The Interplay of Leadership Dilemmas and HoD Mental Well-Being: Exploring the Head of Department Role in New Zealand State Secondary Schools

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Abstract

This mixed methods research aimed to explore the interplay between leadership dilemmas related to teacher performance and the mental well-being of Heads of Departments (HoDs) in New Zealand state secondary schools. This aim was explored through a literature review and a mixed methods study. The methods involved an online survey which included the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (Warwick Medical School, 2006) (59 participants), three semi-structured interviews, and methodological triangulation. Participants were all current HoDs employed in New Zealand state secondary schools. The research design was underpinned by a pragmatic response in relation to the research questions.

The literature review focused on two core areas: Understanding HoDs as middle leaders, and the positioning of leadership dilemmas within a Head of Department (HoD) role. The review established the core responsibilities expected of HoDs and three key sources of tension in the HoD role: managing teacher performance, time constraints, and balancing collegial relationship needs with the needs of the wider school. Leadership dilemmas were positioned within the wider umbrella of organisational learning. Leadership dilemmas involving managing teacher performance emerged as one of the most common types of leadership dilemmas experienced by HoDs and were accompanied by a range of learning processes and mental models. These findings helped to establish the questions asked in the online survey and semi-structured interviews.

Quantitative analysis of survey data revealed there was a moderate to high level of influence of HoD role responsibilities related to teacher performance on HoD mental well-being. Similarly, there was a moderate to high level of influence of HoD mental well-being on HoD engagement in role responsibilities. Managing leadership dilemmas were found to be negatively influential on HoD mental well-being. Leadership dilemmas were also influential on HoD engagement in role responsibilities. Their nature of influence was dependent on the HoD mental well-being state.

Qualitative thematic analysis of interview data revealed four key concepts for the ways in which HoDs were understanding and experiencing leadership dilemmas: HoD role expectations (I), the HoD as a person (II), learning processes (III), and hierarchy and politics (IV). The four concepts were found to be interconnected, inter-dependent, and influential on one another.

Methodological triangulation of the survey and interview findings resulted in the influences between HoD role responsibilities and HoD mental well-being being structured as three components: the nature of the associations (strength and direction), the origins and emergence of the influences (where they were stemming from), and the conditions of practice (what the influences looked like in practice). The influences were bi-directional and found to co-exist in a cyclic nature. Leadership dilemmas emerged at the centre of the cyclic influential relationship between HoD role responsibilities and HoD mental well-being, with metacognitive practices influencing, and being influenced by, the ways in which leadership dilemmas were understood by HoDs.

A key finding of this research was that leadership dilemmas need to be seen not just in terms of their two horns (organisational and relational needs) but also in terms of mental well-being. Recommendations which arose from the conclusions of the study were adjustments to the approaches for HoD professional learning and development to include mental well-being learnings, understanding (leadership) dilemmas, and metacognitive practices. A further recommendation was made to reduce HoD workload to further improve role performance and better support HoD mental well-being. These recommendations have the common goal of better supporting the HoD as a person and in their role, which in turn may indirectly contribute towards organisational learning aimed towards improving student outcomes.

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Attestation of Authorship

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

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Date: 09 November 2022

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Head of Department (HoD) role in secondary schools is one which has experienced an increase in complexity (Cardno et al., 2018). Managing leadership dilemmas involving teacher performance form part of this complexity for HoDs.

Over the past two decades there has been an increasing focus on the role of middle leaders in education (Bennett et al., 2007; De Nobile, 2018b; Lipscombe et al., 2021). This may be somewhat attributed to the evolution of the middle leader role in schools. Well-being has also become a dominant focus. This may be due to the ever-expanding research base linking well-being to learning capacity and flourishment of individuals (e.g., Allies, 2021; Falecki & Mann, 2020; Spratt, 2017; White & McCallum, 2021). Concepts of well-being in education have been further emphasised in light of the Covid-19 pandemic (McCallum, 2021). The overlapping space of the well-being and middle leadership spheres is where this research is positioned.

This chapter first presents a personal note as the researcher and author. This is followed by an overview of the key concepts underpinning this research: The HoD role in a New Zealand context, the responsibility of managing teacher performance, leadership dilemmas, and HoD mental well-being. The rationale, aim, and research questions which have directed the path of the study are then presented. Finally, a brief overview of the research design and structure of this thesis is given.

