arrangements for employers is greater employee productivity and greater organisational commitment (Eaton, 2003). An article by Thompson, Payne and Taylor (2015) found that organisations increasingly offer flexible work arrangements to retain employees. These options include flexible scheduling, telecommuting, part-time work, job sharing, and variable work hours.

Casper and Harris (2008) also state that many employees are increasingly aware of the importance of flexible working arrangements.

When it comes to building trust and respect, flexible work arrangements contribute to building a solid relationship between employers and employees. As Kelliher and Anderson (2008) point out, engaging with employees and letting them voice how they

want to organise their work arrangements shows the employer's respect for staff, thereby enhancing commitment to the organisation.

Another advantage of flexible working arrangements, mentioned by Onken-Menke, Nüesch, and Kröll (2018) and Fallon (1997), is that by empowering staff, they feel trusted to work autonomously, which allows them to get on with their work as well as the other aspects of their lives.

Other studies have found no relationship between flexible work arrangements and organisational bonding (Haar, 2008).

While the positive impacts have dominated much of the literature, there is also the possibility that not being physically present within the workplace could negatively impact progression, hinder development and limit opportunities, including informal learning and mentoring from colleagues (Cooper & Kurland, 2002). Beauregard and Henry (2009) note that time spent at the workplace is frequently used as a sign of employees' contributions and commitment to the organisation., Flexible working arrangements, such as telework and flexible hours that make employees less visible, have been linked with fewer promotions, lower performance evaluation, and smaller salary increases.

Studies show that flexible workers are perceived to have lower long-term career potential (Frank & Lowe, 2003). These workers are also perceived as less serious about their careers by their line managers (De Menezes & Kelliher, 2017), which may influence how their performance is reviewed. Beauregard and Henry (2009) point out that although to some degree, employees are concerned about flexible working arrangements damaging their promotion prospects, they are equally worried about building relationships with co-workers and supervisors (Beauregard & Henry, 2009).

Other studies show that working reduced hours for professional staff means that the employees cannot spend as much time on the skill development criteria vital for career success (Cohen & Single, 2001). As Edwards and Robinson (2004) point out, staff who work reduced hours generally have reduced responsibilities and fewer opportunities to learn new skills.

The mixed results from the international literature are also apparent in New Zealand research (see, for example, Bentley et al., 2013; Masselot, 2015; Rasmussen & Corbett, 2008). However, research on flexible work arrangements has been limited until recently, when new legislative changes have made trends in flexible work arrangements a public policy concern. This has prompted official reports on such trends (New Zealand Law Society, 2019). Crucial for this research has been further official statistical information since the first Survey of Working Life in 2008. This study draws on the insights from these surveys and, in particular, will draw on the latest Survey of Working Life from 2018, where Statistics New Zealand released the first insights and data in July 2019 (Stats NZ, 2019).

2.2.1 COVID-19 Caption

This study was done pre the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there has been no literature on flexible working arrangements that balance productivity and well-being when the whole world went into lockdown due to the coronavirus early this year, working from home became the new way of working for many organisations. Reports, surveys, news stories and statistics posted by governments and media outlets worldwide show that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2.7 billion people have been affected by lockdowns and stay-at-home measures (Schwartz, Hatfield, Scoble-Williams, & Volini, 2020).

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, many people work from home. Some employees will be working from home for the first time. The shift came as big news and required numerous adaptations and a multitude of challenges, and many organisations are now thinking about some of the new practices in the longer term (Public Service Commission, 2020).

2.2.2 Description of sources and criteria

An extensive body of literature is written on workplace flexibility within flexible working arrangements and work-life balance themes. In addition, there are many reports, case studies, and public policy papers written on these themes. The researcher used the following sources for the literature review to guarantee the simplicity of information. The sources include electronic databases, frequently cited authors and sources, key authors in flexible working arrangements, Auckland University of Technology library, literature and reports held by the supervisors, and researcher's reading of books and articles. A Google Scholar search for literature in databases using English keywords; "flexible working arrangements," "flexible scheduling arrangements," "remote work," "telecommuting," "flex-time," "home office," "work from home," "Job sharing," "working part-time," "Job satisfaction," "employees well-being," "employee and career progression" were done and produced a variety of materials on the topic. Peer-reviewed articles took preference.

The search criteria ranged from 2010 - 2019 and comprised eight different types of flexible working arrangements in New Zealand. These FWAs included compressed work-weeks, fixed-term contracts, shift work, overtime, part-time work, Job sharing, flexitime, and teleworking. This research will only focus on the four most commonly used FWAs: telework/home-based work, part-time work, flex-time, and job sharing. The other four

compressed work-week, fixed-term contracts, shift work, and overtime are out of scope for this study. Some of the flexible working arrangements examined refer to recently available government statistics and reports released.

Second search: Extra criteria: Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many events happened while the researcher was still writing the report. The researcher performed a second search using Google Scholar for literature on flexible working arrangements. The search ranged from 2020 to 2021. The researcher wanted to capture any peer literature on flexible working arrangements during the COVID -19 pandemic period. A Google Scholar search for literature in databases used the English keywords; "flexible working arrangements," "flexible scheduling arrangements," "remote work," "telecommuting," "flex-time," "home office," "work from home," and "flexible working arrangements,"

2.2.3 Conceptualising flexible working arrangements.

Many terms are used when talking about flexible working arrangements. Kelliher and Anderson (2008) describe flexible working as a concept used to describe various activities. These activities include remote working or working from home, reduced operating hours, flexible starting or stopping times, and compressed working time; this is when employees can perform their contractual hours in fewer working days than usual. In other empirical studies, different working arrangements are described using various terminologies. Frank and Lowe (2003) used the words 'alternative work arrangements' to describe flexible working arrangements, including full-time hours, part-time hours, compressed workweeks, and seasonal work. In his paper, Fallon (1997) explains similar work arrangements using the term 'alternative work schedules'. Similarly, Belanger and Collins (1998) also use the word 'distributed work arrangements' to describe when teams

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work at different locations. Other studies, for example, one by Townsend, McDonald, and Cathcart (2017), state that FWAs as broadly defined include adjustments to the timing, the location or the tasks of work, such as, for example, job sharing, part-time work, flexi-time, and teleworking, and the provision of caregiving and health benefits for children or family members.

However, Costa, Joyce, and Parodi (2018) state that part-time work locks down wage advancement for several reasons: fewer training provisions, missing out on casual interactions and networking possibilities, and limited build-up skills through working fewer hours.

On the other hand, (Beatson, 2019) report on the megatrends in flexible working shows that flexible working is not equally important for everyone. According to Beatson (2019), most employees are content with the current state of work organisation, so improvements will not lead to a dramatic improvement in their working lives. Throughout an employee's working life, flexible working becomes significantly more important to them and greater value to them, perhaps even a fundamental element of successful participation in paid employment (Beatson, 2019). As one example, Beatson (2019) argues that a part-time job is bad for incomes and career prospects, yet nearly one-quarter of American adults work part-time, often involuntarily (Beatson, 2019. Consequently, Beatson (2019) suggests a few factors that assist or hinder the spread of FWA at workplaces are organisational culture, management capability, and attitudes towards flexible working. Although a large part of the workforce already benefits from flexible working, a significant portion does not, which may explain why FWA is desired at such a disproportionate rate among employees (Beatson, 2019).

2.2.4 Factors leading to an increase in FWAs.

This section outlines the types of flexible work arrangements, definitions of the four types of flexible working arrangements, and the factors leading to increased FWAs. It discusses the four types of flexible working arrangements: teleworking, flexitime, part-time, and job sharing.

According to Townsend, McDonald, and Cathcart (2017), flexible work arrangements can be categorised according to long or short-term, ad hoc, formalised, or informal arrangements.

Flexible working takes many forms. As (Donnelly, Proctor-Thomson, & Plimmer, 2012) observe, traditionally flexible work arrangements have been framed in terms of choice. The survey of New Zealand employees' working lives in 2018 showed that most employees had flexible work arrangements at their workplaces. However, the flexibility employees have at workplaces varies and depends on the industry they work in and the type of job they perform (Stats NZ, 2019).

According to Blake-Beard, O'Neill, Ingols and Shapiro (2010), the 1970s saw many women, mainly white middle-class women, joining the professional workforce in large numbers, "increasing a state of imbalance" that grew between family and work responsibilities. As Sladek (1995) reported, the dramatic increase in the numbers of women joining the workforce compelled both men and women to find help in balancing their roles as employees and parents. Sladek (1995) also noted that employers found that offering on-site day care centres made good business sense in responding to the upsurge of women joining the workforce. According to Sladek (1995), many organisations that had embraced the value of offering childcare added several benefits as part of work-

family initiatives. They progressively added work and family programmes, including a child and elderly care benefits and flexible work arrangements.

Similarly, Blake-Beard et al. (2010) argue that organisations that offer flexible work arrangements to their employees help them to balance their dual work-life assignments. Doing so benefits the organisation, as it maintains its workforce. Studies show that demand for flexible working increases as the "right to request" to work flexibly is expected to extend due to many factors (Kumra & Manfredi, 2012; Fursman & Zodgekar, 2009; Cooper & Baird, 2015).

There is an increased demand for flexible work both in New Zealand and globally. Significant changes drive this demand, such as demographics, social economics, and the labour market (Fursman & Zodgekar, 2009).

Kumra and Manfredi (2012) suggest that flexible working is a good practice that benefits both employees and organisations and is crucial. Organisations must develop management capabilities that can deal with challenges posed by diverse working patterns.

As Kelliher and Anderson (2010) emphasised, flexible working policies support employees to achieve a healthy work-life balance while allowing them an element of choice over how much, when, and where they work (Kelliher & Anderson 2010).

As Kelliher and Anderson (2010) point out, flexible working policies are generally designed to provide employees with a degree of choice over how much, when, and where they work and support them in achieving a work-life balance.

On the other hand, Donnelly, Proctor-Thomson, and Plimmer (2012) observe that flexible work arrangements have in the past been framed in terms of *choice*, in that employees

can balance the demands of work and family life. Conversely, Cooper and Baird (2015) point out that policies that support flexible work arrangements have increased due to the need for employees to balance paid employment and family duties.

Many countries have responded to the call for greater workplace flexibility and the political influence of the work and family clash; thus, countries including Australia in 2010 and previously the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, and New Zealand have enacted the "right to request" policies (Cooper & Baird, 2015; Donnelly et al.,2012).

According to Donnelly, Proctor-Thomson, and Plimmer (2012), although legislative methods vary according to their institutional framework, two broad approaches are evident. The first approach is a life cycle that warrants employees the 'right to work' reduced hours for a specified period to accommodate a range of work-life requirements. The second approach, to which New Zealand, Australia, and the United Kingdom subscribe, extends to the right of a particular group of workers to 'request' flexible working arrangements (Hegewisch, 2009). For example, Heathrose Research (2010) reports that a 'life-cycle approach assures employees the 'right to work' reduced working hours for particular periods in the schedule to accommodate an array of work-life demands. Skinner and Pocock (2011) point out another approach to which governments such as New Zealand, Australia, and the United Kingdom subscribe to amplify individual groups of employees' right to request flexible working arrangements.

Similarly, Heathrose Research Ltd (2010) shows that although these countries, New Zealand, Australia, the UK, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and Canada, subscribe to the idea, they differ in the range of provisions they offer. These countries primarily intend to provide employees with caring duties the chance to request more flexibility in their work. In New Zealand, Donnelly et al. (2012), for instance, point out

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that under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations (Flexible Working Arrangements Act 2007), employees with caring responsibilities are granted the statutory 'right to request flexible working arrangements from their organisation'. In addition to the 'right to request,' the New Zealand government's legislative changes for Parental Leave and Employment Protection (Paid Parental Leave) Amendment Act 2002 and the Employment Relations (breaks, infant feeding, and other Matters) Amendment Act 2008 (Donnelly et al. 2012). Thus, the New Zealand approach is unique. It mandates a more comprehensive provision than other governments by broadening the 'right to request flexible working arrangements to all employees with caring responsibilities' (Donnelly et al., 2012).

On the other hand, studies show there has been criticism in limiting the 'right to request' to a narrow set of employees, for example, carers only as this is claimed to have generated divisions between employees with caring duties and non-carers (Heathrose Research Ltd, 2010; Himmelweit, 2007). In response to the demand for just access to all employees, a reassessment of the 'right to request' Act recommended extending the legislation to all employees regardless of their caring responsibilities (Department of Labour (DOL), 2011; Heathrose Research Ltd, 2010).

Therefore, as broadly outlined, the types of FWAs offered by employers include telework; flexi-time; home-based work; part-time work; job-sharing; and provision of caregiving and health benefits, for example, child and elderly care or care of a partner (Townsend, McDonald, & Cathcart, 2017)

2.2.5 Overview of four types of FWAs

The following section provides an overview and discussion of four types of flexible working arrangements commonly used in organisations: teleworking or remote working, flexi-time, part-time, and job-sharing.

2.2.6 Teleworking

For this study, the term teleworking and telecommuting will be used interchangeably, as is accepted practice in this study area. Drawing from various literature reviews, teleworking is one form of work flexibility, and it is sometimes referred to as telecommuting (de Vries, Tummers, & Bekkers, 2019; Bentley et al., 2013; Al-Habil & Al-Rajudi, 2013). As Baruch (2001) point out, there is no universal definition of the term 'teleworking'. For example, in Europe, they use teleworking, while in the United States, it is referred to as 'telecommuting. Some other phrases used include 'home-working, 'working-at-a-distance', 'off-site workers', or remote workers and all these phrases are used interchangeably.

Other studies have defined telework (also called teleworking or telecommuting) as a work arrangement in which employees operate their regular work away from their usual workplace or work remotely from their central offices or production facilities, with no personal contact with colleagues but supported by technological networks using information and communication technologies (Fitzer, 1997, p .65; Rasmussen & Corbett, 2008; Bentley et al., 2013; de Vries, Tummers, & Bekkers, 2019; Nakrošienė, Bučiūnienė, & Goštautaitė, 2019). Furthermore, (Bailey & Kurland, 2002) define telework or telecommuting as "working outside the conventional workplace and

communicating with it by way of telecommunications or computer-based technology" p.384.

The intensity of telework varies depending on the amount of time spent teleworking. Nakrošienė et al. (2019) note that full-time employees who work from home or places other than a regular office using telecommunications technology are considered to be full-time teleworkers. In contrast, a person who partially teleworks from home, partly from the office, or partly at a client site is referred to as part-time telework (Nakrošienė et al.,2019). Also, Nakrošienė et al. (2019) point out that unplanned telework occurs when an employee works from home only periodically, for example, in the case of unexpected childcare or sickness.

Greer and Payne (2014) point out that telework remains a common choice for working in a conventional central office setting as organisational patterns shift and technology advances. Similarly, (Vega, Anderson, & Kaplan, 2015) agree that technological signs of advancement have played a role in the increased numbers of job duties being completed outside traditional office locations. Baruch (2001) posits that the increase in the use of information technology (I.T.) and the advanced organisational approach acknowledges that work is what you do, not a place where you go.

For example, in 2011, twenty-six million employees in the United States reported engaging in telework (WorldatWork, 2011). Across the literature, studies show 'telework', sometimes referred to as 'telecommuting', means it has become more common for employees to execute some of the work from home instead of travelling to the office (Lazar, Osoian, & Ratiu, 2010); (de Vries, Tummers, & Bekkers, 2019). The awareness of teleworking evolved in the 1970s when *telecommuting* referred to working

away from the office and using the telephone to communicate as an alternative to being physically at a workplace (Nilles, Carlson, Gray, & Hanneman, 1976).

De Vries, Tummers, and Bekkers (2018) indicate that teleworking increased in the 1990s. According to Vries et al. (2018), the 1990s saw an increase in teleworking. More current reports and surveys show that teleworking is a commonly utilised flexibility programme (WorldatWork, 2015; Bentley, et al., 2013). On the other hand, Rasmussen and Corbett (2008) note that with the improvements in technology, the 'traditional' approaches of flexible working methods were expected to become less utilised as organisations adopted teleworking as one of the modern techniques of working.

Lister and Harnish (2011) report on telework in Canada shows that many employers and millions of employees in a wide range of industries across the world have adopted a 'wherever', 'whenever' approach to work, which demonstrates that the old-fashioned obstacles towards telework can overcome management mistrust because the advantages are worth the effort.

Studies have shown that home is the most common off-site work location for employees who use teleworking (WorldatWork, 2011). According to the WorldatWork (2011) report, another common site for telework includes satellite centres and hotel locations. These sites are gaining an increase in people who work while on holiday. Although the challenge that contributes to telework's downsides is the lack of general availability of wi-fi and wireless devices, it is difficult for employees to connect while on vacation (WorldatWork, 2011).

Across the literature, many studies suggest that telework can improve job satisfaction, individual morale, work-life balance, supervisor relationship quality and can decrease

turnover and stress (Vega, Anderson, & Kaplan, 2015; Fonner & Roloff, 2010; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Similarly, telework practices can benefit both individual employees, organisations, and society as a whole (Greer & Payne, 2014). When fewer people travel to central workplace locations, this reduces traffic problems and reduces traffic-induced air pollution (Lister & Harnish, 2011).

As well as the community benefits, organisations that provide telework flexibility have a competitive advantage in retaining and attracting top talent and a diversified workforce (Greer & Payne, 2014), leading to more satisfied and motivated employees (Chiru, 2018). According to Perez, Sanchez, and de Luis Carnicer (2002), telework benefits companies in many ways beyond productivity. For example, it allows companies to address office space pressures, reduce costs associated with office space, broaden the knowledge portfolio existing in the organisation, and make the recruitment and retention of skilled workers the topmost benefit of telework programmes to employers (Perez, Sanchez, & de Luis Carnicer, 2002). Furthermore, telework saves time on commuting (Greer & Payne, 2014) and offers more labour time flexibility (Perez, Sanchez, & de Luis Carnicer, 2002). On the other hand, research has also shown that telework has been linked to frequent negative results for employees. For example, employees who telework regularly feel excluded and out of the loop in the workplace (Morganson, Major, Oborn, Verive, & Heelan, 2010). Also, Golden (2007) states that a higher rate of teleworking in an organisation is linked to lower co-workers' satisfaction levels. Conversely, Sardeshmukh et al. (2012) point out that telework changes an employee's physical setting, such as the equipment used, the tools and resources used to get the job done, and the interactions employees have with other employees who are working traditionally in the workplace. According to Perez, Sanchez, and de Luis Carnicer (2002), other barriers affecting

telework include access to technology, the teleworkers motivation and extent of control, while telework also adversely affects the social network in the workplace. This then causes challenges for managers who may be unable to create team collaboration. It also makes it difficult for managers to overcome the absence of informal and, at times, formal interactive learning, and scheduled meetings are not adequate. Lastly, when employees work off-site, they miss the learning that occurs informally, the sudden learning that cannot be scheduled.

2.2.6.1 Teleworking technical equipment and operating costs

Jaakson and Kallaste (2010) suggested that telework needs substantial investments in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) because telework's success mainly depends on the technical equipment, the installation, and the technical support. Therefore, Jaakson and Kallaste (2010) say that the equipment required by telecommuters should be as good as that used by their colleagues. Thus, this includes voice and data communication systems.

Jaakson and Kallaste (2010) point out that labour law principles presume that the employer provides the equipment necessary for work. As teleworkers work under employment agreement by definition, Jaakson and Kallaste (2010) say that legal principles apply; however, telework often occurs by using the employee's equipment in practice. Jaakson and Kallaste (2010) conclude that the labour laws should also address who owns the equipment and how the costs are shared. According to the authors, in the absence of government legislation that specifies the rights and responsibilities of telecommuters, it appears that employers are responsible for one-off expenses like buying and installing equipment (Jaakson & Kallaste, 2010).

Additinally, Jaakson and Kallaste (2010) contend that flexible working is based on the assumption that employees and their families will bear the overhead costs of employment; as such, teleworking remains risky as long as it remains informal (Jaakson & Kallaste, 2010).

2.2.6.2 Health and safety aspects of Telework

Employers are required to provide their employees with a safe working environment. As an added precaution, Jaakson and Kallaste (2010) state that employers must ensure that furniture, lighting, and ventilation meet governing health and safety requirements. According to Jaakson and Kallaste (2010), finding special terms in the law for telework and how an employer can inspect the working environment outside the office is unclear for many organisations.

Jaakson and Kallaste (2010) agree that telework is commonly done at home, putting employee health and safety at risk (Jaakson & Kallaste, 2010). A study conducted by Jaakson and Kallaste (2010) found that teleworkers are more likely to suffer specific health problems due to endless work hours without interruptions, and second, health breaks are more likely to be neglected (Jaakson & Kallaste, 2010). As Jaakson and Kallaste posit, computers are also regularly used for longer than the recommended periods. To prevent occupational diseases, both employees and employers should be responsible and for implementing ergonomic workplaces strategies.

2.2.6.2.1 COVID-19 Caption

The abrupt shift to remote working due to the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the attitudes of workers and organisations around the world as never before (PWC, 2020). This unexpected and massive shift carries health risks, transforming into productivity drawbacks (PWC, 2020).

Similarly, the International Labour Organisation ILO (2020) quoted Blair Vernon, the Chief Executive, Financial Services enterprise, New Zealand, saying that "*Moving to a full flex workforce has been a necessity given COVID-19, but it only accelerates what we have believed for a long time. Full-flex is the natural extension of embracing diversity in all its facets. Balancing the apparent freedom of flex for a workforce with the necessity for productivity improvement, not just its maintenance, is the true challenge for leaders in any contemporary business in 2020 and beyond*".

A recent article in the Human Resources Director (HRD) report has shown that remote work does not work for everybody. For example, in July, 80,000 Japanese tech group Fujitsu employees transitioned to a remote working arrangement. While there was an immense shift away from Japan's traditional corporate culture in a country where employees work long hours, their new policy does not cover a large workforce segment. These people have to continue working on-site, including those factory employees and customer service agents' employees (Ranosa, 2020).

2.2.7 Flexi-time

Flexitime (or flex-time) is generally defined as the ability to arrange flexible starting and finishing times, which are often centred on a core-hours requirement (e.g., 8 am- 3.00 pm) (Lee & DeVoe, 2012; Wheatley, 2017). Also known as flexible working hours, this is perhaps the best known and most common type of flexible working. Notably, this may operate by mutual agreement between the employer and the employee. As Wheatley (2017) has observed, the UK 2011 *Workplace Employee Relations Survey* (WERS) revealed that 34 per cent of employees used flexi-time.

According to Lazar et al. (2010), Peretz, Fried, and Levi (2018), the flexi-time arrangement allows employees to decide if they can be involved in determining the start and end times of their working once a certain number of hours is completed. This type of work arrangement enables the employee's preferences to meet family or personal commitments and, at the same time, meet the needs of the organisation, and also enables employees to lessen their travelling time by starting and finishing work before or after the rush hour (Lazar et al. 2010; Eldridge & Nisar, 2011).

Wheatley (2017) says that the flexitime arrangement enables the retention of full-time equivalent hours, as an employee's actual working hours are adjusted within the typical working day or week to accommodate the employee's preference while meeting the organisation's needs. Thus, employees still work the equivalent hours of 9 am – 5 pm but are allowed to do so before and after the standard hours.

In a review of research on employee satisfaction and flexible working arrangements, Wheatley (2017) found that flexi-time improves work-life balance and decreases work stress if executed as part of the employee-centred policy so that flexi-time can increase a

firm's profitability. In addition, Lee and DeVoe (2012) noted that an organisation that offers flexi-time to its employees' experiences increased productivity and decreased absenteeism.

On the other hand, challenges in this type of flexible arrangement could arise in customer service, work continuity, and supervision outside the traditional period. Thus, Berkery, Morley, Tiernan, and Peretz, 2020) argue that employers are more inclined to implement flexi-time when the perceived benefits outweigh the cost of introducing it.

2.2.8 Part-time work

Part-time work is defined as working less than 30 hours a week and is the leading employment source among women in the UK, accounting for 40 per cent of all work (Wheatley, 2017). Indeed, van Osch and Schaveling (2020) agree that in the past few decades, women's labour force participation in many developed nations has increased hugely, yet still, compared to men, women tend to hold mainly part-time positions. Equally, Fagan and Walthery (2011) and Stavroua, Casperb, Ierodiakonoua (2015) further outline that the reason many part-time employees are women stems from gender disparities in family roles. For example, van Osch and Schaveling (2020) note that 43% of the working population in the Netherlands work part-time, the highest percentage in the world, with other countries following at a distance, e.g. Austria at 29%, Switzerland and Iceland at 28% and the United States at 27%. Van Osch and Schaveling (2020) state that most of the part-time jobs in these countries are occupied by women, and a good example is the Netherlands, with 66% of women working part-time. Van Osch and Schaveling (2020) add that Dutch women choose to work part-time to combine career

and care responsibilities. Wheatley (2017) states that part-time jobs are more common among the professions.

In Europe, Stavroua et al. (2015) emphasise that women bear a greater share of caregiving responsibilities than men. Women may find it hard to balance their paid work with family caregiving duties, so work-life policies like flexible or part-time work may be beneficial. Despite this, Fagan and Walthery (2011) and Stavroua et al. (2015) state that part-time work for men has increased, but the engagement patterns remain gendered. Overall, Stavroua et al. (2015) say that part-time is much more prevalent among women. Having these choices offers a great deal of flexibility to women who might otherwise have felt that remaining in the labour market for various reasons was unattainable.

According to Gudep (2019), part-time work schedules are vital in creating a work-life balance (WLB). From this perspective, part-time work has been recognised as an essential method of enabling flexible work arrangements worldwide. Besides, as Gudep (2019) adds, part-time working arrangements are more appropriate and suitable for women in the workforce and those making a wage at home. Compared with full-time employment, part-time work causes lower levels of work-family interference. In addition, Gudep (2019) argues that part-time schedules provide employees with a more reasonable work-life balance, which is particularly useful for those who find work-life conflict challenging. Due to this, married working mothers tend to prefer part-time work as an ideal solution to maintain a balance between personal and work life (Gudep, 2019). Van Osch and Schaveling (2020) advise that part-time positions are positions in which employees work fewer hours than performing the maximum number of possible contractual hours.

Stavroua et al. (2015) agree that part-time work is recognised as an alternative to full-time work, which can be utilised to meet employees' needs and to create a better work-

life balance. However, they observe work-life policies affect the employment of women, which varies broadly among countries within Europe. Accordingly, there is a different perception of part-time employment between countries, and the accessibility of part-time employment varies by country Stavroua et al., (2015). For instance, Stavroua et al. (2015) note that switching from full-time to part-time work arrangements is influenced by the cultural and institutional context. Thus, Stavroua et al. (2015) state that some countries remain institutionalised by law or working arrangements in regard to adjustment between full-time and part-time work.

Fagan and Walthery (2011) note that in regards to the male gender, part-time work arrangements are common among students and older employees approaching their retirement. However, this is rare during their "core" working years. Similarly, Chung and van der Lippe (2018) found that part-time work was likely to be found only for fathers from dual-earner households and not single-earner families.

Part-time work can benefit employees who would prefer to work fewer hours in a workweek to integrate better with work and life (Wheatley, 2017). Similarly, Lazar et al. (2010) say that part-time work arrangements can allow employees to deal with health issues or disabilities, or for people with limited time like students to engage in the labour force, advance their skills and acquire more knowledge. Furthermore, Lazar et al., 2010) continue by saying that part-time work arrangements can be a venue to enable employees who have had career breaks, for example, women or men who have stayed home to provide childcare, to re-enter the labour force. In addition, it can offer a gradual exit process for employees approaching the retirement phase. Also, Roeters and Craig (2014) observe that part-time hours compared to full-time work leave more time for personal and family needs and limit adverse spill-over effects. Further, Wheatley (2017) argues that

part-time work can enhance job satisfaction and reduce work stress among working women.

According to Lazar et al. (2010), part-time employees can provide an employer with increased operational flexibility in the peak season by providing additional coverage. In contrast, van Osch and Schaveling (2020) report that part-time employment hinders career progression, particularly for women.

As Lazar et al. (2010) point out, part-time employment can be disadvantageous for employees who prefer working extended hours to earn an extra living, so their families can use that extra income to improve their quality of life. Conversely, as Wheatley (2017) points out, part-time work has some disadvantages for employees. This includes revealing the employee's shortcoming from work pressures and family commitments and that part-time jobs are often of poor quality and can be temporary engagements. The Career advancement of women who work part-time generally faces significant barriers, including a lack of training and development opportunities and the inability to participate in decision–making processes. Similarly, Skinner and Chapman (2013) agree that a reduction to part-time hours has disadvantages. Thus, the penalties may include the job's quality, and having roles, and projects with fewer responsibilities. It can lead to fewer opportunities for skill development and career progression, less access to promotion opportunities and senior positions, and an increased work if the workload is not adjusted appropriately to match the reduced hours.

Kossek, Hammer, Thompson, and Burke (2014) observe that part-time jobs with too few hours to achieve certain benefits may entail employees working two or more jobs to afford their families, harming health and economic well-being. Kossek et al. (2009) also add

that some employees work part-time because they cannot find a full-time job and are underemployed.

2.2.9 Job sharing

This section provides a brief review of job sharing.

Job sharing is not very common. However, as the names suggest, job sharing is a plan or arrangement that allows two or sometimes more employees to equally share one full-time job position with the working time divided as agreed between themselves and the employer (Wood & Wattus, 1987; Lazar, Osoian, & Ratiu, 2010; Daniels, 2011). Additionally, job sharing (JS) is defined as a voluntary work arrangement where the responsibilities and activities of a full-time position are divided among two employees of the same level, each working part-time (Wood &Wattus, 1987; Wheatley, 2017).

For nearly 30 years, the concept of job sharing has been part of the flexibility debate (Daniels, 2011). Wheatley (2017) says that job sharing is a less–known and explored FWA, often bundled together with other options within the part-time or reduced hours grouping. According to a job share report by Daniels (2011), a range of in-depth studies has researched how job sharing works in practice in countries like New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America from the 1980s to date. However, Daniels (2011) notes that these extant studies are pretty few and are more focused on particular roles in the public and health sectors comprising nurses, teachers, librarians, administrative and university employees. According to Daniels (2011), the lack of job sharing reported in academic literature could mean job sharing is an undocumented and under-researched area. Furthermore, Daniels (2011) points out that

the relative lack of research on job sharing suggests that overall job shares are infrequent across professions.

Lazar, Osoian, and Ratiu (2010) point out that job-sharing may be suitable when there are fewer chances for part-time or other work engagements. Similarly, Al-Habil and Al-Rajudi, (2013) agree that job sharing generates typical part-time positions when a full-time position is needed. Job sharing, however, differs from part-time work because it involves the coordination of job responsibilities. Al-Habil and Al-Rajudi (2013) noted that there is considerable flexibility in how time is shared, in that it does not need to be shared 50:50, but instead can vary based on the needs of individual job sharers.

According to Wheatley (2017), Al-Habil and Al-Rajudi, (2013) and Lazar et al. (2010), job sharing has many advantages for both employees and employers. For example, job sharing allows employees more time to attend to other obligations and family responsibilities. In addition, it enables collaborative support among job sharers who learn from each other while delivering joint support. Additionally, Al-Habil and Al-Rajudi, (2013) suggest that job sharing is typically designed to fit the two parties' circumstances and lifestyles.

According to Al-Habil and Al-Rajudi (2013), the working relationship between the job sharers is vital to success. They suggest that an ideal practice of implementing a job-sharing agreement is essential if two parties apply together to split a job (Al-Habil & Al-Rajudi, 2013). As a result of the job share, employees' compatibility, decisions regarding how to divide their workload, as well as coordination with their manager and co-workers, are confirmed (Al-Habil & Al-Rajudi, 2013).

As Lazar et al. (2010) observed, the benefit to employers is that job sharing benefits them by improving staff retention, improved productivity, and a combination of a wider variety of skills and knowledge within a single job. During busy periods, job sharing can also benefit employers in that it can provide continuity of coverage when one partner is off sick or on holiday (Lazar et al., 2010). Kossek et al. (2014) say that another benefit of job sharing for employers is that it can be easy to cope with it as a whole job – the position's duties are kept intact.

2.3 Benefits and challenges of flexible work arrangements

This section of the study discusses the benefits and challenges of the flexible working arrangements of four types: teleworking, flexi-time, part-time, and job sharing for both employees and organisations. First, an overview of the benefits of FWAs is presented, followed by a discussion of the potential benefits of FWAs, focusing on the four types.

As Clarke and Holdsworth (2017) report, senior managers and professionals don't usually have access to FWAs. When available, this flexibility becomes a contributing factor to career derailment. This is attributed to the perceived notion that physical presence at work indicates loyalty to the organisation; a lesser presence is correlated to lower performance evaluations and fewer promotions (Clarke & Holdsworth, 2017). As Timms et al. (2015) have observed, impeding organisational cultures sends strong signals to employees that accessing FWAs may have consequences in their career progression and may create extra workloads for their colleagues, thus producing work-group hatred.

2.3.1 Overview of the benefits of FWAs

According to Heathrose Research Ltd (2010), evidence about the benefits and challenges of FWAs is placed mainly within the wider work-life balance literature. A broad range of literature on work-life balance shows that it benefits both organisations and employees (Heathrose Research Ltd, 2010). More so, it is widely suggested that employees who have a better work-life balance are more productive, have better well-being outcomes and have healthier relationships at home with their families (Heathrose Research Ltd, 2010).

The benefits of work-life balance policies and practices for business are visible themes running through the literature, including improved employee retention, reduced turnover, improved productivity and employee motivation (Heathrose Research Ltd, 2010).

Studies of the literature and reports on flexible working suggest that the provision of flexible working arrangements and implementation can have a beneficial impact on many areas of organisational performance (Dockery and Bawa (2014); Earl and Taylor (2015). According to Earl and Taylor (2015), flexible working is a win-win situation for both organisations and employees. Similarly, Skinner and Pocock (2011) observe that many employers increasingly offer their employees greater flexibility while acknowledging that it is a win-win situation. Earl and Taylor (2015) point out that while full-time hours remains the most dominant type of employment arrangement, new work arrangements have been evolving since the 1990s. For example, Earl and Taylor (2015) state that many organisations in Australia have developed a wide-ranging generic policy. They entrust their line managers to interpret this and translate it into effective practices; thus, the competence of the managers is central when they have the support of senior management.

2.3.2 Potential benefits of FWAs

According to Dockery and Bawa (2014), flexible working arrangements bring both benefits and challenges to organisations, employees and society.

This section details the benefits of the four FWAs, teleworking, flexitime, part-time work, and job sharing. This is written first from the employees' perspective, followed by the organisation's perspective.

2.3.3 Benefits for employees

2.3.3.1 An overview of telework/ telecommuting for employees

This section provides an overview of the perceived benefits of telework for employees

Telework is an alternative way to organise work in any organisation. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a shift towards teleworking in many organisations. Fuhr and Pociask (2011) argue that broadband plays a significant role, allowing employees to use their home just as much as their workplace and allowing them seamless data, video, and voice communication. Fuhr and Pociask (2011) define telecommuting as the utilisation of telecommunication technologies to enable employees to work remotely while avoiding the need to travel to and from work. Further, Fuhr and Pociask (2011) define teleworking as working somewhere other than a home office, such as telework sites, satellite offices, and remote locations using telecommunications.

Several studies indicate that teleworking, sometimes referred to as telecommuting, has many benefits. Firstly, it is the most cost-effective method of reducing rush hours and automobile trips (Fuhr & Pociask, 2011). Additionally, according to Fuhr and Pociask (2011), telework reduces fuel consumption and improves air quality because employees

work from home rather than driving into work; therefore, there are fewer traffic jams, oil shortages and noise pollution. Similarly, Al-Habil and Al-Rajudi (2013) support the idea that teleworking reduces commute time and travel costs and reduces suburban crime by allowing people to stay in their neighbourhoods during workdays.

2.3.3.2 Benefits of telework/ telecommuting for employees

Sometimes referred to as telecommuting, now frequently as work from home, telework is a working arrangement in which employees work from home or at a different location other than their usual workplace (de Vries, Tummers, & Bekkers, 2019; Bentley et al., 2013). The benefit of telework to employees generally is to achieve a better work-life balance between their paid work and other responsibilities (de Vries, Tummers, & Bekkers, 2019).

From the employee's viewpoint, there are several benefits to teleworking. The most obvious is the time saved in commuting and travel costs; thus, this time saving can be significant in some crowded areas, such as one or two hours per day or even more (Hamilton, 2002; Al-Habil &Al-Rajudi, 2013). Another benefit often cited of teleworking arrangements is increased employee satisfaction (Al-Habil & Al-Rajudi, 2013). According to Al-Habil and Al-Rajudi (2013), there are higher levels of job satisfaction with teleworking, resulting from the reasonably high work autonomy and flexibility of work schedule, commitment to the organisation, and organisational support. Also, it creates a better balance between employees paid work and family responsibilities (Hamilton, 2002; Al-Habil & Al-Rajudi, 2013). Conversely, Hill, Erickson, Holmes, and Ferris (2010) agree that teleworking benefits employees with responsibility for caring for others.

Although employees have to be available to customers and co-workers during regular working hours, Hamilton (2002) contends remote working allows employees to work during the hours they feel most energised and motivated.

2.3.3.3 The benefits of flexi-time work arrangement for employees

Downes and Koekemoer (2012) state that flexi-time supports employees in balancing paid work and family responsibilities by creating the chance to reduce the imbalance between work and family responsibilities and improve operational performance at work and home. Similarly, Hill, Erickson, Holmes, and Ferris (2010) agree that flexitime has benefits to parents who have young children and those taking care of the elderly, giving them the increased capacity to overlap work time effectively. For example, it enables a parent to partake in afternoon school activities with the child. Similarly, flexitime helps employees to balance work and non-work duties, allowing commuters to avoid a time-consuming and hectic rush hour and offering ample leisure time to employees (Berkery, Morley, Tiernan, & Peretz, 2020).

2.3.3.4 The benefits of part-time working arrangements for employees

Wheatley (2017) defines part-time as the ability of employees to work under 30 hours per week. Wheatley (2017) observed that part-time is a significant source of employment, especially among women and accounts for 40 per cent of jobs in the UK. According to Wheatley (2017), part-time benefits employees and is an accommodating option for balancing work and life. Another benefit of part-time for employees, as pointed out by Wheatley (2017), is that part-time work increases job satisfaction among working women and reduces work pressure while maintaining an organisational presence.

2.3.3.5 The benefits of job sharing for employees

Job sharing is most prevalent for women with children who would otherwise cease to work (Thakur et al., 2018). Additionally, Thakur et al. (2018) state that employees expecting to be out of the workforce are most likely to work flexibly by job sharing. In their paper, Thakur et al. (2018) note that job sharing is advantageous for women as family carers because job sharing provides more flexibility to balance work and home life.

According to Williamson, Cooper, and Baird (2015), from an employee viewpoint, job sharing offers employees increased capability to balance work and family responsibilities and provides opportunities to take part in rewarding and professional work, which may lead to career advancement. Equally, other benefits of job sharing include improved time management, the capacity to assign some time to family responsibilities by having a plan in place, and, second, to perceive their job better. Job sharers benefit from increased learning from their job share partners (Gholipour, Bod, Zehtabi, Pirannejad, & Kozekanan, 2010).

2.3.4 Benefits to the organisation

2.3.5 Overview of FWA impact on an organisation

According to Berkery, Morley, Tiernan, Purtill, and Parry (2017), 'flexibility and productivity are linked'. From an organisational point of view, there is evidence that FWAs can increase productivity (Berkery et al., 2017). Besides, Berkery et al. (2017) claim that when employees are given discretion over when and where work is completed, they will typically work during their most productive hours, allowing employees to deal with non-work demands during the workday.

Employers of all sizes are very optimistic about the advantages of flexible working arrangements on their businesses. Many employers have now adopted and implemented flexible working arrangements because they make sound business logic. For example, Berkery et al. (2017) outline the impact of flexible working on employee retention, retaining skilled staff, and reducing recruitment costs, engagement, and staff motivation. Similarly, some organisations show that flexible working positively impacts productivity and customer services. Some organisations show a positive effect on raising staff morale and decreasing absenteeism levels, a positive effect on knowledge-sharing, diversity of the workforce by meeting labour markets shifts, and the continuity of business more effectively (Davidescu, Apostu, Paul, & Casuneanu, 2020).

Idris (2014) observes that employees' the advantages of flexible working experienced create positive outcomes for employers. According to Idris (2014), human resource practices that develop employee well-being also strengthen organisational performance. Idris (2014) also points out that besides absenteeism and higher employee retention, flexible working allows employees to pursue continuous learning, increasing organisational knowledge. In particular, Idris (2014) argues that strategic human resource practices such as flexible working arrangements enable organisations to build a more remarkable knowledge management ability, improving their innovation performance.

2.3.6 The benefits of flexible working arrangements for the organisation

2.3.6.1 Benefits of telework/telecommuting for organisations

Telework, sometimes referred to as telecommuting, offers benefits to organisations. As Blount (2015) outlines, telework provides positive outcomes for organisations relating to

health, including reducing work-related stress, better accommodation for the disabled, managing work and family commitments, and less commuting stress. In addition, Blount (2015) states that the benefit of telework to organisations is the reduced sick leave uptake of employees and the increased job autonomy for teleworkers, which they value most.

2.3.6.2 The benefits of flexi-time for organisations

Flexi-time or flexitime refers to flexible starting and finishing times, typically centred on core hours, for example, employees working from 10.00 am -3.00 pm (Wheatley, 2017). From an employer's perspective, flexi-time is generally desirable as they perceive that the employees using this arrangement contribute the same effort (Wheatley, 2017). Similarly, flexi-time is a practical tool that employers use to attract employees, thus, those with caring responsibilities and those desiring to work outside the confines of the traditional working day (Berkery, Morley, Tiernan, & Peretz, 2020). According to Wheatley (2017), flexi-time is the most commonly used FWA among men (19.3%) who use this flexible work arrangement. In addition, Wheatley (2017) notes that flexi-time benefits organisations as it typically enables full-time equivalent hours.

Similarly, flexi-time benefits the organisation by extending opening hours, allowing employees to work outside the company's regular hours (Downes & Koekemoer, 2011).

2.3.6.3 The benefits of part-time work for the organisation

There are many benefits for an organisation in employing part-timers. According to Harolds, Coleman, Michael, and Bluth (2014), one part-time work benefit to an organisation is coping with an increased work volume that exceeds the capacity of current employees. Another benefit, according to Harolds et al. (2014), is filling in for the paid

full-time employees who are on leave or for emergencies. Likewise, part-time jobs are the most customary flexible scheduling options (Society for Human Resource Management SHRM,2020).

A study by Van Osch and Schaveling (2020) states that part-time work arrangements are increasingly being considered as a way to address gender disparities. For example, parents with children may also take advantage of part-time work because it allows them to maintain professional identity and career momentum and develop relevant professional skills. Likewise, organisations can opt for part-time arrangements to recruit employees, such as students, parents of young children, older workers, and others who need work but do not want or can cope with full-time work (Van Osch & Schaveling, 2020. Another benefit of part-time work noted by SHRM is that part-time work can help organisations retain professional staff.

In addition, Kjeldstad and Nymoen (2011) state that part-time jobs enable employers to match labour to a changing workload. According to Kjeldstad and Nymoen (2011), the second benefit of part-time work is to employ cheaper or more flexible labour, and lastly, employers benefit from part-time jobs to meet their labour needs.

2.3.6.4 The benefits of job sharing for the organisation

An employer has an advantage through JS when used to retain two highly skilled and experienced people who otherwise might (Daniels, 2011; Thakur et al., 2018). Thakur et al. (2018) advises that job sharing has other advantages for the organisation, including the broader complement of skills each job incumbent can bring to the position. Thakur et al. (2018) also suggest that retaining women, particularly middle management, in non-traditional jobs positively affects employer recruiting and training costs. Furthermore,

Wheatley (2017) adds that employer's benefit from improved productivity, leadership, commitment, resilience, retention and knowledge sharing.

2.4 The challenges of flexible working arrangements for employees

While studies show that many businesses offer some forms of flexible working, employers also report several barriers and challenges that come with flexible working arrangements. For example, according to Masuda et al. (2012), FWAs can limit daily physical contact with colleagues or line managers, hindering work relationships and can heighten the negative relationship between telecommuting and the quality of co-worker relationships.

2.4.1 The challenges of teleworking/ telecommuting for employees

One of the biggest teleworking challenges is that employees may feel isolated (Al-Habil & Al-Rajudi, 2013). Regarding employees' abilities, employees who telework need to have good work habits and draw a boundary between when to stop working and attend to home and family activities. Thus, the teleworker needs to know how to set parameters on the workday and not encroach into family time (Al-Habil & Al-Rajudi, 2013).