Note from Author

I am currently an HoD in a secondary school. In this position, I have experienced complex interactions between my person and my role. I have had colleagues in similar roles refer to this complexity. Addressing teacher performance issues seemed to be something that negatively affected HoD mental well-being and the way in which they approached difficult situations. I had been conscious of the interactivity between HoD role responsibilities and mental well-being. Yet, I had limited understanding of *why* this interactivity existed. Thus, I had a desire to look further into the potential influences at play.

I have previous experiences in quantitative-based research, and this is where I am most grounded as a learner and researcher. However, hearing experiences of other HoDs and living them myself led me to start understanding the ways in which qualitative analysis offered a more complete picture of the complexities within phenonemons. Through using mixed

methods in this study, I have learnt to bring in qualitative analysis into research for the first time. I regard this as an important step in my own development.

Overview of Key Concepts

The HoD Role in a New Zealand Context

The New Zealand Ministry of Education [MoE] (2012) places middle leaders between classroom teachers and senior leaders. Those middle leaders hold pedagogical, administrative, and/or pastoral positions for leading teachers and students in schools. These leadership responsibilities are usually alongside considerable classroom teaching responsibilities. Heads of Departments (HoDs) sit within the wider umbrella of middle leadership (Bassett, 2016; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013; MoE, 2012). In secondary schools, the HoD role is one that involves leading a subject department or faculty (Cardno & Robson, 2016; MoE, 2012) and the individual teachers within that department (Bassett, 2016).

The role of an HoD has experienced substantial change from its traditional 'middle-manager' role (De Nobile, 2018a, 2019). These changes have seen the role evolve from being predominately management and administration based to a multi-faceted leadership position. A range of literature and research recognises the HoD role requires an increasingly diverse skill set to meet the range of practices and responsibilities expected within it (see Chapter 2, Table 1). The collation of these responsibilities leads to a key purpose of the HoD role: to provide leadership that helps to improve outcomes for students (Bennett et al., 2007; Highfield, 2016; MoE, 2012). It follows that the HoD role contributes towards growing collective capacity of a school (Harris, 2011; Hattie, 2009; MoE, 2012; Robinson et al., 2009). Many HoD role responsibilities demand direct involvement with a range of individuals within a school. Thus, the HoD role contains a considerable interpersonal aspect within the role responsibilities. One example of this interpersonal aspect is the responsibility of managing teacher performance.

The Responsibility of Managing Teacher Performance

A synthesis of selected literature (Bassett, 2016; Bennett et al., 2007; Cardno & Robson, 2016; Cardno et al., 2018; Fitzgerald, 2008; Fleming, 2014; Harris et al., 2019a; MoE, 2012) identifies HoD role responsibilities involved with teacher performance as:

- monitoring teacher performance and quality of work
- encouraging and challenging practice

- providing observation and feedback
- appraising, evaluating and developing teacher performance.

These aspects encompass the HoD holding overall responsibility and accountability for teacher performance. The MoE (2012) present the core intention of HoDs managing teacher performance is to improve teaching and learning pedagogies. In turn, these help to improve outcomes for students. It follows that the management of teacher performance is an important contributor to individual and collective growth within a school.

Leadership Dilemmas

Leadership dilemmas are complex problems. Within them, a leader finds their responsibilities for meeting organisational needs conflict with their responsibilities for meeting relational and collegial needs (Cardno, 2007). These responsibilities make up the two 'horns' of a leadership dilemma in an HoD role. On one hand, the HoD has a responsibility to ensure the school needs are being met for improving student (learning) outcomes. On the other hand, they also have a responsibility for supporting the individuals within their departments and maintaining collegial relationships with them. When faced with a dilemma, the leader may feel they must sacrifice one aspect of the dilemma at the expense of the other. Leadership dilemmas are sources of tension, avoidance and anxiety (Cardno, 2007, 2020). This indicates a potential negative influence on the leaders' well-being.

HoD Mental Well-Being

Well-being is a term that may be understood as a floating signifier; it absorbs meanings and represents whatever viewers impose upon it, rather than having a specific meaning itself (Buchanan, 2018). When focusing on well-being within a New Zealand context, reference can be made to the model presented by Durie (1998), Te whare tapa whā. There are four interwoven dimensions that make up one's hauora (well-being): physical, mental, social and family, and spiritual well-being. The breadth of well-being as a concept means the ability to cover all aspects with meaning within the confines of a 90-point thesis was unattainable. Research involving teacher well-being predominately addresses aspects related to mental well-being (see Chapter 2: HoD Mental Well-Being) with an increasing focus on burnout within the profession (Weiland, 2021). Thus, mental well-being of HoDs is the specific focus for this context.