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM, 2020) notes that teleworking can be helpful under various circumstances. However, teleworking also presents numerous challenges to employees. Accordingto SHRM (2020), these challenges are: being out of touch with the daily flow of information, being out of the hub of activity as far as office politics are concerned, detrimental to career progress, not as readily available as workers in traditional office settings, there are distractions from spouses, children, pets or other family members at home, a sense of ownership by the company, where the company has

a virtual presence at home, and lastly, there is an anticipation of being available outside standard business hours.

Greer and Payne (2014) observe that teleworkers may experience fewer development opportunities and career progression prospects because of being physically separated from the primary workplace. Similary, Greer and Payne (2014) point out that physical separation may also increase teleworkers' possibility of feeling isolated from their colleagues and disengaging from their jobs. Finally, Greer and Payne (2014) continue by saying that another challenge for teleworking is that it can negatively impact the cooperation and communication between team members, thus reducing the frequency and quality of work-related communication among coworkers.

Similarly, regarding co-workers Greer and Payne (2014) observe that teleworking lessens the likelihood of colleagues visiting a colleague's office space to talk informally, network, observe activities, or talk about work-related matters. Blount (2015) argues that telework adversely affects teleworkers' health in numerous ways, including social and professional isolation, stagnant careers, and increased workloads.

2.4.2 The challenges of flexi-time work arrangement for employees

Flexi-time requires employees to have greater self-control to achieve productivity. Employees using flexi-time need an excellent programme solution to keep records, manage their time, and balance work and family life (Downes & Koekemoer, 2011).

Some of the challenges associated with flexitime include: work coordinating and managing flexi-time; possible stigma or career development penalties for employees (Berkery, Morley, Tiernan, & Peretz, 2020).

2.4.3 The challenges of part-time working arrangements for employees

According to Wheatley (2017), part-time work can reflect the constraints that result from household responsibilities and employer demands. Wheatley (2017) says that part-time jobs are frequently perceived as poor quality and temporary engagements. He continues sharing evidence from the UK Labour Force Survey that shows 12.2 per cent of employees working part-time report do so due to the lack of full-time opportunities. Furthermore, Wheatley (2017) advises that work-life balance policies surrounding part-time work and job sharing are often less desirable, as pay reductions render these arrangements financially infeasible for many employees. Wheatley (2017) also suggests that part-time work is associated with reduced responsibility, reduced promotion opportunities, a lower level of seniority, and more work intensity by completing full-time workloads that prevent workers from taking breaks. Teasdale (2013) also notes part-time working is perceived to be an obstacle to reaching management roles.

Wheatley (2017) states that women are restricted by their need to work fewer hours, increasing their tendency to disproportionately face the challenges of working part-time. A second observation Wheatley (2017) makes is that domestic work division, including child care, reduces the time available to women, who are often relegated to lower-paid careers. In addition, the author agrees that part-time work has gendered implications, adding that women working part-time face significant obstacles to promotion, including limited opportunities for training and development (Wheatley, 2017).

Wheatley (2017) argues that past and more recent evidence suggests that men use part-time with a greater degree of choice. For instance, men use part-time at either the end of a career or work part-time while studying, and older men use part-time work as a path to retirement. Thus, Wheatley (2017) notes that differences in part-time employment may

perpetuate the gender wage gap and gender segregation of the workforce, resulting in implications for employee satisfaction and the work-life balance.

2.4.4 The challenges of job-sharing arrangements for employees

The challenges employees see with job sharing are connected to job loss. Employees' perceptions of job sharing are that managers use it to make them redundant slowly (Gholipour, Bod, Zehtabi, Pirannejad, & Kozekanan, 2010). According to Gholipour et al. (2010), the culture and maturity of an organisation are critical, in the sense that the uptake of job sharing is possible for employees who are already established within the organisation.

2.5 The challenges of teleworking/ telecommuting for employers

Although organisations that give their employees the choice of teleworking explain its benefits, teleworking also has downsides for employers. According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) 2020), these challenges include increased technological costs, potential security vulnerability, the obligation to implement strategies and procedures, the regulation of teleworking employees, establishing set expectations, trust, and unique methods of evaluation to manage remotely.

In their study of overcoming telework challenges, (Greer & Payne, 2014) found that teleworking creates a physical boundary between co-workers. As they no longer work in the location simultaneously, they cannot harmonise communication without technological means. Another challenge that employers face with teleworking is supervision. Some employees working from home may require extra management to make sure they are working productively.

2.5.1 The challenges of flexi-time for employers

Despite the potential benefits of flexi-time recorded in the literature, there are also challenges. Employers' challenges linked to flexi-time include the management and supervision of flexi-time, complications with implementing flexi-time within the teams, the possible stigma of career drawbacks related to using flexi-time, and forfeiting a degree of management control (Berkery et al., 2020). Many employers face many challenges when implementing flexi-time and constrain it to particular areas or jobs (Berkery, Morley, Tiernan, & Peretz, 2020).

2.5.2 The challenges of part-time working for employers

The challenge for employers of part-time working is appointing a part-time employee into supervisory or management roles. Because of more responsibilities, employers would want full-time employees in senior positions. Kjeldstad and Nymoen (2011) argue that part-time jobs no longer are perceived as jobs belonging to lower labour market sections.

On the other hand, according to Harolds, Coleman, Michael, and Bluth (2014), employers have many challenges hiring part-time working employees. Harolds et al. (2014) observe the following challenges the employers may experience engaging part-timers. Various activities beyond the regular working hours of part-timers may be unappealing to them, such as responsibilities on committees and leadership efforts, the development of new procedures. As per Harolds et al. (2014), due to their fluctuating work plans, part-timers might not be conversant with organisations' policies, practices, and cultures, leading to lower levels of loyalty. Similarly, Harolds et al. (2014) point out that part-timers may have more difficulty providing continuity in certain ongoing activities, have limited studies to participate in, and still maintain necessary expertise and productivity.

2.5.3 The challenges of job sharing for employers

Despite the many benefits of job sharing for employers, Gholipour, Bod, Zehtabi, Pirannejad and Kozekanan (2010) point out that job sharing also has numerous disadvantages. They comprise high expenses for training or the fact that when there is a new system or upgrade or any new task that requires training, the two employees need to be trained, which means the budget for training is higher. In addition, the employer may face the difficulties of managing and coordinating people (Gholipouret al., 2010). Notably, Gholipouret al. (2010) state that it requires less coordination than two or more people doing the job when one person does the job. Therefore, JS requires more coordination to succeed (Gholipour et al., 2010).

2.6 The challenges of FWA for individuals

From the employees' point of view, the biggest challenges of flexible working depend on the nature of their work. This includes the attitudes of senior management and the supervisors or line managers (Downes & Koekemoer, 2011). In addition, some studies have also shown the perspective of co-workers is a challenge to flexible working in the sense that they may have to cover and pick up workloads (Teasdale, 2013), and a lack of proper equipment and access to resources.

2.7 The challenges of FWA for organisations

Despite the advantages of flexible working, the implementation of flexible working practices frequently faces resistance from managers due to their lack of trust and support for the policy (Idris, 2014).

Many challenges may hinder organizations from incorporating teleworking practices into the traditional office environment (Kurkland & Bailey, 1999). For example, Kurkland and Bailey state that telecommuting is a crucial challenge for many supervisors because of their inability to observe and measure their performance and build trust physically. Additionally, Kurkland and Bailey (1999) advise that supervisors face challenges in managing employees who are physically out of sight; the managers cannot notice when the employee needs help and may not give conclusive performance feedback. Another point observed by Kurkland and Bailey (1999) is that telework negatively affects the social network in the workplace, posing challenges to the supervisor.

2.8 Flexible working and job satisfaction

Gudep (2019) defines job satisfaction (JS) as a positive, effective psychological work-related state of mind that leads to the active involvement of employees in the duties. Gudep (2019) further says that a satisfied employee is defined as someone who is persistently and voluntarily involved in their work. De Menezes and Kelliher (2017) state that job satisfaction has been recognised as a possible facilitator linking organisational policies and performance.

In terms of linking FWAs to job satisfaction, Fonner and Roloff (2010), observe that organisational scholars have long established that interaction on the job is an essential determinant of job satisfaction. For example, Fonner and Roloff (2010) note that social interaction and other important contacts at the workplace lead to employee motivation and accomplishment. Similarly, Fonner and Roloff (2010) point out that because face-to-face communication permits exchanging multiple and rich cues, it empowers interactions creating positive results. For instance, employees who see each other daily

have access to relatively unlimited communication channels, enabling psychological closeness and social presence. This may also encourage mutuality and common ground that enhances communication quality and creates more significant information exchange levels.

Foloff and Foner (2010) argue that employees with a reduced presence in the office and an intensified reliance on technology are at a greater risk of poor communication, inaccurate information sharing, inadequate quality discussion, and poor communication richness. As Wang, Albert, and Sun (2020) observed, telecommuting negatively impacts psychological and physical well-being. According to Wang, Albert, and Sun (2020), psychological isolation refers to a feeling of being disconnected from others, lacking expected social and influential network connections, and lacking the support, perspective, and other psychosocial needs demanded by interaction. Wang et al. (2020) define physical isolation as the spatial separation of teleworkers from their colleagues.

According to these arguments, Fonner and Roloff (2010) suggest that teleworkers' job satisfaction should decrease because there are reductions in their contact frequency and quality of their interactions with others. Furthermore, Fonner and Roloff (2010) state that some teleworkers claim to feel isolated from the office network, a factor that negatively impacts job satisfaction.

Fonner and Roloff (2010) contradict this by saying that a recent meta-analysis confirmed a positive relationship between telework and job satisfaction. Other studies identified an association that showed several teleworking hours per week improved employee satisfaction to a point where the outcome narrowed slightly. Thus, Fonner and Roloff (2010) suggest that traditionally held views about the positives of face-to-face interactions may be generalised; however, they acknowledge that there are some

detriments with limited face-to-face interactions but propose that it also offers several advantages.

De Menezes and Kelliher (2017) observe that employee job satisfaction can be achieved by allowing employees some autonomy over their working arrangements, which may give them a sense of independence linked to enhanced job satisfaction and higher performance. De Menezes and Kelliher (2017) further outline that employees with informal flexible working arrangements have been found to place high importance on their arrangements and have an awareness of control, which might positively influence job satisfaction.

2.9 The New Zealand Context

The following section offers a brief overview of the existing literature with a view to providing a comprehensive outlook on what flexible working arrangements can mean for work-life balance, career progression, and the changing nature of flexible working arrangements in New Zealand.

2.9.1 What is flexible working?

This section details flexible working arrangements in the New Zealand context and explains work-life balance and policies in New Zealand, then discusses employee's career progression and a brief outline of the changing nature of flexible working in New Zealand.

Flexible working is an integral part of modern organisations. Clarke and Holdsworth (2017) define flexibility in the workplace as the opportunity for employees to make choices influencing when, where, and how long they engage in work-related tasks.

Flexible working arrangements (FWAs) in the New Zealand context, means employees who, to some degree, work in different sites or have non-traditional working hours (Clarke & Holdsworth, 2017); and this comprises;

- **teleworking** or **work from home:** where an employee works a few days per week from home or a different location away from the central office (Clarke & Holdsworth, 2017; Vries, Tummers, & Bekkers, 2019)

- **flexi-time:** where employees can vary their start and finish times as long as they perform certain hours. The number of hours may be agreed on weekly or monthly, and core working hours such as 9:00 am to 3:00 pm may be arranged (Lee & DeVoe, 2012; Clarke & Holdsworth, 2017; Wheatley, 2017)

- **part-time:** where an employee works fewer hours than a full-time employee who typically works 35 hours or more weekly (Wheatley, 2017; Clarke & Holdsworth, 2017)

- **job sharing**: where two employees share the work of one full-time job (Lazar, Osoian, & Ratiu, 2010; Wood & Wattus, 1987)

In the New Zealand context, the New Zealand Law Society describes "flexible work" as comprising a wide variety of arrangements outside the traditional working week. This can be adapted to match each employee's demands (New Zealand Law Society, 2019). Some typical examples of flexible work arrangements include part-time work, which is when an employee can work a different number of hours (Wheatley, 2017). Telework is another form of FWA and sometimes referred to as working remotely, which is when the employee works from home or another location one or more days per week (Clarke & Holdsworth (2017), Flexi-time is another form of FWA, this is when an employee is

working within different time frames, for example, start and finish time (Kröll, Doebler, & Nüesch, 2017) and lastly, job sharing, where two employees share the week of one full-time job (Clarke & Holdsworth, 2017).

As in many countries around the world, Fursman and Zodgekar (2009) note that flexible work is becoming more popular in New Zealand. Significant shifts have pushed this change in the labour market and social and demographic changes (Fursman & Zodgekar, 2009). New Zealand Law Society reports indicate that the demand for flexible work is rising, and many organizations are adapting to support their employees in new ways (New Zealand Law Society, 2019). In their study, Fursman and Zodgekar (2009) observed an increasing number of working parents, more employees participating in advancing their education training, skills shortages increasing, and prolonged retirement age. Thus, as a result, technological innovations suggest that organisations workplaces that adopt flexible working arrangements will have a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining staff (New Zealand Law Society, 2019; Clarke & Holdsworth, 2017).

2.10 Work-life balance and policies in New Zealand

According to Nelson and McNaughton (2004), the New Zealand government has voiced concern about the diminishing work-life balance of its people. For example, the Labour-led New Zealand government (1999-2008) established the Work-Life balance project in 2003. Nelson and McNaughton (2004) note that the project recognised that achieving a balance between paid work and non-paid work and other attributes of people's lives is difficult; for example, caring and community responsibilities, leisure and study issues posed challenges to individuals.

In the New Zealand context, Nelson and McNaughton (2004) observed that work-life balance objectives are linked to addressing labour and skills shortages, improving labour force participation and enhancing social well being.

According to De Sivatte and Guadamillas (2013), many employees attribute great value to the work-life benefits (WLB) offered by organisations, especially to flexible work arrangements (FWA). On the other hand, Timms et al. (2015) observe that impeding organisational cultures reveals strong signals to employees accessing FWAs. Thus, Timms et al. (2015) state that this may have repercussions in their career progression, and it creates extra burdens (work) for their colleagues leading to team resentment.

The term work-life balance (WLB) has evolved in recent years (Chieregato, 2020). The rise in women's employment increase, and primarily married mothers in developed nations emerged in the 1970s. This implies that many couples with dependent children are now spending more time in the workplace than ever before (Fagan, Lyonette, Smith, & Saldaña-Tejeda, 2012). Similarly, Fagan et al. (2012) perceive that single parents, primarily single mothers, have also increased, and the challenge of balancing paid work and family responsibilities is more critical. Fagan et al. (2012) point out that many parents are working long hours; a substantial number of fathers and mothers are also working typical or non-standard hours, for example, working in the evenings or at nights, or in the early mornings and weekends.

Kossek, Valcour, and Lirio (2014) define work-life balance as being satisfied with the way your roles meet work and non-work demands, having little conflict among them, and having many options for enhancing your roles. Thus, this suggests that the experience gained in one role can therefore be applied to other roles, improving their performance

Darcy, McCarthy, Hill, and Grady (2012) agree that work-life balance is a general term used to describe organisational strategies designed to enhance the employee work experience and family life spheres. They further define work-life balance programmes as "any employer-sponsored benefits or working conditions that help employees balance work and non-work demands". They continue by saying that work-life balance arrangements and practices refer to initiatives voluntarily introduced by organisations that support the balance of employees' work and personal lives.

Among these initiatives, Darcy et al. (2012) points out flexi-time arrangements, under which employees make their own start and end times while working certain core hours, and telework/homeworking, which allows employees to work remotely from home. Additionally, Darcy et al. (2012) suggest that periodic arrangements are another effective way to reduce employee work hours, such as job-sharing. Two employees share one job or part-time work where employees work less than full-time equivalent hours.

Diversity Works New Zealand is New Zealand's national body that promotes workplace diversity and inclusion. In recent years, the annual Diversity Awards NZTM awards programme has become one of the most significant recognitions for excellence in workplace diversity and inclusion in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Participating in the awards is an opportunity for organisations to demonstrate initiatives while publicly committing to be held accountable for tangible improvements in building productive and safe work environments where everybody can grow (Diversity Works New Zealand, 2022).

In a 2013 survey conducted by Diversity Works New Zealand, Chief Executive Bev Cassidy-Mackenzie noted that worker well-being consistently ranks among the top diversity issues for businesses. The survey revealed that 76 per cent of organizations offer flexible work hours, 64 per cent provide part-time or reduced-hours roles, 62 per cent

permit remote work, and 59 per cent provide family-friendly working arrangements (Blythen, 2018).

2.10.1 Flexible work policies

The 'right to request flexible work' policy is New Zealand's policy response. In July 2008, the Employment Relations (Flexible Working Arrangements) Amendment Act 2007 came into force (Blount, 2015).

Chieregato (2020) outlines that while policies to enable employees to merge family responsibilities and paid work first emerged in the 1970s, these policies were developed to balance work and family responsibilities. Similarly, Kossek, Valcour, and Lirio (2014) agree that the term work-family grew out of early policy attempts in developed countries to counter gender discrimination and ensure that young children's responsibilities did not prevent female's labour market involvement. Besides, Chieregato (2020) says that realising that caring duties, which women had traditionally borne, may influence their ability to participate in the labour market, thus reconciliation policies emerged. According to Chieregato (2020), these policies sought to enable women to join the labour market, taking into account many factors such as; their caring responsibilities, the massive entry of women into paid work, the questioning of the traditional relationship between work and family, production and reproduction and paid and unpaid work.

Chieregato (2020) points out that, in the 1990s, reconciliation policies began to be gradually renamed and framed within the 'Work-Life Balance' Agenda. Thus, the shift from family to 'life' was meant to endorse a gender-neutral idiom, steered at looking beyond the initial focus on employees with family responsibilities, most commonly working mothers with small children, to considering numerous aspects of life other than

care, such as training and education, community life, leisure and personal care and other undertakings (Chieregato, 2020; Kossek, Valcour, & Lirio, 2014).

Wheatley (2017) agrees that work-life policies have pushed for the increased availability of FWAs in many organisations. Accordingly, Lazar, Osoian, Ratiu (2010) state that work-life balance practices are the organisational adjustments in programmes that enable both worker efficiency and reduce work-life conflict; therefore. Thus, this can be achieved through deliberate changes in organisational cultures to recognise employee engagement and contributions to performance.

Similarly, the latest survey of working life conducted by Statistics NZ between October and December 2018 asked employed people about their work arrangements, employment conditions and satisfaction with their job and work-life balance. The results showed that overall, 76 per cent of those surveyed were satisfied with their work-life balance, with a relatively small variation between men (75 per cent) and women (77 per cent) (Statistics, New Zealand, 2019). The survey shows that half (50 per cent) of employees in New Zealand have flexible work hours that allow them to start and finish work at different times each day (Statistics, New Zealand, 2019). Stats New Zealand shows that the industries with the highest proportion of 'flexi-time' arrangements are comprised of rental, hiring, and real estate services and professional, scientific, and technical services, which shows that over 70 per cent of employees had flexible work hours. Employees with flexible hours reported higher job satisfaction and work-life balance levels than those without (Statistics, New Zealand, 2019).

Practices that help employees balance their work and non-work times are referred to as work-family policies, family-responsive policies or family-friendly policies (Lazar, Osoian, & Ratiu, 2010). However, in recent years, what used to be recognised as "work-

family balance' has been substituted by the term 'work-life balance (Hudson Resourcing, 2005). The change arises from the fact that childcare is by no means the only crucial non-work obligation; this can be extended to any other non-paid commitments and a diverse range of employees such as women, men, parents and non-parents, singles and couples (Lazar et al., 2010).

In a study by Hudson Resourcing (2005), both Australian and New Zealand organisations are becoming more aware of the benefits of achieving a work-life balance for their employees. This is a critical component of how employers remain competitive in attracting and retaining talent from traditional and untapped sources (Hudson Resourcing, 2005).

Thus, studies have shown an increase in employees seeking a balance between their daily work and personal life commitments (Darcy et al., 2012; De Sivatte & Guadamillas, 2013). Moreover, policies are in place to support the work-life, family and career balance that supports employees. For example, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has published Convention 156, which deals with work and family responsibilities (International Labour Organization, 1981). Thus, many organizations will develop work-life balance policies after taking account of the ILO convention 156. As Lazar, Osoian, and Ratiu (2010) postulate, the work-life balance primarily acknowledged in the literature as the quality link between paid work and unpaid work duties is crucial for success in the modern competitive business world. It is a trend driven by changes to demographic, economic, and cultural differences (Lazar et al., 2010; Fursman & Zodgekar, 2009).

According to Lazar, Osoian, and Ratiu (2010), work-life balance has gained a lot of attention in the literature as the link between paid work and unpaid work duties, which are vital for success in the modern competitive business world. It is a trend driven by

changes to demographic, economic, and cultural differences (Lazar et al., 2010). Furthermore, Lazar et al. (2010) say that the work-life balance has been described as a reasonable level of commitment or 'fit' between the multiple responsibilities in a person's lifetime. Thus, it shows that the effects of flexible working arrangements for employees are varied. For example, in their review of work-life balance (WLB) in a large New Zealand organisation, Smith and Gardner (2007) found that conflict between work and home life was linked to job dissatisfaction, and organisations were using WLB initiatives to recruit and retain employees.

Similarly, employees view work-life balance (WLB) as enabling them to balance their work commitments with family life (De Sivatte & Guadamillas, 2013). Thus, WLB flexibility initiatives work reduction, such as flexi-time, telecommuting, and increased job satisfaction due to increased perceived autonomy (De Sivatte & Guadamillas, 2013). Part-time work was a potentially optimal choice toward improving the work/family balance for mothers and fathers (Van Breeschoten & Evertsson, 2019). These results resonate with a study by Lazar et al. (2010), indicating that companies can alleviate work-life balance for their employees through work-life practices that are generally linked to flexible work and reduced working time, and with family-friendly policies. As Lazar et al. (2010) point out, family-friendly policies or work-family policies are well known in the literature as practices that support employees in managing work and non-work times. According to Smith and Gardner (2007), many companies adopt initiatives to create a family-friendly workplace to help employees better balance work and family commitments. These workplace initiatives or family-friendly policies comprise work alternatives such as telecommuting, permanent part-time, flexible working hours, part-time work, job sharing and supported childcare (Albion, 2004; Lazar et al., 2010).

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Brewster, Mayne, and Tregaskis (1997) agree that flexible working arrangements provide employees additional opportunities to work, offer supplementary balances for employees to increase family incomes, and allow jobs to fit in with family life. However, Brewster et al. (1997) observe that flexible work is commonly low remunerated. This means that the employee engaging in flexibility can sometimes cost or disadvantage the employee and the family for not working on standard hours and contractual arrangements. Similarly, Dex and Scheibl (2001) further outline that many businesses have adopted flexible working practices that allow flexibility around hours of work to enable employees to take time off to care for family needs. Glass and Estes' (1997) research suggests that flexible working hours reduce work and family life battles.

Studies indicate that enhancing the balance between employees lives and outside work can generate real advantages for both employers and employees (Smith & Gardner, 2007; Employment New Zealand, 2020). As Wheatley (2017) points out, the benefits for employers include a healthier and more contented workforce, improved recruitment and retention, increased productivity, decreased absenteeism, knowledge sharing, and skill development arising from workers covering roles or the reorganisation of work tasks that are reduced by accommodations costs from hot-desking.

Likewise, employee benefits include work-time flexibility, greater job satisfaction, improved work-life balance from various work arrangements, alleviating the "school run' hassles through evading peak travel times, and avoiding work-life conflict and work stress.

Furthermore, as Wheatley (2017) observes FWAs offer women-specific benefits. Compared to men, their job satisfaction may be reduced by work-life conflicts as women are more often overloaded by household involvement.

In New Zealand, clear workplace policies and procedures are in place. For example, part 6AA of the New Zealand Employment Relations Act (2000) provides employees with a right to request a variation of working arrangements to permit more flexibility in certain circumstances and employers are required to consider any request. Similarly, Heathrose Research (2010) suggests that a critical focus of work-life balance policies has been balancing caring responsibilities and women's partaking in paid work. Thus, Heathrose Research (2010) agrees that the provision of FWAs can play a significant role in supporting employment agreements that can deliver both employees and employers with win-win outcomes.

On the other hand, studies show that a poor work-life balance can cause stress, absenteeism and poor productivity. Employment New Zealand (2020) indicates that employees, general health and well-being, work satisfaction and motivation are all likely to be improved where work-life balance practices are functioning well.

In New Zealand, about 69% of professionals have indicated that work-life balance, comprising flexible working, is their topmost precedence when looking for a new job (Employment New Zealand, 2020). Because of this, Employment New Zealand (2020) reports that employees in companies offering work-life balance schemes enjoy advantages, such as being able to balance work and family at home, work and in the community in a more balanced way, being able to balance work-life and personal commitments in flexible ways so that earning an income and managing family and other commitments becomes easier.

2.1 Flexible working and employees' career progression

Employees may be concerned that flexible working arrangements may negatively impact their career progression. However, studies and reports suggest that employees think differently; some employees perceive that flexibility negatively impacts them. Some think it has a positive impact and some employees see neither positive nor negative effects. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2019) survey reports reveal that some form of flexibility had different results to employee's career progression; employees who used flexitime, part-time and job-share reported having negative impacts on career prospects.

In Wheatley (2017), the author argues that working part-time for women presents significant career advancement barriers, including fewer training and development opportunities and exclusion from the decision-making process (Wheatley, 2017). As Wheatley (2017) points out, several studies have indicated that men take advantage of part-time flexibility at both ends of their careers. For example, young men might work part-time while studying, while older men might work part-time as part of their retirement. It seems that part-time employment differences lead to gender segregation and wage gaps, leading to lower job satisfaction and other life characteristics (Wheatley, 2017).

On the other hand, Nakrošienė et al. (2019) point out that information technology has become an integral part of the office environment. As a result, the physical location of a working place has slowly lost its value. Thus Nakrošienė et al. (2019) suggest that telework, defined as work performed from different areas such as home, enables employees to access their job undertakings by using information and communication technologies. Furthermore, Nakrošienė et al. (2019) suggest that teleworking as a work

arrangement is one of the most critical arguments for many organisations regarding increased employee productivity. Nevertheless, Nakrošienė et al. (2019) advise that while previous research has shown that teleworkers experience greater job satisfaction, telework literature shows that employees worry that their career progression can be diminished when teleworking creates social isolation. Wang et al. (2020) agree that remote physical isolation negatively affects employees' career progression and professional development. Wang et al. (2020) advise that teleworkers lack organisational visibility and informal communication with coworkers by not being physically present in the workplace, leaving them feeling "out of the loop" and limiting their career progression opportunities, informal learning networking and mentoring.

Walsh (2012) observed that although increasing numbers of women have joined the workforce and professional service firms in recent years, they have been less successful in progressing into high-ranking organisational positions.

2.1.1 The changing nature of flexible working arrangements in New Zealand

The labour market and societal and demographic adjustments drive the growing demand for flexible working arrangements in New Zealand and globally (Fursman & Zodgekar, 2009). Consequently, Bentley et al. (2013) observe that flexible working is the way forward to solve the difficulties of employee productivity in New Zealand, the traffic congestion in major cities, the work-life balance for busy working parents, employee's attraction and retention of workers, and organisational resilience and environmental sustainability.

Similarly, Blount (2015) states that teleworking in New Zealand has improved productivity and satisfaction with work, particularly for those employees who worked a few days at home and in the office.

Chapter 3 : Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methodology in this research describes the design of this study and the methods and procedures which were used in the research.

3.1.1 Ontological and epistemological assumptions

This section outlines the theoretical foundation underpinning this study.

Researchers take different approaches in their research, even within a particular paradigm. Their own beliefs and assumptions direct the way they look at data and the types of asked questions (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Simply put, paradigms are a way of looking at reality and are a framework that is used to interpret reality (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2010). As Creswell and Poth (2017) point out, these beliefs and assumptions are connected to the researchers' standpoints about the nature of reality and its characteristics (ontology) and how we know what we know (epistemology) (Scotland, 2012; Gray, 2018).

According to Creswell and Poth (2017), assumptions are linked to the value stance of the researcher in a study (axiology) and the processes used in the study (methodology). This means there are multiple realities; subjective reality and socially constructed reality (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The researcher's assumptions underpinning epistemology are within social constructivism. The researcher believes reality is co-created between the participant and the researcher (Creswell, 2013) and also seeks to explore people's experiences, views, and perspectives of these understandings (Gray, 2018). Truth and

meaning are created by the subject's interactions with the world (Gray, 2018), and their context is modified by interpretation (Jones, 2014). Similarly, Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2013) further outline that constructivist interpretivist methodology rests on a belief in the existence of potentially multiple, intersubjectively constructed "truths" about social, cultural, political and other human events. Given that these understandings can only be accessed or co-generated through interactions between the researcher and the researched, they seek to interpret those events and make those understandings legible to each other.

Additionally, from a social construction perspective, the researcher observes a real world out there and separates how the researcher explores it (Silverman, 2015). According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2016), ontology, epistemology, methodology, and methods are concepts that link to each other in many ways. Therefore, this means that ontology shapes the researcher's epistemology, which shapes the researcher's methodology, shaping the methods used in this research (Scotland, 2012). It is a notion that knowledge about social reality is found and understood through the interaction with the individual being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2017). As Grant and Giddings (2002) and Creswell (2013) point out, in phenomenological research methodology, these could be face-to-face interviews where the researcher has a conversation with the participants to construct some reality. The philosophical stance given above means that the study is connected in a way that aims to stay close to the stories and happenings of the individual by capturing their stories.

3.2 Aims and research questions

This study explores employees' perceived advantages and disadvantages when using flexible working arrangements in the New Zealand context. Specifically, the study investigates the links between flexible work arrangements and employee well-being and how flexible work arrangements relate to job satisfaction and career progression. The two questions arising from this aim are:

- RQ1. In what context, by what means does the use of flexible work arrangements improve the well-being of employees?

- RQ2. What are the sacrifices and downsides for New Zealand employees in terms of visibility and career progression when using flexible work arrangements?

These questions will be answered using literature research on flexible work arrangements in organisations and the lived experiences of twelve employees who work with organisations that offer flexible working arrangements in their workplaces. The worker's experiences using flexible working arrangements are explored using interviews.

3.3 Research design

The study involved both a literature review and qualitative interviews. In this study, the researcher used a qualitative research design. A qualitative research methodology was seen as the most appropriate way to uncover the lived experience and perceptions held by employees who use the flexible working arrangements provided by their organisations. It allowed the researcher to stay close to the participants and capture and understand how people act and account for their actions (Gray, 2018). Precisely, this study employs a descriptive, interpretive research design. Smythe (2012) advises that descriptive research is "ideally suited to a master's study" (p.5). Smythe (2012) points out that descriptive, interpretive research design allows the researcher to hear the interviewees' voices through interviews. By analysing their answers, they draw out themes, explore the themes, and describe and interpret them. The researcher then links the findings with the literature to support shared insights.

Downes and Koekemoer (2011) state that researchers act as research tools and inspire participants to freely discuss their experiences, perspectives, feelings, and thoughts during qualitative research. Downes and Koekemoer (2011) point out that researchers directly influence data quality. Therefore, the researcher in this study attended qualitative teaching classes that stressed interview skills and communication techniques.

According to Downes and Koekemoer (2011), interview training significantly affects data quality and is very necessary when researchers require in-depth and detailed data.

3.3.1 Method

According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2016), a method is defined as the technique or theoretically informed ways for collecting and analyzing empirical data, so the information can be obtained. For this study, face-to-face and semi-structured interviews were chosen as they allow the researcher to probe for more in-depth responses where the participant was asked to clarify what they said to expand on their answers (Gray, 2018).

Similarly, Myers (2019) states that semi-structured interviews can give the researcher and interviewee some structure while allowing for some improvisation; they allow the interviewee to add important insights as they arise during the conversation, whereas the researcher's previously prepared questions could provide some focus as well.

There are several ways that a researcher could choose to analyse semi-structured interviews. In this study, l decided that the best way to analyse the data was through a thematic analysis method. As Braun and Clarke (2013) point out, thematic analysis (T.A.) is a widely used qualitative method of data analysis and a technique focused on categorizing themes and patterns of meaning across a dataset based on a research question.

3.4 Search strategy and evaluation of sources and criteria

The literature review search was conducted and examined using relevant literature articles in the databases. The review of the literature studies examined the database in Human Resource Management and employment relations over the last ten years. In this review, some terms of reference referred to New Zealand government reviews of existing FWAs provisions in the legislation and in Statistics New Zealand.

The researcher carried out two separate literature reviews searches. The initial literature review searches were limited to peer-reviewed articles that ranged between 2009 and 2020. The library's databases included the Business Source Complete EBSCO host, emerald insight for books, JSTOR, PsycINFO and AUT Google Scholar, which were searched with the English Keywords; ''flexibility', 'flexible work arrangements', 'flexible working practices', 'telecommuting' 'working from home, flexible working hours, 'work from home' 'telework' 'flexible staffing arrangements and part-time work', 'job sharing', 'flexi-time', 'part-time', 'remote work'. 'Job satisfaction, 'career progression', 'work-life balance and policy' "employees' well-being," "employee and career progression", and flexible scheduling arrangements.

3.5 Criteria for the inclusion of searches

The review was limited to scholarly peer-reviewed articles written between 2009 and 2020. Some grey literature articles on industry reports, government reports and conference proceedings were regularly browsed to identify the current trends. However, they were not included, as they were not peer-reviewed, or the results had no links with the keywords, or the articles were not written in English.

3.5.1 Second literature search

The second literature review searches were more focused on the New Zealand context, between the period from 2019 to 2020. A further search was conducted for the period between January 2021and May 2021. The researcher felt that because of the COVID-19 pandemic, an investigation into literature in 2020 was necessary to uncover the new literature covering FWAs during the period when the COVID-19 pandemic saw a mass group of employees working from home. To carry out the searches, the researcher used

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Google Scholar searches for literature using the English keywords, "flexible working arrangements," "flexible scheduling arrangements," "remote work," "telecommuting," "flexi-time," "home office," "work from home," "job sharing," "working part-time," "job satisfaction," "employees well-being," "employee and career progression". The searches produced a variety of data on the topics. Peer-reviewed articles took precedence.

The researcher narrowed the search to eight different types of flexible work arrangements, including compressed workweeks, fixed-term contracts, shift work, overtime, part-time work, job sharing, flexitime and teleworking. This study will focus on the four most commonly used types: telework/home-based work, part-time work, flex-time, and job sharing. The other four compressed workweeks, fixed-term contracts, shift work and overtime, are out of the scope of this study. However, some of the flexible working arrangements examined referred to the recently available government statistics and reports released.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

The interviews were transcribed verbatim. However, due to the time constraints of the researcher, the audio interviews were transcribed by an external transcriber.

3.7 Samples and participants

The study reported here explores four types of FWAs; teleworking, flexi-time, part-time work and job sharing. The study investigates the links between FWAs and employee well-being and how flexible work arrangements relate to job satisfaction and career progression.

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Participants for this study were chosen from individuals who live in the greater Auckland region and satisfying specific criteria. Inclusion criteria were as follows:

1. Individuals had to be adults over 18 years currently working in permanent employment. However, they may have experienced or used some form of flexible working.

2. The organisation they worked for was offering flexible working arrangements to employees.

It is vital to recognise that the inclusion criteria adopted narrowed the sample of participants. The selection of participants considered age, diversity, experience and profession (Ritchie, Lewis, & Elam, 2003).

Twelve participants were interviewed for this study, all of whom were office-based employees. Participants were recruited via e-mail. The researcher sent an email invitation to participate in this research to participants from my social networks and previous colleagues. The email invitation contained a brief description of the study, a request for their participation and a soft copy of the participation information sheet, which detailed the purpose of the research and how they were identified to take part in this study. The participation information sheet included information that described that the participants were recruited because they were engaged in a permanent job with flexible work arrangements, full-time hours with remote / telework, part-time on-site, or a combination of these.

To qualify for this study, the participants were sent an email invitation to participate in a research study with the following information;

> "Please find attached an information sheet with more information. This email is to invite you to take part in this study. I aim to investigate the links between flexible work arrangements and worker wellbeing. Interviews will last about 30

minutes and will take place at a mutually agreed place that is safe, convenient, and at a time that suits you. I will be scheduling interviews from 22nd November 2019 and can discuss time slots as volunteers contact me.

I will ensure that your identity is protected by keeping all responses anonymous. All data, including audio recordings and notes, will be saved in password locked files. Hard copies of data (including any handwritten notes or USB devices) will be stored in a locked cabinet at AUT. If you would like to participate in this research project or have any questions, please contact me on email: pagufa@yahoo.com"

The participants were required to self-select based on their current work arrangement criteria and description to qualify for the study. Those who did not meet the requirements were not interviewed. Three volunteers were removed before scheduling interviews for data collection because their work arrangements did not meet the study criteria.

Participants who chose to participate in the interview were given the choice of being interviewed within the AUT environment/campuses convenient to where they live; in the library meeting rooms, or in the postgraduate meetings rooms. All interviews were conducted in a private meeting room away from the Post Graduate study rooms at AUT's main campus and were recorded using a digital voice recorder.

3.8 Data collection procedure

The researcher collected data from the 9th to the 23rd of December 2019, using twelve semi-structured face to face individual interviews with flexible workers from four different organisations that offered flexible working arrangements to their employees. According to Downes and Koekemoer (2011), a 'semi-structured interview is a method of collecting data where a flexible interview schedule guides a single interviewer who

uses active listening and probing to allow in-depth detail and understanding. The interviews were transcribed verbatim. Due to the time constraints of the researcher, the audio interviews were transcribed by an external transcriber.

3.9   Sampling Method

For this research, the researcher applied the following methods; a mix of snowball sampling and criterion sampling, as the most appropriate methods.

3.9.1 Snowball Sampling

A standard snowballing technique was used to broaden participation. As Creswell (2013) points out, snowball sampling is a method that pulls information for a study based on the initially recruited participant(s). To some degree, there was a snowballing effect from the interviewed participants. Snowballing aided the researcher to get three additional participants who were then interviewed.

3.9.2 Criterion sampling

Criterion sampling refers to a strategy where individuals that meet and fulfil specific criteria are selected (Creswell & Poth, 2017). As Patton (2002) notes, criterion sampling entails studying and reviewing all the cases that meet some pre-set criteria of significance. In this study, the criteria that were used to determine which participants could form part of the research included the following sample.

These criteria required that the participants;

- should be an adult

- be working in permanent employment and have some form of flexible working arrangement offered in their organisation

- be willing to take part in the research and give their written consent after the researcher informed them about the purpose and procedure of the research

- be ready and willing to be interviewed by the researcher

- be willing to have their interviews digitally-recorded

3.10 Participant selection

The researcher confirmed the sample size according to the number of available participants who were willing to partake in the interviews. The study registered 12 participants who were employed across different industries in different organisations. In this sample, most participants were female. Although most participants had children, some had no children. Two of the participants were unmarried males from two different organisations, and ten participants were female from three various organisations. Eight out of ten female participants were married, and six participants had children. The other two females were not married.

Concerning their position at work, the sample had one participant at a managerial level and three participants at a team leader level.

The interviews were in-depth, semi-structured, and ranged from 28 to 37 minutes, with most lasting from 30 to 35 minutes. All interviews were tape-recorded.

3.10.1 Materials

The scope of the semi-structured interviews covered the different types of flexibility in a variety of organisations, with a particular focus on the type of flexibility they used, work-life balance, career progression, and job satisfaction. The interviews included eight pre-designed questions, which covered the questions in the next section. During the interviews, sometimes probes were utilised to clarify or prompt more information from some interviewees (e.g., why do you use this type of arrangement? Why did you choose not to use the available arrangements?).

3.10.2 Interview Questions

1. Thinking about working in an organisation that provides flexible working arrangements, could you please describe what flexible arrangements are available at your workplace?

2. Of those available, what flexible arrangement do you use?

   a. Why do you use this one?

   b. Why do you choose not to use arrangements that are available to you?

3. Thinking about flexible work arrangements in your company, what are the benefits of the flexible working arrangements you use in terms of your job?

4. Thinking of the flexible work arrangements you use, what are the disadvantages of your job efficiency and/or career progression?

5. Thinking of flexible work arrangements, what are the benefits to you in terms of your family/ home commitments?

6. What are the disadvantages to you of flexible work arrangements in terms of your family/home?

7. Now thinking about your organisation and colleagues in general, are there any other disadvantages you have witnessed for others in accessing flexible arrangements? Please describe?

8. Now thinking about your organisation and colleagues in general, are there any other advantages you have witnessed for others in accessing flexible working arrangements? Please describe.

3.11 Data Analysis

This section describes how the data was conducted, recorded, transcribed and reviewed.

For this research, the researcher used a qualitative approach using data-driven thematic analysis. The researcher used a thematic analysis approach to analyse the data from the interview transcripts. As Braun and Clarke (2013) point out, thematic analysis (T.A.) is a widely used qualitative method of data analysis and a technique focused on categorizing themes and patterns of meaning across a dataset based on a research question.

As Creswell and Poth (2017) advise, data analysis in qualitative research consists of the preparation and organization of the data. As such, the analysis and interpretation of empirical data depend on how they are theoretically outlined. Data analysis also depends on the researchers' ideological beliefs. Similarly, Beauregard (2014) points out that thematic analysis consists of a search for themes relevant to labelling the topic of interest. Through reading and re-reading the data, researchers engage in pattern recognition in the form of pattern recognition in which recurrent themes are identified and categorised for analysis.

3.11.1 Data analysis of the semi-structured interviews

Steps in the data analysis process entailed becoming closely acquainted with the experience as the participant communicated it. To fully be acquainted with the interview data, this was achieved through multiple readings of the transcripts and notes taken during the interview simultaneously, listening to each audio-recorded interview, and finally thoroughly re-reading each transcribed interview. Important statements from across the entire length of each interview were extracted and afterwards transformed in a manner that would bring out the context and significance while retaining a connection with the participant's descriptive statement. The researcher corrected minor errors in the transcript drafts and maintained the points stressed during the interviews. Finally, multiple reads of the transcripts guided the researcher to generate codes. The process of generating codes includes breaking down transcripts into smaller sections that can be used to analyze significant findings. The process of generating codes includes breaking down transcripts into smaller sections that can be used to analyze significant findings. This cumulative process continued for all 12 transcripts.

Using the NVivo program, codes were then analysed and sorted into themes with the overarching themes categorised. According to Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas (2013), a theme is defined as a logical integration of the different pieces of data that represent a finding. Emergent themes were 14 themes and one sub-theme as follows:

(1) Informal written arrangement

(2) Work from home is an agreement negotiated between the Team leader/supervisor and the employee

 (3) The technology is supported by the organisation

(4) The equipment to support telework is borne by the employee

(5) Management mistrust and attitude towards telework

6) Not all roles or jobs are suitable for teleworking

7) Career progression opportunities

8) Work-life balance spill overs

     a) Work encroaching on family time

9) Awareness and knowledge of FWA

10) Returning from maternity

11) Break-workload and less income

12) Work co-ordination

13) Productivity and efficiency

14) Health and Safety and productivity

3.12 Summary

This chapter described the methodology used. The following were examined in detail: search strategy and evaluation of sources; aims and research questions; my ontological and epistemological perspective; research design; sampling methods; interview questions; data collection methods, and interview structure.

Semi-structured face to face interviews was used for collecting data. Pre-defined open-ended questions were used to allow the participant the time and freedom to express themselves and to feel comfortable in responding to the questions. Interview schedules took place in the AUT meeting room. Thematic analysis was used to categorise the data into themes. The chapters that follow examine the findings in detail and explore the lived experience of the employees with flexible work arrangements.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

Gray (2018) defines ethics as the study of standards of conduct and values, and in research, how this influence both the researcher and the research subjects. Additionally, the (Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), 2004) describes research ethics as moral values guiding research. Similarly, Gray (2018) adds that ethics are sets of moral values or standards that are used to guide good choices in conduct and relationships with others. In accordance with all the above ethical guidelines, an ethics application was submitted to the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) and approved on the 22nd of August 2019 - *AUTEC Reference number 19/295*. Particular attention has been given to protect the names of the interview participants and their workplaces.

As there were a small number of interviewees from different organisations in different sectors in New Zealand, confidentiality was essential to the interviewees. The researcher has adhered to the guidelines and upheld confidentiality during the data collection process and the write-up of the findings. The researcher left out information or any material that could identify any of the participants. For this reason, no organisation's name or the names of the participants have been mentioned in this research.