The reader should note that ‘mental well-being’ has been purposely left undefined throughout this study. This is due to the enormity of the concept, and to prevent restricting the study’s findings into a predetermined concept of what ‘mental well-being’ means for HoDs.

Rationale and Aim

It is suggested that the tensions tied within middle leadership practices work against middle leaders responding positively for their leadership responsibilities (Cardno, 2012; Robson & Bassett, 2017). These responsibilities are aimed to help improve student outcomes (De Nobile, 2018b; Fleming, 2014; Harris et al., 2019a; MoE, 2012). Such tensions often arise for HoDs from the expected responsibility and accountability for department members’ performance (Bassett, 2016; Bennett et al., 2007; Leithwood, 2016). The importance of supporting performance improvement is understood. Yet, managing teacher performance continues to dominate the literature as one of the more difficult aspects of the HoD role. It is therefore unsurprising that Cardno (2020) has reported the management of teacher performance as the most common context for a leadership dilemma to occur.

Studies have found that leadership responsibilities can leave HoDs feeling overwhelmed (Bassett, 2016; Cardno & Robson, 2016), generate reluctance and avoidance to perform responsibilities (Leithwood, 2016), create feelings of isolation from their colleagues (Harris & Muijs, 2002), and demand a workload that is unmanageable (Post Primary Teachers' Association [PPTA], 2016b). Attention is also drawn to concerns of insufficient support being available for middle leaders to perform their responsibilities (Cardno et al., 2018; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013; Robson & Bassett, 2017). These findings suggest HoD well-being must be considered as potentially influential on engagement in HoD role responsibilities, and vice versa.

Historic and current research seem to address leadership dilemmas and well-being as predominately individual components. There is adequate literature available providing strategies for dilemma resolution. Such strategies include double-loop learning (Argyris, 2003), productive reasoning (Piggot-Irvine & Doyle, 2010), and open-to-learning conversations (Robinson et al., 2009), amongst others. Recommendations for supporting middle-leader well-being are also frequent in occurrence. This is support such as suitable professional development, manageable workload, and organisational support for the middle leadership roles (Gurr & Drysdale, 2013; Leithwood et al., 2020; PPTA, 2016a; 2016b).

However, there is a deficiency in educational literature investigating the interactions between leadership dilemmas and middle-leader well-being, specifically for HoDs as middle-leaders. Whilst the concepts are not new to the education field, the pandemic has highlighted issues of exhaustion and heightened anxiety within the teaching profession (Flack et al., 2020). Thus, this study aims to explore the interplay between leadership dilemmas related to teacher performance and the mental well-being of HoDs in New Zealand secondary schools. This aim is supported by the research question(s) below.

Research Question(s)

How do leadership dilemmas and mental well-being interplay with one another for HoDs in New Zealand state secondary schools, when dealing with teacher performance issues?

The research question unfolds into the following sub-questions:

1. To what degree do HoDs perceive their mental well-being:
   a) influences their engagement in role responsibilities related to teacher performance?
   b) is influenced by role responsibilities related to teacher performance, arising within their department?
2. What are the implications of understanding leadership dilemmas for HoDs?

For these questions:

- *degree* intends to encapsulate the associations as measured responses as well as the perceptions of the associations from lived experiences;
- *'related* to teacher performance' indicates the HoD role responsibilities which are either on the fringe of, or directly associated with, teacher performance;
- Leadership dilemmas are focused on teacher performance.

Research Design

This research design stemmed from a pragmatic response to the research questions. Pragmatism is centred upon human experience, with knowledge based upon those experiences (Creswell, 2014). Performance-based leadership dilemmas and HoD mental well-being exist as experiences in a social setting, the consequences dependent on actions and

interactions unique to the individual. It followed that a pragmatic stance provided an appropriate foundation for the design.

A parallel, convergent mixed methods design with methodological triangulation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) was applied. Quantitative and qualitative analyses generated through the respective data collection methods of an online survey and semi-structured interviews were converged. Whilst quantitative analysis pointed to existing associations and influencing factors between HoD mental well-being and role responsibilities involving teacher performance, qualitative analysis helped to generate plausible explanations for how and why they were associated with one another. Thus, a mixed methods design was employed to enable a fuller understanding of the interplay of leadership dilemmas and mental well-being for HoDs.