Chapter 4 : Interview Findings

This section of the study provides an overview of the key themes from the qualitative research study interviews with the participants and the emergent themes. The study starts with features linking to contributors as an overview of the themes. NVivo software coded a total of 14 themes and one sub-theme from 12 transcripts. The transcripts were analysed to form 14 themes. Flexitime arrangement was by far the most common form of flexible working arrangement. In practice, flexitime working arrangements were mainly informal, and the employees initiated the request.

The 14 themes included:

(1) Informal written arrangement

(2) Work from home is an agreement negotiated between the Team leader/supervisor and the employee

(3) The technology is supported by the organisation

(4) The equipment to support telework is borne by the employee

(5) Management mistrust and attitude towards telework

6) Not all roles or jobs are suitable for teleworking

7) Career progression opportunities

8) Work-life balance spillovers

     a) Work encroaching on family time

9) Awareness and knowledge of FWA

10) Returning from maternity

11) Break-workload and less income

12) Work co-ordination

13) Productivity and efficiency

14) Health and Safety and productivity

The following section provides details on the demographic profile of the participants in this study.

4.1 Participant's demographics

The participants in this study were full-time employees working between 37.5 hours - 40 hrs per week. The gender distribution was ten females and two males with ages ranging between 26 and 48 years. Participants were from different industry backgrounds with varying years of experience. Four participants were in leadership positions, and three of them had direct reports. The majority of the employees in this study had flexible working arrangements, primarily flexible start and finish times and work from home options, while part-time work and job sharing were the least used options. The first theme is the informal written arrangement, an overarching theme that explains the sporadic nature of the formal procedure.

4.2 Emerging themes

This section presents 14 overarching themes and one sub-theme that emerged from this study in more detail, illustrated by the participants' quotes.

First, the arrangements were informal and were based upon an individual choice as agreed upon with their line managers. Second, they cited low productivity and efficiency when teleworking and long work hours using flexi-time.

4.3 Informal written arrangements, flexi-time and teleworking

An overarching theme indicates that although formal and informal work arrangements

exist in the organisations the participants in this study worked for, most flexi-time and

teleworking arrangements were informal. Formal arrangements are those arrangements

that have been made via the organisation's flexible working policy. The participants in

this study who used flexi-time arrangements asserted that the arrangement tended to be

informal; many employees managed to take the arrangement as a personal choice. Here

is some of what they had to say:

> *"As long as you inform the team leader before only. That's is fine with the team leader and the management, you have to inform them when you're starting and as long as you work for eight hours with half an hour lunch hour. That's fine with the management."*

> 'It *is Informal. You just inform the manager and let them know - Ok, today I'm going to leave earlier, - or tomorrow I will come in earlier - and that's fine.*

> *"I can start at 9.30 am, maybe, just depending on the day. I like to start a bit late because I'm coming from a bit far. I can have a flexible time with the time I start".*

> *"Yes. I have got a flexi-time. I sometimes start at nine-thirty and then complete my seven and a half hours and then leave by five and sometimes I start at 10 o'clock and leave by six".*

> *"Yeah, I can start between eight-thirty and nine-thirty and, because my house is located a little bit far off to avoid the traffic hours, I took flexi-time it as I can start between 9 and 9:30. And then work till five-thirty or six. They're pretty flexible.*

> *"It's just discretion between you and your manager. Regarding taking off early because I have an appointment, I can stop work at some point, as long as you make sure that you work for 40 hours and finish all your work on time, I usually don't have any problem with it.*

Another participant compared the approach of informal arrangements between her two
team leaders, asserting that:

"We don't have to write an email formally, we can just message or make a phone call to our team leader, but also you can even Skype your team leader. If your team leader is not available at her desk, you can leave a note on her desk to just let her know and then leave. My team leader is new. She joined, I think, nine months ago. But with my previous team lead, I never have to message. I can start at any time and leave any time, but the thing is I have to work for 7.5 hours, and then I have to finish my job, that's it.'

These informal flexi-time arrangements often require a one-on-one conversation between the employee and the Team Leader or their line manager, or sometimes through an email request or phone call made by the employee. Less formalized approaches included situations when employees had to attend an appointment, like a doctor's appointment, a house viewing, taking their children to games, e.g., swimming lessons, and coming to work during off-peak hours to avoid traffic. The interviewees stated as follows that;

"The benefit is that you can attend to your appointments. Sometimes if you've got a doctor's appointment you can't do it on the weekends, you've got to do it during the week you know, Or I don't know, your house viewing because you want to rent a new place but the renting times are between 12.00 pm or 1.00 pm or something like that, you know, ridiculous hours.

"*You need to be able to do that otherwise; you can't find a house and, you know, whatever other obligations or appointments. I don't have children, so I don't have commitments based on somebody else's wellbeing but for mine, primarily things like doctor's appointments or dental appointments. Something that I can't schedule outside of the 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 pm period.*

"I would use my flexi-time if I am late for work because of traffic or the bus didn't come on time. So, I have to work extra time and cover out the time that I missed. "

"I also use only flexi-time to be with my daughter on her swimming classes every Friday, but that means that I don't have lunch on Thursday and Friday".

"*I'm very happy with the flexible hours because we both are working at the [….]. Even my husband has flexible hours working at the [….] So, we both came off-peak hours. So, we come together. So that's a big advantage we can come together to save so much money on bus fare. If they didn't give us flexible hours, then each one has to come at different timings, then it would be difficult as we will have to waste so much money on transport."*

Time in lieu was also another flexible working arrangement that emerged from the interviews; one participant asserted that;

> "Flexibility, working from home, flexible hours, time in lieu. I think that is one of the things which I sometimes do. Sometimes you have got a doctor's appointment because they are not available on weekends. However, if you're going early to attend the appointment, your manager still has flexibility to do time in lieu. Then you can cover up the time; that's also one of the important flexible l have, fortunately."

One participant who is a manager and has employees reporting to her asserted that flexi-time increased her productivity; coming into the office earlier than the regular working hours reduced disruptions from the staff.

> "With flexi-time, I like to come in early because when I'm at the office early in the morning, I can get quite a lot done before the rest of the staff comes in. Most of the time… as you have your staff come in you, I need to support them, help them with any questions, and be available. And that's why I usually do most of the data work in the mornings before there are any disruptions."

Even though most participants had some form of flexible working arrangement, one participates who worked from home occasionally acknowledged that the arrangement was not formal. It all depended on the kind of working culture. Here is what one man had to say;

> "I mean, it's not formally; it depends on how you describe formally. I mean, do we have to fill in a form? No, it's more kind of… quite casual. If I can't make it to work, it's more like a text message to my boss or an email to the team saying – I won't be in the office for this reason, but I will be working from home, so if you need me just let me know. Send me an email, send me a text, and I'll jump on if you need anything. So, it's more casual. I don't think it's… Yeah, I mean, it's always been with my current job or the previous job. It's been more casual in how you approach it. You know, as I say, it's all to do with the kind of working culture. I guess people (sigh), I don't think we come across anybody who will say – If you want to work from home you need to give me one day's notice, or are you willing to tell me the exact reason why you want to be working from home. I mean, that ability is there; it's good not to exploit that, you know. I mean – no, I don't feel like coming to work, I'll work from home. I mean, not that, but the approach to it now is much more casual. I guess it's informal".

4.4 Telework arrangement agreed between the employee team leader.

Irrespective of the role, position or organisation type, telework arrangements are agreed upon between employees and their team leader. The participants in this study stated that they had to initiate the request to telework through one-to-one conversation with the team leader or write an email or make a phone call requesting an opportunity to telework. The team leader or supervisor then evaluated the request and its practicality and granted the employee that chance.

> *"So, our company also provides flexible working, for example, I had a health condition wherein I have to stay at home for three weeks. My company allowed it, and I worked from home for three weeks. So, they made sure that we were two in our team during that time, like two people doing the same job, so the other person supported me in covering other areas.. I mean I'll be working from home, and she'll be in the office so that she can also manage the phones. Also, in my workplace, we have to handle customer phone calls, so she has to manage the work and phone calls. Because I was working from home, I was not able to be on the phone".*

One participant asserted that, although her organisation offered flexibility, which tended to be informal, she got greater flexibility from her manager. She stated that:

> *"At my workplace, we have work flexibility. We have flexible time, that's, you can start between any time between, seven-thirty to nine-thirty and finishing between, three-thirty to five-thirty. There is further flexibility depending on the manager. Unlike my current manager, my previous manager, I started at six o'clock to finish at two o'clock because I was studying. So, on top of the flexibility from the organization, there's also flexibility from the manager."*

Although most teleworkers did their telework from home, some asserted that they could work from anywhere. The company provided laptops, phones, or tablets, making it easier to use a telework arrangement, which means that employees can work while on the go, such as when travelling by bus or train on a commute to work.

"I've got, with my current manager, I can work from anywhere. I've got a laptop, and I can work from home. I can work from the park as long as I get my job done. So, it can be anywhere. I can just do my job from anywhere, anytime".

"Ah, we have access to our to staff Internet at any branches, so if we can't make it to work for some reason, you can simply just go to any branch and work from there.

"I am entitled to a laptop, so that's also, you know, an option for us so we can work at home using work laptop, not our personal laptop, and also [.......] we have two main sites in Auckland, so for people who live in North Shore, they're not, they don't have to work in here, in the city if they don't have to because they can work from the other site in Albany, so that's an option for them. Like some people, they have their phone provided by the company, which also helps."

"I know for sure that from previous conversations with my husband, for example, one of his managers works in or stays in [.....] And he usually uses the train. So, his commuting time he used to answer emails. So that was part of the flexibility that they had is because it is like an hour and a half train journey, that he had an hour and a half that he would have answered emails, got work done, and he had his few minutes that he had to walk to the office, then he spent another five or six hours in the office. And then in the afternoons, he takes another hour and a half back home to finish work. So that is another type of flexibility that is available as well, that is out more in the corporate areas."

Some formalised telework agreements reflected a combination of telework, where people

work from home once a week or work at a client or satellite office.

"It's not difficult to just work from home, and I know that one of my heads happens to work from home once a week; the aim for it is so he could spend more time with his kids. And I heard of a couple of people who already have that contract that they would work for four days a week only, for 40 hours and just cram their hours to four days, although it's still not common".

"With my current job where I need to meet with suppliers; sometimes, things like that, if and I can move back and bring some of the examples that my colleagues currently do. So, for example, if someone is based in NorthShore and the suppliers are based in Northshore, I have colleagues who had meetings with the suppliers there and not coming to work but rather going home and continuing working from home for the rest of the day. Let's say it takes them one and a half hours to get here; then it would make no sense for them to come to the city, go back to a meeting with the supplier, then get back to the city for work and then go back home, so they have utilised that"

Interviewees linked teleworking as a benefit. They cited that teleworking was their preference when they have specific tasks that require fewer distractions and a need to concentrate. One interviewee commented:

> *"It's the same principle as when you're studying. You don't want to come into the office and study when you are studying. You would rather be in the library, where it's quiet and has fewer distractions.   I think it is the same with work, especially when you're working on special projects you know you need to get that done well by yesterday, you are behind. So, in that sense, yes, if you have a good understanding manager and as I say to her, you require this report tomorrow on your desk, I think I'm going to work from home because it's easier. It would be faster less distracting than when I am in the office. Yes, I think it would be quite a good thing to have. And I'm pretty sure, some people would probably use that to their advantage, especially when it comes to that deadline, just sitting down focusing on that job task at hand, and getting it done, you know, rather than coming to work, going here and there and meetings and this and that".*

Benefits and challenges to teleworking

The majority of interviewees who used teleworking flexibility stated that they encountered both the benefits and challenges, especially the use of double computer screens when working and low productivity. Some felt distracted while working from home, and some felt less distracted and were highly productive.

In this study, interviewees who teleworked were quickly able to outline the positives and benefits as follows:

 One participant asserted that;

> *"So, if you work from home, the benefits would be if you need to focus on something. If you need to concentrate complete specific tasks, that is a benefit to work from home. Because when you don't have those disruptions, you don't have the phones, you don't have phones that ring the whole time. You don't have staff members asking questions, so most of the time, when I work from home, I've got specific tasks that have to be finished.*

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Other participants stated that when they telework, there are many advantages: saving on commuting time, no dressing up for work, saving on costs and feeling less stressed:

> *"The benefits of working from home are that you don't need to commute. No commuting and you don't have to dress up, and you can look like whatever you want to look like".*

> *"Ah, I don't have to travel, I save time on travelling, l don't get stressed so much, and no phone calls to attend to."*

> *"The benefit is that the stress level is so low. I won't get stressed even if the workload is high. If you're at the office, the stress level will be high, but I won't get stressed at home even if the workload is high.*

Another interviewee asserted that one could work around the tasks simultaneously, and nobody followed them. They felt autonomous in setting up and scheduling their work and tasks:

> *"The convenience is that you can work around whatever obligations I guess you have at home. Nobody is chasing you physically, so if you've got like a micro-manager, they can't physically chase you. They might send you emails, and you can respond accordingly," but nobody's trying to get hold of you on the phone or chasing you physically as well sending you an email because you haven't responded in the last five minutes. So, people have better patience. So, when they're communicating with you, they're a lot more patient because you're not physically there. Still, if you're physically there, people seem to think it's - I need it now - and then they'll chase you after they've sent you an email, but you haven't seen the email yet because you've got other emails that were there before and you're trying to work your way through it or whatever, so that's the kind of thing".*

> *"If you're working from home, the good thing is minimal distractions. The only person that can distract you is yourself. You can also attend to other things you need to do. So that's the benefit as well as people are much more patient with waiting for your communication, I would say, and that's really what I think".*

The negatives or challenges that the teleworkers experienced were workspace setups, work stations, access to hard drives at their office, lack of multiple computer screens to work on:

Challenges for working from home would be, I would say, the setup. So, if you're used to two screens, and you work from home, and you only have one screen, it can become quite a bit of a challenge. So, I've got myself set up with a laptop and a nice big screen that I can split in two, the big screen can be divided into, that it gives me the same type of environment that I've got at work."

"My company does not provide me with a computer, and I use my laptop. I don't have a workstation set up, my daughter has a study table that l can use, but it's not as comfortable as sitting on the sofa. So, I just don't use it. At first, it will be comfortable, but sitting with a laptop on the sofa, the heat of the laptop and all is not comfortable."

"I lack the speed, maybe because of the system that I use. That's the only reason I think I have two screens at the office, but the whole point is that the number of tasks you do can affect your productivity. At my home, there is no workstation set up; I'm just working through my laptop."

"Two screens are more convenient for me to look for information and find other documents but because if I work from home, I only have a small laptop and the screens small, and I use more mouse clicks, and it takes more time for me to finish one work".

"So, having one screen and I'm working from a laptop is so uncomfortable. Ergonomically, it's not that comfortable. Sometimes, with that particular role, I need multiple screens to spread out the spreadsheets and then process the documents from the spreadsheets and see where I am with which student. So yeah, sometimes I think working from home can be a bit of a challenge if you don't have the right set-up to do it. So, for example, for me, it was two screens I needed for that particular role. But sometimes other things, like if you're sending an email, you don't need two screens".

"Oh, that's a challenge, so shared drives, you don't usually have access to the shared drive if you work from home. But what I can see currently is that quite many of the documents we've got would be saving on a SharePoint site, which is on the cloud. So, if the Microsoft SharePoint site can retrieve all our documentation, that is one of the benefits. But if we have to save things in our share drive, it is a bit challenging because you need to get all those setups on your computer."

"I think working from home, especially from my experience, working from home tends to get a bit slow because we usually work with two screens. At home, there would normally be one screen, which makes things a bit slower. We're used to having two screens, working on multiple screens and multiple systems, and it's easy to swap between them and much faster at work. But if you're at home, it tends to be slower, there's a little added time on top of it, and it's a bit trickier because you're looking at one laptop screen. Or that's the case with me at my job. Other people might have multiple screens at home, so that becomes a challenge".

"When I am at the office, I used to finish it off quickly, but when I'm at home, I'm more relaxed, which you need because you will be working from home because of

some reason. So sometimes I take more time to finish my job. For example, if I have to say, for completing one task at the office, if I take 20 minutes, I might take 25 minutes at home. That's not a big difference, 25 to 30 minutes".

"Sometimes it's good to just be at home and so when you're out of reach… out of sight, out of mind people don't bother you or don't start looking for, you know, like ways to ask you to help them with their little things that in the grand scale of things are minute compared to what you have that you need to complete. Because they kind of ignore.. like they think about just themselves in that situation - Help me with this - but you have to do finance for the whole of their […] or something you know. And they're not aware of that because they're in their own world. Sometimes, when you're able to work from home, and you just have that out of an office to say that you're working from home, people expect you to take the time; excuse me before you respond.

Another challenge, as indicated by one of the interviewees, was the workload for the team members working in the office. One respondent observed that:

"They have to pick up my phone calls that come in my work area or topic. The load that they have on phone calls, they have to pick up my workload as well."

Among those interviewees who chose not to telework even though teleworking flexibility was available in their organisation, one stated that:

"Yeah, because you need that interaction. So that's like one of the reasons why I don't work that much from home".

"Some people do well working alone from home, but you do have people that need that support, that it's much easier to get up and ask somebody something, if you're in the office, whereas if you're at home you don't have that and then if you had a problem, you tend to leave that problem for the next day if you couldn't resolve that specific thing. So that is some of the challenges."

Another participant expressed that getting help from colleagues in the office benefited them when working in the office. Also, it was much more efficient to talk to colleagues' face to face, which improves communication and fosters a mutual connection.

"Working in the office is much better and also because I'm still having questions coming from my work, and when I don't know, I can ask my colleagues easily. Sometimes face-to-face is more efficient, and also maybe they will come to me and show me how to do it on my computer or how to use the system".

Among the employees who teleworked, some expressed those distractions were common when they work from home; this could take the form of playing on the phone, browsing the internet and distracting family members:

> "I found out that if I work from home, my productivity will decrease because of so many distractions. Because it's like, for example, there are so many things I can reach in my room. So, I will sometimes play on my phone and then do other things, that's why I find out that working from home is not suitable for me and also, it's why I choose the flexible hours.

> "Yeah, it's easier to work just from work and also distractions from home maybe, oh my family, my mum, she will get me to do something, and I have to stop my work".

> "I don't know, I think, because I'll end up procrastinating, like going on my phone or going on the internet for something, and l won't be more focused".

Another disadvantage of working from home, as highlighted by the interviewees, was that the employee has fewer interactions with friends and won't learn much and that their communication skills will deteriorate:

> "No, no, I don't prefer doing it most of the time. Only when occasionally when required that's nice, you'll be deprived of so many other things if you permanently work at home, you won't have interaction with your colleagues, and you won't learn much. Your communication skills will be less".

Other interviewees stated that they did not feel isolated while working from home; however, they thought they missed out on birthday parties and information that is sometimes delivered verbally.

> "I never felt isolated. The only thing I felt is that we will not be aware of what's happening in the office; what's going on in our team? So, for example, if I say if there is a birthday function, I mean a birthday party is going on".

> "I think working from home is not like always an option that you need to do because you will be affected and miss opportunities. For example, because of the information, you get from colleagues or managers, sometimes seniors and managers, they will deliver the information verbally".

> "Although they will also send an email to everyone, it's like not so detailed. So, you won't get so many details as to when it was said verbally. Because also, if I am in the office when I hear something from the manager, I will ask them the

question for further information, and they will explain. But for staff who are not in the office to attend the meeting, the manager will send out a short email to explain - Ok, this is what's going on".

4.5 The cost of technology supported by the organisation

Technology has made it easy for many organisations and workplaces, and this has allowed flexibility in that work no longer needs to be completed on the office premises.

The participants in this study who used telework indicated that the standard technology used to support it usually consists of laptops and smartphones for some roles. However, not all positions are entitled to the equipment. The issue of equipment depends on the seniority of the position or the needs of the job. The home internet access bills were paid by the employee who requested the telework arrangement:

> *"Some departments do provide for the management and senior staff. There are a couple of laptops available in our department, so if I did want to take one home, I could take one home. Still, it's like a loan; it doesn't belong to me, it's to the whole department, but if they needed it on the day or they needed both laptops on the day, there's no way I'd be able to take one home the night before and then."*
>
> *"Yes, I have a work phone with the laptop as well, and you can easily sign in just like your office, computer, and then you can we have like in terms of calling because one of my jobs is receiving calls for some queries and all that. I do have a Skype and mobile number on my directory so people can call me anytime".*
>
> *"My personal laptop. Ok, only those managers can have company laptops. For lower-level staff, we need to use our own laptop, but it's easy to get access to the system because of just a link, like VPN, it's a link to remote control, my computer in the office".*

To enable their teleworkers to access shared drives remotely, many organisations preferred using a secure Virtual private network (VPN).

> *It's my own computer, and I just asked IT to provide me with VPN access. So, I had to leave my laptop at work, and then I could sign in from my computer at home. The challenge is its only one screen that I have at home*

"Yeah, no problem because I have a VPN. So, VPN is provided by the [….], and that helps, that gives you access to your computer system at work, but the thing with that is you need to ensure that you don't turn off your computer on the other side, because if you turn off your computer in the office, you can't sign in".

"I don't have any problems because the laptop, I have got, I don't know what you call it, VPN access, so it's all set up. I can just connect with whichever Wi-Fi, just log in with my credentials, that's it. It can access all the folders that can access the internet, everything I can do from anywhere. As long as I've got Wi-Fi".

"I think because we all are connected on the server, and we use the VPN number, then, you connect to the Office system, so we still access the drives folders as normal, but that's not a big problem. I don't think it's an issue nowadays, and it's quite easy".

4.6 **The devices to support telework are borne by the employee**.

The majority of the interviewees in this study asserted that no equipment was provided to them when they worked from home. They used their own laptops or home work station and paid the home internet bills.

The equipment like the computer is not the same as what we use in the office and usually because we have two screens. If we were working from home, I could only have one screen, and I have to split the screen for the things that I have to do and then the next thing is, of course, if you're at home, they will feel that you're not going to work full-time."

"At home, there would be, we usually have one screen, and that makes things a bit slower. We're used to having two screens, working on multiple screens and multiple systems, and it's easy to swap between them and much faster at work. But if you're at home, there are a few added times on top of it, and it's a bit trickier because you're looking at ah one laptop screen. Or that's the case with me at my job. Other people might have multiple screens at home, but yeah… So that, yeah, that becomes a challenge.

"I have space for that, but none of the stuff is provided by the [….] They don't pay for the power or the internet or anything like that when I'm using it for work purposes. That's, I guess that would be a disadvantage that they don't pay for it, you pay for it, whereas when you're here in the office, they pay for everything there.

"It's my own computer, and I just asked IT to provide me with VPN access, so I had to leave my computer at work on, and then I could sign in from my computer at home. The challenge is it's only one screen that I have at home. So having one screen and working from a laptop so ergonomically it's not that comfortable. And sometimes, with that particular role, I need multiple screens to spread out the

spreadsheets and then process the documents from the spreadsheets and see where I am at with which students. So sometimes, working from home can be a challenge if you don't have the proper setup.

"In my previous role, we didn't have laptops, so we just stay in the office and work from the workstation. If you wanted to work from home, you would just use whatever access you have, like using your own resources, not from the organization. So, it's a bit of a challenge if you don't have a laptop. In some roles, you don't, you're not given a laptop, but you have to use your own resources, or else you take leave and say I'm not available to come to work. So yeah, that was my previous role."

Overall, one manager interviewee indicated the importance of having a suitable setting

for the equipment if employees wanted to work from home:

"We've got a study room. We've got specifically designated space. We've got a nice big deck away from any noise and things like that. Enough light and everything is just set up on that desk."

"*And the other thing is if you set up in the right way at home that opportunity or that work will work very well, but not everybody has the ability, or, ability to get that set up because of the spaces that they've got at their at home. And I think that's something significant, especially for health and safety, and you need to make sure that you're comfortable.*

4.7 Management mistrust and perceptions of telework.

Teleworking is a big challenge for management. The inability to observe the employees

working remotely and measure the employee's performance and build trust.

An interviewee who is a manager in one of the organisations stated:

"So, the previous experience that I had with one of my team members who had the opportunity to work from home is that we had to get hold of the person, and the person wasn't available, and we've tried numerous options. We've tried instant messaging, text messaging, everything. And eventually, we found out that the person went to go and exercise during work time. Because the person never got time to go and exercise and that was between, I think it was from 9.00 am to 11.00 am. We couldn't get hold of the person, and there were specific tasks that had to happen during their specific times."

Some of the comments the interviewees made regarded management views towards telework;

"It's important that your manager should be supportive even though you did not hear in your organisation that you have the flexibility to work from home. But in a situation wherein a time where you are caught up with the situation that you have to be present at the same time at home, but at the same time you have to get the work done, and you could ask your manager, your manager need tell you there is an option, and how you can go about it."

"I think support from the manager is also important. So, it's not like you will decide you're working from home, be it, whatever. I'm just working from home. You need some approval from your manager whom you are reporting to understand If it is okay or what's the situation is like? And I think your manager should be supportive enough to give alternatives".

"Sometimes I find that some managers want to know why and where you are going there or whatever. And technically, it's not their place to learn all that, but I feel that it depends on the relationship you have with your manager and management style. So, if they are micro-managers, it is difficult very uncomfortable. So, you do have to come up with a well-organized story. So, my manager's manager, you got to come up with the story. You can't because you don't want to share your personal business. We're not friends."

One participant who has a child found it difficult to get approval to work from home during the school holidays so she could be with her daughter felt that the management was not supportive of working from home:

"Every day, I would have to think - Where will I... where will l leave her? And even her, she would ask me - Where am I going today? Where am I going tomorrow - so if only my laptop it's ok and if they allow me to work from home because my daughter has no one to look after her, so I have to stay with my daughter then I think I would prefer to work from home, but I tried that once, and then they said no. That's why, yeah, it's ok."

One manager and some team leaders in this study who had team members working remotely stated that working from home can be challenging at times as there is no clear visibility to know what the employee is doing:

"And I think that from a team leader's point of view, it can be challenging because you don't have that visibility of what is happening and where the person is that you need to get hold of them, then things get completed. So, it can be challenging. So that's why if you have the working from home, it would be things that could be easily completed that is not deadline-driven."

"Because especially if something that's deadline-driven, if that person needs to be ideally in the office because, unless you've got somebody that's very structured,

and that knows when things need to be completed… But if it's not that structured and you have specific things that need to get finished, and you can't get hold of the person, it can become a bit challenging. So that was, yeah, that was one of the experiences that I had during the year.

"Some people… it varies. The thing is, I have people that got more done at home. You could manage it because you could see like for transactions, if they are completed, they would have achieved more transactions or completed more documentation than what they could have done during the regular office hours. But then you have like the flip side that you've got people that take the liberty and do what they want. There were also times when I had a team member who did work at midnight, and if I think… Oh, how can you work at midnight because you still need to have to cut off? 'Because, ideally, it just has to be within the working hours.

Some interviewees indicated that the management does not approve of employees working from home for too long. Working from home for so long can affect the workplace and the colleagues sometimes because of the workload:

"I don't think you can work from home for too long. The management will not agree, I think if you're taking too often or too long. I don't think they will agree because it will affect the workplace and other colleagues also because like all the workload, Phone calls will come to them only and their work will be affected. Even if one person is not there, the phone calls related to our job, our topics will go only to the remaining people in the office, so I don't think the management will allow us to take too long. They can tell you off to come to the office or take sick leave. If you cannot come to the office, they might tell you to take sick leave. So, we can't always take work from home. It also depends on the manager as well as the workload at that time:

"Yes, and also the equipment like the computer is not the same as what we use in the office. Usually, because we have two screens at work and if we were working from home, I can only have one screen, and I have to split the screen for the things that I have to do. And then the next thing is, of course, if you're at home, they will feel that you're not going to work full-time."

4.8 Not all positions or jobs are suitable for teleworking

Three participants who worked in a big organisation asserted that some positions are not appropriate for teleworking. This means that teleworking / work from home is not suited to every role. Here are some statements from the interviewees:

"Yes. Like we need to be there physically. So, if I'm at home, they need to hire someone else to cover that. So that means I need to give some of the hours, so I have to move into part-time work other than full-time work. Do you understand what I mean?"

"Ah, but I think the [....] is getting more flexible with it. And I think it would be slightly different for people who work with the customer because that's speciality contact, and yeah, I would imagine that it would be different to ours because they need to be on the phone at certain times. But for other people who work in the head office background, we tend to... it's more flexible for us so we can work from home".

Two participants in this study expressed concern that their roles did not have the flexibility to perform the work from home:

"Within my position, I think they change depending on the position, but for my position, the flexible working hours require me to inform my manager of the times that I need to start earlier or later during the week or whatever."

"Yeah, so that's how it works, but then for other positions, I find some people can just make their starting time and leaving time separately, so I think it just depends".

One participant in this study who is in a leadership role expressed concern about the

role of being a team leader (TL) and working remotely. Sometimes it can impact the

team if they require assistance on critical tasks they are working on, and the TL is not

physically in the office to assist:

"So again, it comes back to the role one holds. So, if you are managing the team, if you are at a manager level, or a team leader level, if you are at the level where someone is dependent on you or you have a team. In those cases, working from home again impact to some extent because sometimes the team needs some assistance or need to manage internally how the work of the particular task suddenly comes up as critical; how can you handle that? And in that scenario, I think you need to be present in the office and working from home won't serve the purpose. And to be honest, it has happened many times with me. I have taken work from home at times, where I realized that my team is struggling. I was managing a team before and realized that my team is struggling, and sometimes you won't expect, but some critical things come up, and then the team is just stuck even though you're available on call.

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Some participants stated they would very much want to work from home; however, some part of their role is customer based and requires face to face interaction, which means that they have to be at the premises physically:

> *"I would like to have that option, but with my position, it's not so easy because I also have a front desk so, as I'm front and behind. So being more customer services, if my [….] come and ask me questions or [……] or visitors or whoever is there, I can do things from home. For example, like documenting the PhD's processes, how far along they are into their studies, what needs to be sent where? To the graduate centre, I mean the graduate school or if I need to chase up their supervisor because the other supervisor's no longer supervising them or whatever it may be. There are things that I can do that's all databased, but then there's also a percentage of my role which requires face-to-face. It's what makes it a bit difficult to have"*

One participant stated that although flexible working arrangements are widely advertised in their organisation, working from home is not an option for everyone and felt that it was not fair:

> *"So when I first applied at the [……] it had it in the advert… that was one of the many benefits of working at [..].   So, it's widely advertised as a flexible workplace and having all these other benefits such as upskilling and studying and all these kinds of things or discounts from particular organisations. Still, it's not something that your manager advertises if that makes sense."*

> "So, I don't think the work from home is for everybody. I don't think it's for everyone, and I don't think it's completely fair either, but that is how the [….] attracts people to the [...]by saying that they do have the work/life balance and flexible working hours, but it doesn't apply to every single job."

4.9 Career progression opportunities

With career progression and opportunities, evidence concerning the impact of flexible working on individual career progression and future development were mixed. The interviews showed that teleworking employees were very mindful of the significance of visibility to the management when working towards advancing their careers or job secondments. So, working from home frequently could potentially lead to missing opportunities to progress in a career. Some interviewees in this study did not see any negative impact on their career progression regardless of any form of flexible arrangements they took.

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Among the participants who worked from home, some asserted that regular working from home typically means the employee is working less than the employees physically in the office who are attending to various tasks while meeting other colleagues face-to-face. They stated that:

> *"I would say that working from home means… as I said, that person is just… the person working from home is just handling that task which is coming digitally. So, we also get queries, our phone calls or in person. So obviously, management thinks that the physically available person handles all of these phones, in-person questions, and helping other team members. But when you work from home like you won't get that kind of queries that you will receive in the office when you work at home".*

Other participants stated that frequently working from home or remotely could harm their ability to progress well. One can be limited to learning fast and building on other available skills only in the office setup. This means that the ability to get an opportunity to move on can be limited:

> *"I think about 10 to 15% it affects really because you'd be lagging behind somehow. You won't be learning so faster. You can't keep up that pace with the other colleagues, and they are building on like so many other things while at the office, but you wouldn't be learning so many things when you're doing work from home".*

> *"Like my thinking is that the reason where you will not get the priority for career progression when you work from home is that's how I feel; you know the person who's available at the office is available every time, and that person is always there. If one of the persons in the team cannot manage this query and that person who was able to help, then that's more reliable, you know."*

Some participants indicated that because the culture in their company values staff who are always seen in the office interacting with other colleagues, they will likely get a chance if any opportunity comes up:

> "*Yes, yeah, because you know verbal communication improves friendships. Because you always work from home and don't talk with people and people won't know you or understand you like a person, yeah. It will affect.*

Other interviewees who took flexitime working arrangements indicated that the flexibility did not impact their career progression. However, they noted that flexi-time could

potentially affect work coordination in the office. The tasks have to cover the period the employee has yet to report to the office.

However, some noted that working from home most of the time would impact their career progression. People miss out on the information they get from colleagues. Some managers deliver the information verbally to the staff in the office, and others can miss that opportunity if they are working from home:

> *"Yeah. No, not actually. With career progression and the work that I do, I take pride in everything I do, and I think, or I believe it's shown in my work. So, if there's any career progression that people can see what I'm capable of, they don't necessarily need to worry if I'm not in the office and things don't get done. And I think that is one I've proven previously as well, is that things will get done if the tasks are given and that it will be completed in the appropriate time".*

> *"I think working from home is not like always an option that you need to do because it will be affected. For example, because that information you get from other colleagues or the manager because sometimes like seniors and managers, they will deliver the information by verbal."*

Among the interviewees, some indicated that working from home most of the time could potentially impact a number of things; for example, productivity and professionalism, along with a lack of social interaction and therefore the professionalism of employees in the entire organisation.

> *"I think if an employer gives you the flexibility to do work from home, you should take that as an opportunity, not as like, you know, every day you are doing work from home, Uh, I think it impacts a little bit. But as I said, if you plan and believe that you are taking work from home tomorrow and all your critical task has already been done, but you are taking like small tasks that you can handle, that's fine. But taking work from home as an opportunity is okay, but taking it as for fun and, you know, or for granted, I would say that impacts your productivity.*

> *"If you do work from home every day and not in a work environment, I don't think you can progress professionally. Do you know what I mean? But working from home is just one of the flexibilities if you require and if needed. Working from home daily can impact your progress professional. One can miss socialising with their colleagues and staff. Somehow how people in your entire organization will not know who you are if you work from home most of the time. They won't see you*

in person. So, there is a lack of socialism and a lack of professionalism if you're working from home every day.

"I think that's the right thing to do because then if you are going to ask for if you are not performing what you're supposed to be doing, then it's something that will impact your performance because how can that be done well, you still have to have to meet your targets. So, you still have to do whatever you agree to do. Like is if you're in the office.

Among the interviewees, some indicated that flexibility did not impact their career progression as whether they worked from home or the office, there found there was no impact:

"But for me myself, I don't find flexible working beneficial as much in regards to my career progression, I think just the same; whether I work from home or work from the office, it's not, it doesn't affect me as much, you know what I mean."

"I don't think so because it's how you perform. It's how you still feature within the circles of your employment. If my manager sends me an email and l say, I'm working from home, I should respond because I said I am working from home. But if I'm at home and I'm not working, then there's an issue. I need to be a very trustworthy person for me to be able to earn that. So based on trust, you know, if I requested for flexibility and they give me or grant me that opportunity, I need to use it, you know, appropriately and not abusing it".

"With career progression, the work that I do, I take pride in everything that I do, and I believe it's shown in my work. So, if there are any career progression, people can see what I'm capable of, but they don't necessarily need to worry if I'm not in the office and things don't get done. That is one thing I've proven previously as well, is that things will get done if the tasks are given and that it will be completed in the appropriate time.

4.10 Work-life balance and spillovers

Interviewees described how working flexibly allowed them to balance their work-life balance and their personal commitments. In addition, several participants in this study highlighted the significance and benefits of having time to work together as a family. For some, having time as a family meant working together and going for walks together; some took time to attend to their studies.

One employee who worked flexi-time explained:

> *"During the last few months, I was travelling with my husband every morning, and that was quite good because there's more time that you spend together. So, he's got similar also flexible working hours, and we can spend more time together. And in the afternoons, when we get home, we're there earlier, we can get things done at home, go for walks, and focus more on the health. If you work the typical 9 to 5, it is pretty tricky to get that time to yourself and spend more time with the family and exercise because that's something that I didn't do.*

Other participants stated that having flexible working arrangements was tremendously beneficial. They stated that:

> *"I can work flexibly, so I can organise my study or some activities for my personal life, as I can meet with my friend, those sorts of things and, also, it's like common maybe in my company like people choose differently. I think it's like I can work as an average person.*

> *"I'm married, so my husband's family loves me working; you know they don't want me staying at home. I'm not saying about working from home; they want me to work. So, it's going in the right way now because we both are working and we can manage time. We are getting more time to mingle because we finish together. Most of the time we finish work together, so we are getting time to socialise at home, so the family life is good.*

4.10.1 Work that infringes on family time

Whereas most participants in this study found flexible working arrangements very beneficial, some interviewees admitted that flexible work arrangements could make life more complex than working regular hours. In addition, evading some responsibilities of family life can also mean that work encroached on family life.

Three interviewees in this study stated that although flexible working arrangements had many benefits, they sometimes made life more complex than when they worked regular hours. Here is what they said:

> *"Yes, because you have to do extra for those days that you'd want to leave early or and if you would like to work later, like work more than eight hours, like nine hours, when you come back home you would be exhausted.*

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"I have a feeling that when you have kids, it's potential. I don't have kids now, so a person who has kids might find it a struggle. In my case, I don't have any battle by working from home because it's just us two, so it's not a big deal if I'm taking more time to finish; it's not a big deal for my husband.

"Ah, you know, for me, it hasn't had any negative impacts, I mean, I know a lot of people, and I have had meetings where suppliers had to work home that day because they have to look after their child or someone, but they had to join into the meeting from home. Working and doing their thing from home, I'm sure that working from home does have that benefit because you know, work is like the main thing and things like family come first, so you can, if work is flexible towards it, more accommodating to it, yes, it helps so you, you don't fall behind on your work. At the same time, you do take care of family matters".

Interviewees also expressed the unique culture of their organisations and the high levels of work-life balance. Participants stated:

"I think our company culture is pretty good. When someone has such an arrangement, we understand why as it promotes, you know, the work/live balance. They just want to make sure that everyone is happy and family always comes first.

"I mean, my team leader works from home every Thursday. The reason behind it is because, yes, he has two kids and a wife, but the reason why he wants to work from home on Thursday is that he wants to, you know, like have breakfast with the family on Thursday and take the kids to school in the morning and pick them up in the afternoon. This is the way it works, so I think that's probably the reason why he gets permission to do it because it is quite important".

"Yeah, disadvantaged, not really because I think if you get to work from home and you're with your family more often, I think that's kind of like an advantage. But I know like [....] also offers the statutory return for people who just came back from maternity leave, so that's a good thing, and I think that's the benefit for them. I cannot speak for them because I don't have any kids, but a colleague is now filling in for someone else. She just came back from maternity leave".

Some interviewees who teleworked or worked from home asserted that they tended to get distracted when they worked from home:

"Working from home has a bit of a challenge because when I'm at home, I am in my comfort zone; I tend to look at other things that are surrounding me instead of focusing on my work, so I get distracted. So, I prefer to be in a setting where I just, you know, sit and say, this is the time I'm working. So, I just find sometimes I have to move away from my home and go maybe to a library or somewhere.

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"The last time I tried to work from home was a bit of a challenge. I ended up not doing much because, you know, I saw that I need to clean the house. I saw that I had to cook, checked my time, or needed to eat. I'm hungry, you know, all these other things start coming because I'm at home. But if I'm in a different setting, I would say, okay, I'm working. I need to get things done. So that's my challenge, but it's something that I need to manage myself. I don't think it's something to do with flexible working arrangements. It's just me who needs to say, okay, this is time to work, even when I'm at home, focus."

Although most of the interviewees found flexible working arrangements valuable, some indicated that they had to put in more hours to make up for the time when they used flexitime. They reported that as a disadvantage that potentially affected their family life or the spillover between work and family life. Here is what they stated:

"Sometimes, I do have to work a little extra overtime just to get the numbers down so it won't be as high for the next day. There's a challenge when there's a high volume of work. So, it does affect my free time at home; I guess" that means I'm the last to leave in the team or one of the last to go, so I get more work towards the end of the afternoon, but fewer phone calls and more time to focus on the service requests that I'm processing".

4.11 Awareness and knowledge of FWA in organisations

Although there were policies and systems for accessing FWAs in the interviewees' organisations, some interviewees, team leaders, and line managers did not know their organisational policies. Three participants asserted that they relied upon friends, colleagues and team leaders for information on work flexibility, stating;

"So normally… I understand that at the place where I work, they say - flexible working environment - and it's not there in the employment agreement, but we will be well aware of any flexible working from the team members. You can hear that from the team leads and manager. So, they say to you that you have a flexible working environment."

"But before I knew of the flexibility, every Thursday, I work until 6.00 pm and then when I heard that you could skip lunch and work on your desk by having lunch, I started doing that"

"I think I just asked the team lead. Oh, well, the first team lead gave me the choice of when I'd like to start or like the flexible working hours, and then I got to choose from there. So, she gave me a choice."

> *"Being a flexible workplace and having all these other benefits such as upskilling and studying and all these kinds of things or discounts from particular organisations, but it's not something that your manager advertises."*

Because the interviewee's managers and supervisors lacked a complete understanding of the existing content and presentation of the policies in their organisations, their line manager's opinion determined the authorisation of a request for flexibility. This might explain why many interviewees had a one-on-one conversation or an email to notify their line managers about a request. It is also about controlling/limiting the distribution of information

4.12 Part-time work and return from maternity leave

Part-time work was not a popular flexible arrangement with the interviewees. In this study, part-time work was commonly used by employees returning from maternity leave. Others choose to work part-time if they have a family member to take care of or study. One interviewee who used a part-time, flexible working arrangement stated:

> *"But I had already used part-time a few days a week when I came back from maternity. I was not working full time. I think you take time to settle down when you come back from long leave, and that's what I did. But at the moment, currently, what I'm doing, I sometimes take the flexibility of working from home just when I have a situation."*

Two other interviewees who did not use a part-time working arrangement said that part-time work was also a flexible working arrangement offered in their organisation that was mainly used by mothers returning from extended maternity leave. However, one said that she would consider taking on part-time work if her parents fell sick to spend time looking after them.

They stated that:

"At the moment, I don't need to work part-time. Unless something happens at home, I need to be working at the office full time physically, but like if my parents are sick, and I need to spend more time looking after one of my parents, then I will consider that".

One male interviewee who used a different form of flexibility but knew a colleague in his company who had just returned from maternity leave who used part-time working arrangements stated:

"Well, I know someone pretty close to my team. She works part-time. She is part of the financial support, pretty much accounts payable. She just came back from maternity leave, and she just wanted a part-time role. So, what they did, I think she comes in five days a week but only like four hours a day or something like that?"

Another interviewee who is a team leader and has direct reports asserted that part-time was another opportunity their workplace provided to employees in her organisation; this is what she had to say:

"Because we've got all these available for them, in my team, I've already got one person that is on that part-time basis, and then in that space where that person's working, there's always another full-time person that if she's not there that other person will pick it up."

Another interviewee said they had employees who were full time but were working part-time. They also had part-timers coming in to help break the workload during high peak times or busy periods. She asserted that:

"We do have the part-time, flexible arrangement, and we take part-timers to help us break the workload. In my team, we have a colleague who works on a part-time basis. Like she doesn't work every Tuesday and then works from 8.00 am to 2.00 pm, I think.'

4.13 Break workload and loss of income

Job sharing was the least flexible arrangement used by the interviewees in this study. Although this flexibility existed in their organisations, many employees did not use it.