Thesis Overview

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the reviewed literature and research on middle leadership in schools, and leadership dilemmas for middle leaders. Chapter 3 covers the methodological approach for this study. This includes design and analysis approaches for the online survey and semi-structured interviews. Chapter 4 and 5 present the respective quantitative and qualitative data analyses and results. These results are summarised through the methodological triangulation of the findings. Chapter 6 discusses the results in reference to the research questions posed in this chapter. The discussion is in three sections: role responsibility influences on HoD mental well-being, the influence of mental well-being on HoD engagement in role responsibilities, and understanding leadership dilemmas. Chapter 7 presents summaries and conclusions of the research. These are followed by accompanying strengths and limitations. Recommendations are given for future HoD practices and further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter I review two major bodies of literature. The first is on middle leadership, with a focus on HoDs as middle leaders and their mental well-being. The second is on the placement of leadership dilemmas in a learning context. The initial version of this review was written prior to collating the findings from this study's data. Due to the findings that emerged, the section 'Mental Models' was added.

Literature Review Process

Literature was identified using a combination of selective searching via Auckland University of Technology's access to EBSCOhost and Google Scholar, and backward citation tracing.

The search parameters included:

- Search terms: *middle leadership, middle leader, secondary, education, head of department (HoD), well-being (wellbeing), New Zealand.*
  Subsequent terms were later included to identify research specific to: *leadership dilemmas, dilemmas, appraisal, teacher performance.*
- Inclusions: publications initially from 2016 onwards, from countries with similarities in schooling and education systems (e.g., New Zealand, Australia, United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom)
- Restrictions: publications that focused on tertiary, early childhood or specialist education providers were intentionally excluded for the most part, due to being out of scope for this research.

Upon backward citation tracking, literature which sat outside of the initial search restrictions was included.

Middle Leadership in Schools

Middle leaders are positioned at the centre of a school 'hierarchy'. They sit between classroom teachers, whose responsibilities are focused predominantly on teaching, and those whose responsibilities are focused predominantly on senior leadership (e.g. principals and deputy principals) (Bassett, 2016; Busher & Harris, 1999; Cardno & Robson, 2016; De Nobile, 2018b; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013; MoE, 2012). Sitting in this central position, middle leaders typically need to do both: teach, and lead. As "the vast majority of middle leadership roles

involve motivating and managing people to improve the quality of education and/or outcomes for students" (Fleming, 2014, p. 22), middle leaders need *both* management and leadership skills.

Even so, preparing for a middle leadership role is predominantly left to the individual and it is suggested further organisational (school) support is needed (Gurr & Drysdale, 2013). De Nobile (2018b) presents a similar notion, emphasising principals need to support middle leaders through providing empowerment and autonomy to them. However, he also notes that specific ways to provide appropriate support is unclear in the literature. It could thus be inferred that there is a disconnect between the theorised roles of middle leaders, and the professional development needed for success in the roles.

HoDs as Middle Leaders

HoDs are consistently characterised as middle leaders (see, for example: Bassett, 2016; Bennett et al., 2007; Harris et al., 2019b; MoE, 2012). Within secondary schools, the HoD role is often alongside substantial classroom teaching responsibilities (PPTA, 2016a). Leading the improvement of teacher practice to positively influence student learning outcomes is widely recognised as the dominant 'goal' of the HoD role (Bassett, 2016; Fitzgerald & Gunter, 2006).

Role Responsibilities

Literature indicating common responsibilities within secondary school HoD roles are summarised in Table 1. Responsibilities were initially drawn from the middle leadership descriptors found within the MoE (2012) publication. This is because these are the role guidelines applicable to and expected for all middle leaders in New Zealand state secondary schools. These responsibilities become the basis for the survey design in Chapter 3.