One interviewee who worked in a larger organisation stated that job-sharing was commonly used by employees who worked in their hospitality department and involved mostly reception jobs. Other interviewees who recognised job sharing as one of the work flexibilities offered by their organisation stated that none of their colleagues was using that arrangement due to the fear of not getting paid enough to cater for their bills. Here is what they said:

> *"We don't have job sharing in my department, but about the whole organization at the [....] I think there is usually reception jobs. There are some reception jobs, especially in the halls for the [......], the accommodation and staff. I think they have job shares where they have a receptionist in the morning from eight to something. And then from whatever time to 11:00 PM or something like that. I think they do have those kinds of positions. But that's more reception accommodation kind of"*

If they were unable to cover bills even when working full time, some interviewees felt that job sharing flexibility was not attractive to them and would disadvantage them in terms of income. Here is what they had to say:

> *"I think for my team, I understand even we work full-time, we don't earn enough to cover the bill… so no one would suggest we share that job to make that income even smaller."*

> *"I don't think they would want to share 50/50 with another person to get their pay in half, split into with others because people want to get some, increase their pay to cover the bills".*

> *"I think to put it this way, if I do 50% of the time, get the same pay, I will say yes. But I think that it's not the reality. If I work 50% of the time, the amount of time of my work, my pay will be accordingly to be 50% as well.*

Another participant asserted that job sharing is beneficial but could fit better with employees approaching retirement or with financially stable employees. She felt that the people retiring were financially stable and that sharing the job kept them busy for a bit of income and kept them going. Here is what she had to say:

> *"I think they will only be available for those retiring people, they're financially secured, and they're just looking for more time to travel, to get the little job to*

keep them busy for a little income to keep them going for their flight tickets or their travel fund. Otherwise, in my team, I can see everyone is a working family, have a family to support, have bills to pay. No one can say – Ok, I'll cut down my hours, cut down my pay. I don't mind working four days to get full pay, but that, hopefully, that will happen in the future."

4.14 Work co-ordination issues

Participants who used flexi-time working arrangements had issues with work coordination. Interviewees in this study highlighted that they had to put in more hours to reduce the workload for the next day. One interviewee stated that working on travel requests required a backup person; however, the backup staff had Flexi hour arrangements. It became challenging if she came in late due to unforeseen circumstances as her backup started work later than her. She asserted that:

> *"I think it's only a challenge if it's for like a travel request because that one for travel if I will be late, my back-up will work for that time I'm not in. But the thing is, my back-up works later than me; that's why it doesn't make sense."*

Another participant who had a Flexi hour arrangement with a start time later than the regular start time asserted that:

> *"Sometimes, I do have to work a little extra overtime to get the numbers down, so it won't be as high for the next day. There's a challenge when there's a high volume of work. So, it does affect my free time at home, I guess" that means I'm the last to leave in the team or one of the last to go, so I get more, towards the end of the afternoon, fewer phone calls and more time to focus on the service requests that I'm processing".*

Participants who used Flexi hours said that their start time hours affected their team members who have to deal with many phone calls and other work before they arrive. Things such as phone calls or attending to work affected the colleagues who come in earlier than them. This means they have to deal with the phone calls in addition to their workloads. Below are some statements:

"I guess they might maybe answer some of the phone calls we get early in the morning because I'm not there, so it affects perhaps them a bit.

'They'll have to deal with the phone calls. Maybe some of the phone calls that I'm dealing with, like the travel phone calls, they have to take notes and then wait for me to come in."

"I guess it's a little bit challenging because there's someone else that can help answer the queries like [....] or so there's always someone there at least to answer that because of my backup [....] who has Flexi hour's gets in before me.

"Yes, they have to pick up my phone calls for my job area. The load that they have on phone calls has to pick up my workload, and because I'm also acting team leader and working from home, and that's why I don't do much of a workload.

4.15 Productivity and efficiency

Across the interviewees from the four organisations that participated in this study, all who shared their experience of the teleworking and flexi-time forms of flexible work arrangements had two things in common. First, the arrangements were informal and were based upon an individual choice as agreed upon with their line managers. Second, they cited low productivity and efficiency when teleworking and long work hours using flexi-time.

Interviewees who teleworked chose this form of flexibility for different reasons. Some chose to telework when they had a sick family member, they needed to take care of, while other employees had a health condition or illness that meant they were unable to travel to work but were still fit and able to work using the telework flexibility. Some chose to telework when they had something they were working on that was deadline-driven. Some teleworked if they were waiting for a delivery or a tradesman that they had to be home for.

"So, our company also provides flexible working, for example, I had a health condition wherein I have to stay at home for three weeks. My company allowed it. I worked from home for three weeks. So, they made sure that we were two in our team during that time, like two people doing the same job, so the other person supported me in covering different areas.

I think, especially when you're working on special projects, you know you need to get that done well by yesterday; you are behind. So, in that sense, yes, if you have a very good understanding manager and as I say, you require this report tomorrow on your desk, I think I'm going to work from home because it's easier. It would be faster, less distracting than working from the office.

"I just use the work from home when it's necessary for me. For example, like when I'm waiting for a parcel or something like that in the morning, and I will just say to my manager, can I just work from home that day, and then my manager would be okay with that as long as I can manage the meetings around it. So, I just make sure that that day, I don't have any meeting I have to attend."

"I do not have to adjust my life around work as much if that makes sense. So, if I have, or if I buy something and I need to be at home to receive the parcel, I don't need to feel sorry about it because I can just work from home and my manager is fine with that. So that's a good thing, I suppose.

If I have an appointment in the morning or the afternoon, I can just take off earlier or, you know, get into work a bit later, and it's not a problem at all."

Participants in this study revealed that they enjoyed teleworking, experienced fewer distractions from colleagues, and were less exposed to office politics.

"You're not distracted with people, just wanting to have chitchat, and that can distract you as well sometimes.

"I didn't have to be influenced by physically other people, commotions going on behind or whatever. You could sit in the same spot if you wanted to for the next ten hours if you wanted to, and nobody's there. You're focused, you're completely focused".

However, they asserted that their productivity while working from home tended to slow down when measured against working from the office. Interviewees in this study stated that they were accustomed to working with the double computer screens in the office, which they lacked in their home office environment, potentially affecting their productivity. Here is what they stated:

"It's my computer and, I just asked IT to provide me with VPN access. So, I had to leave my computer at work and sign in from my computer at home. The challenge is it's only one screen that I have at home."

"But if you're working on multiple things at the same time, you need a couple of screens

"I think working from home, especially from my experience, working from home tends to get a bit slow because we usually work with two screens. At home, I would normally have one screen, and that makes things a bit slower. We're used to having two screens, working on multiple screens and multiple systems, and it's easy to swap between them and much faster at work. But if you're at home, it tends to be slower, there's a little added time on top of it, and it's a bit trickier because you're looking at one laptop screen. That's the case with me. So that becomes a challenge. Other people might have multiple screens at home".

"When I am at the office, I finish work off quickly, but when I'm at home, I'm more relaxed, which you need because you will be working from home because of some reason. So sometimes I take more time to finish my job. For example, if I have to say, for completing one task at the office if I take 20 minutes, I might take 25 minutes at home. That's not a big difference, 25 to 30 minutes, this is because, at my house that is no workstation, I have set up, so I'm just working through my laptop so splitting over the screen, initially, I had a dashboard, but now I have a mouse. Still, even then, because of the lack of two screens, it's taking time.

"I think when you work from home, you work less, so I suppose productivity-wise, it's not the best thing for employees. Especially if it's for us whose productivity is based on the service requests that we do, I think it's not an excellent option to work from home, but I would want that, especially if it's school holidays and has two screens to work through service requests.

4.16 Health and safety Productivity

Some of the teleworking participants expressed concerns about productivity and health, particularly in the realm of the employee's productivity and health and safety. Not having the proper tools to do their work can lead to long term problems with vision and/or back problems for some employees. People stated that:

"So having one screen and I'm working from a laptop is so ergonomically bad. It's not that comfortable, and sometimes with that particular role, I need multiple screens to spread out the spreadsheets and then process the documents from the spreadsheets and see where I am with which student. So yeah, sometimes I think

working from home can be a bit of a challenge if you don't have the right set-up to do it. So, for example, for me, it was two screens I needed for that particular role. But sometimes other things, like if you're sending an email, you don't need two screens."

"I use my laptop. I don't have a workstation, maybe like a dining table or something, but it's not as comfortable as sitting on the sofa. At first, sitting on the couch with your laptop will be satisfied, but sitting with a computer, the laptop's heat and all this is uncomfortable".

Chapter 5 : General Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This discussion section sets out to answer the research questions using the findings from the interviews and the literature reviewed. In summary, this study aims to explore flexible working arrangements, such as teleworking, flexi-time, part-time work, and job sharing. Specifically, the study investigates the work-life balance versus the career progression tradeoff and how flexible work arrangements relate to job satisfaction and career success. The two questions arising from this aim are:

- RQ1. In what contexts, by what means, and for whom do flexible work arrangements improve the well-being of employees?

- RQ2. What are the sacrifices and downsides for New Zealand workers regarding visibility and career progression when utilizing flexible work arrangements?

5.2 COVID-19 Caption

Flexible working has become more than just a trend as the arrival of COVID-19 has represented a considerable change in how many organisations manage their work and their workers. However, even before the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, many organisations were exploring new ways of operating that could allow employees to have a better balance between work and other commitments and how that could increase their engagement with and control over their own work.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many organisations to adopt new working patterns quickly. As the lockdown restrictions start to ease, many organisations are considering adopting some of these new practices in the long term. The Gartner report shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the pendulum of a long-observed pattern to one extreme,

such as the increase in remote working and the separation of critical skills and roles (Baker, 2020).

The Deloitte COVID-19 workforce strategies for post–COVID recovery report records that the COVID-19 pandemic is unlikely to end immediately. Many organisations worldwide have now started rethinking work, employees and offices (Schwartz, Hatfield, Scoble-Williams, & Volini, 2020).   The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the ways things have been done much faster than most people projected would happen over a long period (Slaughter, 2020). Anne-Marie Slaughter, president of the New America Foundation, had this to say about the COVID-19 pandemic: 'The Coronavirus and its economic and social fallout is a time machine to the future. Changes that many people predicted would happen over decades are instead taking place in weeks" (Slaughter, 2020).

5.3 Forms of flexible work arrangements

This chapter will discuss the four FWAs; flexitime, teleworking or working from home, part-time work, and job sharing.

There are numerous types of flexible work arrangements organisations can institute. The right type will depend on many things, such as the organisation's corporate culture, job nature, and industry (Workplace Wellness System Limited, 2020).

The fours forms of FWA outlined in the literature were found across the four organisations the participants in this study were involved in. However, not all four forms of FWAs were found in these organisations. For instance, the two forms of FWAs, flexi-time and telework, prevailed across the four organisations. On the other hand, part-time

work and job sharing were the least FWAs found in this study sample. In general, FWAs were an informal arrangement between the individual employee and their line manager.

For many participants, the employees had initiated flexible working arrangements that operated informally and were centred on their organisational requirements.

Flexitime. Flexi-time was a popular flexible work arrangement with employees in this study. Employees who used flexitime in my sample had positive experiences. Ten out of twelve employees in the sample believed flexitime had a favourable influence on their general work and job attitude and was suited to balancing their work and family life. Most participants regarded flexi-time as an expression of organisational care and concern for employees (Downes & Koekemoer, 2011). This study has found strong evidence of the positive benefits of flexible work arrangements that support employees' wellbeing.

Many participants also felt that flexi-time might affect the coordination of work with co-workers and supervisors. During traditional hours, employees who arrive early in the office may think that their colleagues are getting away with less work as they come into the office later. The participants confirmed that while they used flexi-time, they had to make up those hours each day by working late and sometimes putting in more hours to cover for the next day's work. Putting in more hours would then mean that they are missing their quality time with their family, referred to as spillover (Edwards & Rothband, 2000; Sanz-Vergel, Rodríguez-Muñoz, & Nielsen, 2015).

Another issue, as noted by the interviewees, was that employees who used flexi-time felt that they were inconveniencing their colleagues who worked the standard hours and had to pick up their work before arriving in the office. This could imply that work

coordination and workload could be affecting the office-based employees who work the standard work hours; it could also mean there is a disconnection in the team cohesion.

These findings have important implications for organisations. With their support, employees can balance their work, have time to attend to family commitments, and flexi-time works as a strategy for employers to attract and retain talented employees.

Telework. Telework was the second popular flexible work arrangement for employees in the sample. Employees who teleworked regarded the experience as moderately successful. Most participants had used telework either formally or informally in their current role in an organisation. The findings in this study are mixed. There is a distinction between two groups of employees in terms of teleworking. Some believed teleworking had had an unfavourable influence on their general work approach and did not fit well with how they enjoyed working, while some regarded the experience moderately, and their overall approach fitted well with the way they enjoyed working.

The first group reported having been very productive and completing specific tasks or projects with no distractions. However, the majority believed that they relied on their own laptops to work due to the unavailability of office equipment like computers or laptops provided by their workplace. Most of the tasks required them to have two computer screens to perform their job. They felt that having one computer screen or working on just a laptop meant fewer added times in completing tasks, which tended to be slower and take time to finish. This can lead to additional hours of input in the evenings, infringing on family time.

The second group of teleworkers reported that working from home tended to be slower and that their job quality and productivity tended to slow down as it was easy to

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procrastinate. Similarly, they said that distractions were familiar when they worked from home. Common distractions took the form of playing on their cell phones, browsing the internet and distractions from their family members.

The second group of teleworkers also felt that apart from procrastination and distractions, working only on their laptops implied that there were few added times to complete the tasks, which tended to take time to finish the job. They stated that could impact their productivity and the efficiency of their work. As Jaakson and Kallaste (2010) point out, the labour law principles assume that the employer provides the equipment necessary for work. This was not the case for the participants in this study; the equipment and internet cost was borne by the employees who chose to work remotely.

These findings have significant implications for organisations as they improve and support the view that telework can form effective employee retention and an engagement plan. Jaakson and Kallaste (2010) note that the technical equipment, installation, and technical support quality largely determines telework's success.

According to Jaakson and Kallaste (2010), the technical equipment that teleworkers need should be at least as good as that of their colleagues in the office, including primarily voice and data communication techniques. Therefore, with this in mind, it is no surprise that the high implementation costs are a challenge to telework from the employer's point of view.

In general, the findings suggest that teleworkers experience lower levels of stress caused by meetings, interruptions and office politics, which indicates that they may experience a level of autonomy and independence from the office (Fonner & Roloff, 2010).

The findings also show that teleworkers are more satisfied and productive based on their capacity to reduce work-life conflict.

Overall, the implication of the lack of technological equipment portrayed by the sample could mean that the employees who teleworked in and out of the office with no proper workstation at home to match the work environment set up could develop in the long run health and safety issues. For example, they could develop vision problems because of the different setup and the use of home laptops vs two big screens at the office, resulting in strained eyes. Other issues that could arise are back pains or tennis elbow. For example, sitting on the couch using the laptop versus sitting in the office with a proper workstation could cause back pain or tennis elbow.

Part-time. Part-time work was the third most common FWA used by interviewees in this study**.** A lot of part-time work has been studied in the literature review, and part-time is viewed as the most used FWA in the literature review, but that was not the case in the findings in this study.

To illustrate, only one interviewee in this study had used a part-time work arrangement for three months, which was when she came back from maternity leave. The reason for choosing to work part-time was to give her time to settle down after a long break from work. Interestingly, in this study, two more interviewees who did not use part-time work arrangements said they had one or two colleagues in their organisation who worked part-time. All were female employees who had just come back from maternity leave.

This finding implies that although part-time working arrangements are highlighted a lot in the literature review, female employees work part-time, especially mothers with small children or mothers who have care responsibilities.

5.4 Themes from the interviews

- *Employees mainly initiate informality and flexibility changes*

The majority of the interviewees in this study who used telework or flexi-time initiated the arrangement with their supervisor or line manager. This arrangement was informal, without a written agreement. Interviewees asserted that they used a one-on-one form of communication or an email or phone call to arrange it.

However, De Menezes and Kelliher (2017) state that formal arrangements should be made through the organisation's flexible working policy. That generally involves a written request from the employee to their line manager to be considered in conjunction with the human resources (HR) department. In an informal arrangement, De Menezes and Kelliher (2017) say that those arrangements have not gone through the organisation's flexible working policy but have arisen from a conversation between the employee and their line manager.

As De Menezes and Kelliher (2017) state, evidence shows that formal policies are not the only means for employees to access flexible working arrangements; in practice, informally agreed changes to working arrangements are prevalent. Nevertheless, their knowledge remains limited because most studies have limited their analysis to flexible formal working arrangements outcomes. De Menezes and Kelliher (2017) say that when informal arrangements are made between employees and their line managers, managers use their discretion to make changes to the working arrangement. Thus, De Menezes and Kelliher (2017) outline that the trust that employees' specific needs are accommodated through an informal arrangement may nurture feelings of organisational commitment or commitment to the line manager, who many employees feel in effect represents the

organisation. Furthermore, De Menezes and Kelliher (2017) observe that informal arrangements might be characterised by ongoing negotiations between the employee and their manager to benefit both the employee and the organisation, which is unlikely to be the case with formal arrangements.

This study shows a lack of formal flexi-time and telework policies in the interviewees' organisations. This suggests that these organisations do not adhere to telework procedures and guidelines, as they do not record who teleworks in their organisations. This then means that the supervisors, line managers, or management cannot measure efficiency, productivity, and performance and may not know about the well-being of the teleworkers. Informal teleworking can be challenging because it often leads employees to believe there is no clear boundary between work and home, rendering it impossible to "turn the work off" (Kossek, Hammer, Thompson, & Burke, 2014).

- ***The majority of the respondents provided their work equipment and paid for the internet.***

From the findings, teleworking has a wide range of employee outcomes, affecting work and home life. The findings from this study show that employees who choose to telework need to be aware of the potential impacts of the teleworking approach. The advantages appear to benefit employees in terms of work balance and home commitments, and in particular, telework allows for flexibility in time and place of work, employees' freedom, greater autonomy, flexibility in the timing of work and the meeting of the deadlines, and being able to concentrate on tasks without being disturbed by co-workers. Other benefits noted from the findings included monetary savings on commuting expenses, work clothes and the ability to balance work and family commitments.

However, given the numerous benefits that telework can offer, the findings show that most of the participants in this study provided their own work equipment and paid for the internet.   As the employee initiates the teleworking arrangement, their home internet access is paid for by the employee. Most employees who teleworked provided their own equipment. Most participants in this study occasionally teleworked because teleworkers had a regular workspace allocated for them when not working remotely.

The findings from the study reveal, predictably, that people have very mixed findings. Some evidence suggests that even though an organisation provided informal work flexibility, the participant's organisations may not be ready to participate in the cost-sharing of the internet bills because it has provided the employees with office space and a workstation. If the employee initiates the work flexibility, they will have to cater to their equipment and internet access.

The study revealed that the organisations the participants worked for in this study might not have realised the benefits of office space savings or overhead costs that telework can offer through office sharing or other such arrangements.

The study also furthers my understanding of the complexity of FWAs by revealing the interplay between the benefits and challenges of workplace space and teleworking in the context in which it functions. The organisation's responsibility is to ensure that equipment and technology function well; however, individual teleworkers should be mindful of the fundamental part technology will play when teleworking.

Technology support for remote workers in this study was rated highly by many participants. Whereas teleworkers supplied their internet connection access, the organisations provided and maintained the technology hardware. In this study, home

internet access was considered to be an individual cost mainly because the teleworking arrangements were at the request of the employees.

- *What happens if the underlying conditions aren't in order (house spaces, furniture, equipment)?*

The safety and well-being of employees is usually the topmost concern for many organisations, particularly in the home office environment. However, in this study, employees who teleworked rated their work environment moderately in terms of their productivity and work quality.

All the participants in this study reported challenges with ergonomic problems, homework space, furniture and equipment. Most respondents asserted that they did not have a proper workspace and they were not ergonomically set up. In addition, some respondents were using their own equipment and their laptops to perform their duties while working remotely.

The findings also show that most teleworking participants reported having no workstation set up or comfortable seating. Having no workstation set up affected the productivity and quality of work; the lack of working on multiple computer screens slowed the processing time of tasks.

A major concern articulated by the participants of telework was the workstation setup. If the working space is limited, working from home poses challenges to employees. Specifically, many respondents used their laptops when working from home, which most respondents said tended to slow their productivity. Some interviewees did not have a proper computer chair and used their sofa with the laptop on their lap to perform their work. The finding implies that the employers should take care of the ergonomic aspect of

a home office, providing home workstation assessment and training for remote workers on how best they can achieve an ideal physical work atmosphere. This finding suggests that the organisations should perform home office valuations and training for teleworkers to reach a standard physical work environment.

Other difficulties centred on negative employer attitudes, both perceived and actual, to requests for flexible working. Some interviewees reported that they did not use flexible work arrangements because doing so would impact career progression and cause adverse financial consequences; this was primarily evident for those who observed that flexible work necessarily involved part-time and more teleworking.

Drawing on the findings from this study, organisations may need to revisit their policies and consider how flexibility can be utilised to support teleworkers and their organisations. For example, although it is practical for employees to telework using their laptops to complete their duties, organisations must ensure that their wellbeing is cared for by providing home office workspaces or workstations set up correctly.

According to Sanz-Vergel, Rodríguez-Muñoz, and Nielsen (2015), what occurs at work also impacts home actions, referred to as spill over. Edwards and Rothband (2000) define spill over as the 'effects of work and family on one another that generate similarities between the two domains.

- *Any adverse effects in terms of customers, team cohesion/feelings, workload distribution?*

Evidence suggests that flexible working could impact team cohesion and diminish team efficiency, particularly for teams with highly interdependent tasks.

As Clarke & Holdsworth (2017) point out, research examining the social context of flexible working underlines the significance of the team's cohesion and task

interdependence. According to Clarke & Holdsworth (2017), recent evidence shows that flexible working may impact team cohesion, thereby reducing team effectiveness, especially for teams with highly interdependent tasks:

> "*I don't think you can work from home for too long. The management will not agree, I think if you're taking too often or too long. I don't think they will agree because it will affect the workplace and other colleagues also because like all the workload, Phone calls will come to them only and their work will be affected. Even if one person is not there, the phone calls related to our job, our topics will go only to the remaining people in the office, so I don't think the management will take too long. They can tell you off to come on or take sick leave. If you cannot come to the office, they might tell you to take sick leave. We can't always take work from home. If you're not able to come, they can say to you to take sick leave. It all depends on the manager as well as the workload at that time:*
>
> "*Yes, the staff who are in the office have to pick up my phone calls. The load they have on phone calls has to pick up my workload because I'm acting as a team leader, and that's why I don't do much of a workload.*

- ***I find a link between visibility and career progression. Implications***

 In this study, participants expressed concerns about teleworking flexibility's impact on career progression. Teleworking is a big challenge for management. Observing employees working remotely and measuring the employee's performance while building trust can be challenging. Participants expressed concern that the lack of visibility would indicate a lack of seriousness and commitment to work, restricting career progression opportunities such as secondment or other ongoing opportunities.

> "*And I think that from a team leader's point of view, it can be challenging because you don't have that visibility of what is happening and where the person is that you need to get hold of them to get things completed. So, it can be challenging. So that's why, if you have the working from home, it would be things that could be easily completed which are not deadline-driven.*"

Participants asserted a potential lack of career progression by teleworking that might impact an employee's ability to do specific roles properly. In addition, the findings generated implications for visibility in the workplace. They reveal that not being

visible in the workplace is regarded as the nature of work or tasks being done when teleworking is less than their colleagues who work at the workplace, presumably doing various work.

> *"I would say that working from home means… as I said, the person working from home is just handling that task which is coming digitally. So, we also get queries, phone calls or in person. Management thinks that the person physically available in the office handles all of these phones, in-person questions, and helping other team members. But when you work from home like you won't get that kind of queries that you will receive in the office when you work at home.*

Some participants stated that teleworking could adversely affect career progression and training development. Specifically, interviewees asserted that there was a lack of social connectivity between the staff and the management.

> *"I think about 10 to 15% it affects because you'd be lagging in some areas. You won't be learning so faster. You can't keep up that pace with the other colleagues, and they are building on like so many other things while at the office, but you wouldn't be learning so many things when you're doing work from home".*

> *"If you do work from home every day and not in a work environment, I don't think you can progress professionally. Do you know what I mean? Working from home is just one of the flexibilities if you require and if needed. I can simply say that one doesn't progress professionally if you're not coming to the office. You don't get to socialise with your colleagues and your staff. People in your entire organisation will not know you if you are constantly working from home. They won't see you in person. So, there is a lack of socialism and a lack of professionalism if you're every day doing work from home".*

- ***Part-time work and job-sharing flexibility***

Part-time working and job-sharing flexible working arrangements used in this sample did not emerge as standard flexible practices during the interviews.

When asked about part-time work, one interviewee had this to say:

> *At the moment I don't need to work part-time. Unless something happens at home, I need to be physically working at the office, but like if my parents are sick, and I need to spend more time looking after one of my parents, then I will consider that"*

I think they will only be available for those retiring people, they are, they're financially secured, and they're just looking for more time to travel, to get the little job to keep them busy for a bit of income to keep them going for their flight tickets or their travel fund. Otherwise, like in my team, I can see everyone is a working family, have a family to support, have bills to pay. No one can say – Ok, I'll cut down my hours, cut down my pay. I don't mind working four days to get full pay, but that, hopefully, that will happen in the future "

"I think for my team, I understand even we work full-time we don't earn enough to cover the bills. So, no-one would suggest we share that job to make that income even smaller, because my company is going through the remuneration of the shuffle of our pay. I don't think anyone is pleased with that, but I feel they're not satisfied with their pay, but they're not going to take any industrial action to go for strike, so…

"I don't think they would want to share 50/50 with another person to get their pay in half, split into with others because people want to get some, increase their pay to cover the bills."

A key finding of this study is that the participants felt that they were currently under financial strain and were reluctant to take up anything that might reduce their income.

- **Knowledge and awareness**

It is evident from this study that the interviewee's organisations did not have a transparent and open conversation about the organisation's procedures and practices surrounding flexible work arrangements. The participants' challenges highlighted their partial knowledge of FWAs, the availability of accessing FWAs, and maintaining productivity.

According to Clarke and Holdsworth (2017), knowledge of FWA practices in organisations by supervisors and managers is varies but is mainly poor, which affects their competence to offer FWAs. A lack of supervisors and managers ability in understanding the policies could lead to them interpreting the practices unfairly and could lead to managers' discretion to allow someone to access flexible working arrangements when an employee puts in a request, despite the policies being in place.

Another point is that if managers or supervisors lack knowledge and understanding of the policies surrounding FWAs, that may also hinder employees from using the flexibility available in organisations. On the other hand, if managers and supervisors are trained well and knowledgeable about the organisation's policies, they should encourage employees to take up the flexibility available in their organisations if they want to.

In relation to RQ1, telework and flexi-time work arrangements may be beneficial and may improve the well-being of employees. However, the selection of participants for part-time and other flexible work arrangements was not positive. In addition, contrary to the literature, part-time work has been recorded as the most flexible work arrangement used. Similarly, job sharing was the least used flexible arrangement in my study, which is a finding in this study.

In relation to RQ2, employees who used flexible teleworking arrangements had positive outcomes in balancing work and nonwork commitments; however, there were mixed results about career progression among the participants who teleworked. Most participants felt teleworking flexible arrangements should be used sparingly to avoid risking their career progression and training development.

5.5 Limitations of the study

This study was not without some significant limitations. Firstly, this study had few participants, and the answers provided by the interviewees were triggered by the questions being asked of them. A somewhat limiting concern about this issue is that the study aimed to get participants who worked part-time and job sharing. However, the study did not find enough participants who worked part-time or had job sharing working arrangements but only relied on the information supplied by interviewees who used another form of flexible arrangement. Given that part-time work is a form of flexibility widely offered by many organisations, I could not get participants who worked part-time or who had job sharing flexibility in this study. This poses a limitation on this study, as the interviewees who provided their responses on behalf of their colleagues who used part-time or job sharing may not represent the individuals or their organisations. Insight into broader aspects surrounding part-time work and job sharing could have been provided if a larger sample of more than four organisations was used.

5.5.1 Range of issues

Although this study has made notable contributions essential to understanding FWAs, WLB and career progression, several issues could be explored further. Firstly, the number of participants should be increased to get a broader range of views from small and big organisations in all sectors. Secondly, this study focused only on the greater Auckland region, particularly with organisations within the central CBD; further studies could be done to examine other areas in the country.

5.5.2 COVID-19 Pandemic

This study was done pre the COVID-19 pandemic. However, reports and surveys have shown that COVID-19 took the whole world by shock, triggering a great deal of uncertainty and raising issues and challenges (Pastakia, Kilpatrick, Kearsey, & Moir, 2020). This means that the pandemic may challenge organisational cultures, how work is distributed, how organisations organise and engage their workforce (Pastakia, Kilpatrick, Kearsey, & Moir, 2020). Furthermore, given the importance of human capital to every organisation, organisations will need to respond to employees' requirements during the evolving challenges (Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), 2015).

According to the ILO (2020), teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond shows that although the number of people teleworking part-time or full-time has gradually increased over the years, the COVID-19 pandemic has entirely fast-tracked the implementation of teleworking modalities by employers.

Lott (2020) points out that recent digital technological advancements have made autonomous work arrangements available to more employees; thus, the world has adapted quickly to the lockdown because of the COVID -19 pandemic risks in this 2020 lockdown.

It is important to remember that the demand for flexible working has been growing for years, and irrespective of its scale, the impact of the COVID-19 response is part of a long-term trend.

5.6 Summary

Flexible working arrangements (FWAs) that are in place and time, particularly those arrangements created to support work-life balance, career progression, and those that are employee-driven, can generate positive organisational results. The employees who choose to take up the employee-driven FWAs such as telework and flexi-time are generally highly motivated. However, for those employees who opt for teleworking or working from home, the question of who provides their computers and caters for the cost of the internet and other related home bills for work-related activities is an issue. Employer-driven FWAs have been shown to drive positive effects on organisational performance; their effectiveness has not been very steady regarding employees' career progression.

The study has revealed an additional perspective to the existing literature on telework. The participants indicated their specific requirements for using telework flexibility effectively. According to them, some aspects are critical for organisations that offer telework, including ergonomic equipment, workstation setups, professional discipline, and good communication.

The researcher uncovered that the participants in this study found flexi-time a challenge. This is consistent with findings from another research (Downes & Koekemoer, 2011). Some of the specific characteristics that participants found challenging were managing their time and balancing work and family life.

The main reason organisations introduce FWAs is to help employees attain and maintain the balance between work and personal life. Participants described this more clearly by discussing the other challenges they encounter. These include the absence of IT

equipment and computers, the lack of double screens when teleworking, difficulty paying the internet bills, the difference in the nature of the work, challenges in coordination with co-workers, and management's perceptions.

This study was done pre the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 took the whole world by shock, triggering a great deal of uncertainty and raising issues and challenges (Pastakia, Kilpatrick, Kearsey, & Moir, 2020). Therefore, this is a challenge to organisational culture, and there are now new ways of working for organisations to organise and engage their workforce (Pastakia, Kilpatrick, Kearsey, & Moir, 2020). Furthermore, given the importance of human capital to every organisation, organisations need to respond quickly to employees' requirements in the evolving challenges (Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), 2015).

According to the ILO (2020), although the number of people teleworking part-time or full-time has gradually increased over the years, the COVID-19 pandemic has entirely fast-tracked the implementation of teleworking modalities by employers.

Lott (2020) points out that recent digital technological advancements have made autonomous work arrangements available to more employees; thus, the world has adapted extremely quickly to the lockdown problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic risk in this 2020 lockdown.

It is important to remember that demand for flexible working has been growing for years, and irrespective of its scale, the impact of the Covid-19 response is part of a long-term trend.

Chapter 6 : Conclusions

The findings of this study suggest that many organisations were already providing a range of flexible work arrangements for their employees before COVID-19. Although the organisations have formal processes and policies to access flexible work arrangements, most employees have access to these flexible work arrangements through an informal process. In addition, there is evidence that flexible work arrangements offer significant benefits for an employee's work and family life, such as fewer distractions and interruptions from work, choosing to work during off-peak hours and having more time to spend with family.

The results of the data analysis found that flexible working arrangements, FWAs and work-life balance, WLB, go hand in hand. These two functions facilitate the impacts of job satisfaction, career progression, and employees' well-being in organisations.

There was evidence that flexible work arrangements could also have detrimental outcomes, such as in career progression, which could creep into family life. Participants showed a moderate degree of commitment to their work but felt that lack of visibility at work when using flexible arrangements could limit their chances for career advancement. However, the participants who had flexible work arrangements but did not use them felt they had to cover for the team or back up for their colleagues who used the arrangements.

The request for flexible work was a personal choice of the employees, depending on their kind of work, which sometimes amounted to a significant under-utilisation of their skills and an inability to learn new things from their colleagues as they missed out on office events. However, although their line managers granted informal flexible work arrangements, there was no guarantee that their organisation would pay for the internet

bills incurred while working remotely. Similarly, their organisations did not provide them with equipment or assess their home office to ensure they had a proper workstation, similar to the one provided at their workplace.

Irrespective of the technological challenges faced by the teleworkers in this study, interviewees demonstrated the value of having the flexibility to work some days from home, which is generally associated with overall job satisfaction. However, working from home is associated with a lower rate of career progression for those employees who regularly worked from home; the lack of visibility in the workplace could mean that the work being done at home was more minor and not essential tasks than the work that was performed when working in the office. This was noted in the sample of this study, which asserted that working from home could potentially affect career progression, the lack of communication skills, and that networking with friends and line managers could be an issue.

Therefore, based on the analysis of the data of this study, it can be concluded that flexible working arrangements (FWAs) and work-life balance (WLB) can mediate the impact of job satisfaction, career progression, and the wellbeing of employees in organisations. However, FWAs also retain employees with proficient skills within the organisation and can create a competitive advantage. Employees use of FWAs has the general outcome of decreasing turnover and absenteeism; however, these positives decline when the FWAs are not reconciled with career progression and work-life balance efforts (Peretz, Fried, & Levi, 2018)

6.1 Directions for future research

This study had a small sample size, so it would be valuable to repeat it on a larger scale to determine whether the findings can be generalised to other New Zealand organisations. Participants for this study were chosen from individuals who lived in the greater Auckland region and satisfying specific criteria. Future research should further explore how employees and organisations influence part-time working and job-sharing arrangements. The researcher in this study was limited to finding participants who had flexible working arrangements that involved part-time work and job sharing. It may be worthwhile to study the impact of part-time work as research shows that it is one of the most flexible working arrangements and is used by employees worldwide. However, this study was not able to do this as the researcher was limited in finding people who worked part-time. Another area that future research could examine is job sharing working arrangements. Although job sharing is a newer concept, research shows that this working arrangement is gained in popularity. Many organisations offer these working practices; however, the researcher did not find participants who used job sharing flexibility in this study. Job sharing could also be researched in detail with a broader scope of participants in many organisations around New Zealand.

COVID-19 took the world by surprise, and this saw the majority of the workforce shifting very fast to working from home. It would be worth repeating this study to identify how the workforce in different organisations settled to it within a short period and adjusted so quickly to the new technological changes. Some of the employees were working from home for a very long time.

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Appendices

Appendix One: Table One

Literature Informing Research Questions

Questions to participants	Literature suggests	References
Thinking about working in an organisation that provides flexible work practices, could you please describe what flexible arrangements are available at your workplace?	Demands and pressure are growing for businesses to offer flexible working practices arrangements that allow workers to choose how they work.	Kelliher, C., & Anderson, D. (2008). For better or for worse? An analysis of how flexible working practices influence employees' perceptions of job quality. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *19*(3), 419-431.
What flexible arrangement do you use?	To retain their current employees, organisations are increasingly offering flexible working arrangements. These include; flexible work schedules, telecommuting, part-time, job sharing, or variable daily hours.	Thompson, R. J., Payne, S. C., & Taylor, A. B. (2015). Applicant attraction to flexible work arrangements: Separating the influence of flexi-time and flexplace. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *88*(4), 726-749.
Thinking about flexible work practices in your company, what are the benefits of flexible working arrangements in terms of your job?	Casper and Harris (2008) outline that many employees are increasingly aware of the importance of flexible working arrangements offered by organisations.	Casper, W. J., & Harris, C. M. (2008). Work-life benefits and organisational attachment: Self-interest utility and signalling theory models. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, *72*(1), 95-109.
	Literature suggests while positive impacts have	Cooper, C. D., & Kurland, N. B. (2002). Telecommuting,

Thinking of flexible work arrangements, what are the disadvantages in terms of your job, efficiency, and/or career progression?	dominated much of the literature, there is also the possibility that not being physically present within the workplace could negatively impact progression, hinder development and limit opportunities, including informal learning and mentoring from colleagues. In terms of career progression, flexible workers are perceived to have lower long-term career potential	professional isolation, and employee development in public and private organisations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organisational Psychology and Behavior, 23(4)*, 511-532 Frank, K. E., & Lowe, D. J. (2003). An examination of alternative work arrangements in private accounting practice. *Accounting Horizons*, 17(2), 139-151.
Thinking of flexible work arrangements, what are the benefits in terms of your family/home commitments?		
What are the disadvantages of flexible work arrangements in terms of your family/home?		
Are there any other disadvantages?	Suggest that staff who work with reduced hours have reduced responsibility and fewer opportunities to learn new skills. Other studies show that working for reduced hours for professional staff means that the employees are less able to spend time on the skill development vital for career success	Edwards, C., & Robinson, O. (2004). Evaluating the business case for part-time working amongst qualified nurses. *British Journal of Industrial Relations, 42(1)*, 167-183. Cohen, J. R., & Single, L. E. (2001). An examination of the perceived impact of flexible work arrangements on professional opportunities in public accounting. *Journal of Business Ethics, 32(4)*, 317-328.

Appendix Two: Ethics Approval
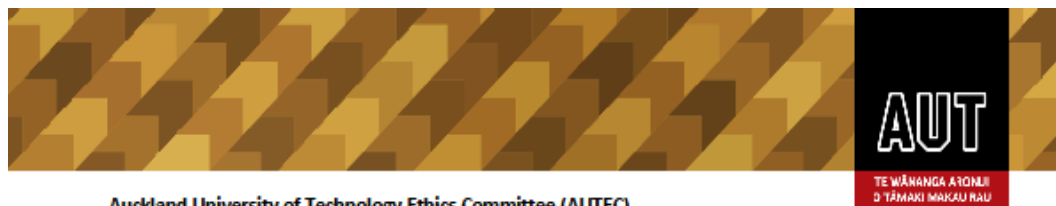
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

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

22 August 2019

Rachel Morrison
Faculty of Business Economics and Law

Dear Rachel

Ethics Application: 19/295 The work life/progression trade-off: How flexible work arrangements relate to job satisfaction and career success

I wish to advise you that a subcommittee of the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) has approved your ethics application.

This approval is for three years, expiring 21 August 2022.

Non-Standard Conditions of Approval

1. Please ensure that the consent form is attached to the invitation email, along with the Information Sheet;
2. On the Information Sheet, please remove the statement about 'legal obligation' to report, as this is not relevant to the nature of questions being asked. Also, please change 'copy of the research results' into a ' summary of findings' as per the Consent Form.
3. If the interviews need to be conducted in private homes (C.2.1.1.) please provide a Researchers Safety Protocol.

Non-standard conditions must be completed before commencing your study. Non-standard conditions do not need to be submitted to or reviewed by AUTEC before commencing your study.

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

Cc: fdx8152@autuni.ac.nz; Erling Rasmussen

Appendix Three: Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

08 August 2019

Project Title

The work-life/ progression trade-off: How flexible work arrangements relate to job satisfaction and career success

An Invitation

Greetings, my name is Phoebe Murabula, and I am enrolled as a master's student in the field of Management at Auckland University of Technology (AUT University). I would like to invite you to participate in this study that is about the work-life/progression trade-off; How flexible work arrangements relate to job satisfaction and career success. Please read the information in this document carefully. If you have any questions Iam more than happy to answer those via e-mail.

Remember that if you decide to participate in this study, your involvement is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time before the completion of data collection.

What is the purpose of this research?

The aim of this study explores Flexible Working Arrangements, such as teleworking, part-time work, and job sharing. In particular, this study aims to explore and investigates the positive relationship between flexible arrangements and the well-being of workers. However, as well as benefits, there may be downsides that come with flexibility and remote work, primarily around isolation, visibility, and opportunities for promotion. By exploring the work experiences of individuals through interviews, the study will analyze both the positive and negative side of flexible work arrangements.

This study is a part of the qualification Master of Business (MBus) at AUT University. As a result of this study, a thesis will be published. The thesis will be available at the Library at AUT University. The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.

How was I identified, and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have been identified because you are a worker of an organization that offers flexible work arrangements to its staff. Since this study aims to hear from workers in flexible work arrangements, you have been sent this invite. Not only you but also other workers who have flexible work practices in their workplace have been sent this invite. Your email address has not been given to me, but the information has been forwarded on by my networks, who have been informed about this study.

I am sending this invitation to you because I believe that you are employed in a permanent job with flexible work arrangements (for example, full-time hours with remote / telework, or part-time on-site, or a combination of these).

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice), and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, you will be offered the choice between having any identifiable data as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, the removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

This research involves interviews with workers in flexible work arrangements from within the researcher's own social network. The interview will be audio-recorded, and the recorded data will be and transcribed. The questions will be centered around what flexible work arrangements are available at your workplace, the benefits

of flexible working arrangements in term of your job, the disadvantages in terms of your job, efficiency and or career progression, and benefits of work flexible working in term of your family/ home commitments.

I will interview you as the researcher and, if you agree, the interview will be recorded. The information collected will be listened to and transcribed by a transcriber under strict confidentiality. The results will then be analyzed and be presented in the form of a thesis document.

What are the discomforts and risks?

I do not expect there to be any discomforts for you during this interview. Your participation will involve an interview lasting approximately 30 minutes. You can pause or stop the discussion at any time. You will also be given an opportunity to view and comment on the interview transcript that will be typed up from the recording. While it is anticipated that there are no/minimal risks, the researcher will adhere to the guidelines on researchers safety as outlined in the AUT ethics knowledgebase.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

Your confidentiality is guaranteed. You can withdraw from the study at any time during data collection. If you chose to do so, all the data about your participation will be destroyed. If you are uncomfortable, doubtful or adverse to any question, you may decide not to answer it.

What are the benefits?

Benefits for the researcher include

- This research will contribute to a better understanding of flexible work arrangements for workers in organizations.
- It will also contribute to a better understanding of what it means to work for an organization that provides its staff with work flexibility from the workers' perspectives.
- Fulfilling the requirements of MBUS Qualification
- Understanding participants' career stories while Identifying the benefits and challenges that may lead to a lack of career progression

Benefits for the participants include:

- The research will contribute to a better understanding of what opportunities for flexible work arrangement are provided to employees.

- The final findings of the study provided to the participants. This may give the participants better self-knowledge.

- The final findings will also contribute to a better understanding of what it means to work for employers who offer flexible work practices from the employees' perspectives.

Benefits for the wider community:

- Society will start seeing the changes in how people can work through flexible working arrangements with the aid of new technology and infrastructure, therefore allowing many people to a variety and options for them to choose from and for many people inclusion.

How will my privacy be protected?

Your Privacy will be protected at all times; it is very important in this study. The information gathered from the participant will be used for research purposes only for my thesis. All information will be de-identified, and your data remain confidential. In order to achieve privacy and confidentiality, the interview and audio file will be identified only by a code to avoid data being accessed. The recordings will be kept private, confidential, and will be locked away in the supervisor's office for a minimum of six years.

It is anticipated that the interview will occur within the AUT environment/campuses convenient to where you live it can be city, north or south campus in rooms such as library meeting rooms or the postgraduate meetings room. The researcher will book these in advance and arrange to meet you within these premises. You will have the opportunity to read through the transcripts from your interview. If you find anything that can threaten your privacy, you can notify me, and the section will be taken out. Any changes or withdrawal of data should be made before the end of data collection.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The interviews will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

If you are interested in participating, please contact me regarding your participation. You may contact me at any time with questions about this.

If I don't hear from you in two weeks, a reminder will be sent out.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

The summary of findings will be available to the public at the AUT University Library. If you ticked that you want to receive a summary of findings on the consent form, a summary of findings results will be sent to you.

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 Supervisors,

Dr Rachel Morrison, rachel.morrison@aut.ac.nz +64 9 921 9999 ext 5457
Professor Erling Rasmussen, erling.rasmussen@aut.ac.nz +64 9 921 9999 ext 5916

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

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Phoebe Murabula.
Email: fdx8152@autuni.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Rachel Morrison,
Email: rachel.morrison@aut.ac.nz.

Professor Erling Rasmussen,
Email: erling.rasmussen@aut.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 22 August 2019, AUTEC Reference number 19/295.

Appendix Four: Consent form

Consent Form

Project title: *The work-life/ progression trade-off: How flexible work arrangements relate to job satisfaction and career success*

Project Supervisors: **Dr Rachel Morrison**

Prof. Erling Rasmussen

Researcher: **Phoebe Murabula**

○ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 08/08/2019

○ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

○ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.

○ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.

○ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.

○ I agree to take part in this research.

○ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes○   No○

Participant's signature: ....

Participant's name: ....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

....

....

....

....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 22nd of August 2019

AUTEC Reference number 19/295

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.