Table 1
HoD Responsibilities

HoD Responsibility	Supporting literature
Leading teaching and learning pedagogy	Bassett, 2016; Cardno and Robson, 2016; De Nobile, 2018a; Fitzgerald and Gunter, 2006; Fleming, 2014; Gurr and Drysdale, 2013; Harris et al., 2019; Harris and Jones, 2017; MoE, 2012; Robson and Bassett, 2017; Sinnema et al., 2013
Leading the curriculum	Bassett, 2016; Cardno and Robson, 2016; De Nobile, 2018a; Gurr and Drysdale, 2013; Robson and Bassett, 2017
Developing collegial and trusting relationships	Bassett, 2016; Bolman and Deal, 2013; De Nobile, 2018a; Fleming, 2014; MoE, 2012; Gurr and Drysdale, 2013; Robson and Bassett, 2017
Liaising with senior leaders, teachers, parents and caregivers, and students.	Bassett, 2016; Fleming, 2014; MoE, 2012
Administrative tasks e.g., management and moderation of assessment and reporting, budgeting, tracking student achievement, resource allocation	Bassett, 2016; De Nobile, 2018a; Gurr and Drysdale, 2013; MoE, 2012; Robson and Bassett, 2017; Sinnema et al, 2013;
Implementing and translating the wider organisational goals to a department level; liaising between senior leaders and teaching staff	Bassett, 2016; Bennett et al., 2007; Cardno and Robson, 2016; De Nobile, 2018a; Fleming, 2014; Gurr and Drysdale, 2013; Harris et al., 2019; MoE, 2012
Monitoring and evaluation of staff performance, including appraisal	Bassett, 2016; Bennet et al., 2007; Cardno, 2020; Cardno et al., 2018; Cardno and Robson, 2016; De Nobile, 2018a; Fleming 2014; Harris et al. 2019; MoE, 2012; Robson and Bassett, 2017
Professional development of teaching staff	Cardno and Robson, 2016; De Nobile, 2018a; Fleming, 2014; Harris et al., 2019; MoE, 2012; Sinnema et al., 2013
Developing the quality of student learning outcomes and achievement	Bennett et al, 2007; Cardno, 2020; Cardno and Robson, 2016; Fleming, 2014; Gurr and Drysdale, 2013; Harris et al., 2019; Harris and Jones, 2017, MoE, 2012; Leithwood, 2016; Robson and Bassett, 2017
Mentoring and coaching of teachers	De Nobile, 2018a; MoE, 2012; Robson and Bassett, 2017
Ensuring a safe and positive learning environment for both teachers and students	Fleming, 2014; Gurr and Drysdale, 2013; MoE, 2012; Robinson, 2011; Sinnema et al, 2013
Creating a shared vision, goal setting, common purpose etc	Bassett, 2016; De Nobile, 2018a; Dinham, 2007; Gurr and Drysdale, 2013; Robson and Bassett, 2017; Sinnema et al., 2013

Influences on Teaching and Learning

The MoE (2012) presents the main purpose of middle leader roles is "to improve outcomes for all students – outcomes that embrace their education, welfare, and development" (p. 12). Further literature supports this notion, emphasising the role as one designed to positively influence student learning outcomes (Cardno, 2020; De Nobile, 2018b; Fleming, 2014; Harris et al., 2019b). This is usually via a direct influence on teaching and learning pedagogies (Bassett, 2016; Cardno & Robson, 2016; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013; Harris & Jones, 2017; Leithwood, 2016; Robinson et al., 2009; Robson & Bassett, 2017). Little of the reviewed research had a primary focus on HoD influences on teaching and learning. However, the concept emerged as a secondary, indirect link. This link has also been identified across various studies:

A study by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) reported significant correlations between principalship and school practices, and between school practices and teaching practices. Self-reporting on teaching practices indicated "most teachers are confident that they can improve all their students' learning outcomes" (Wylie et al., 2018, p. 109). However, the study data was self-reported. Therefore, the significant correlation between the school layers of responsibility was based on educator perception (espoused practice) rather than direct evidence of it occurring *in* practice. One must still ask, where does the transfer and implementation of school practices to teaching practices occur? HoDs are the predominant pedagogical and curriculum contact for their department members. It could be inferred from the HoD role responsibilities and position within a school that HoDs are the 'middle-men' communicating and implementing those school practices into teaching practices (Leithwood, 2016).

A comprehensive study of HoDs based in New Zealand (10 secondary schools, 30 departments), found significant effects of HoD leadership on the variance in student outcomes, especially in senior students (Highfield, 2016). After controlling for socio-economic and cultural factors, it was estimated that HoD leadership could account for a further 22% of variation in student academic outcomes. Although this was focused on student academic learning, one could hypothesise aspects of HoD leadership may also be influential on general student outcomes.

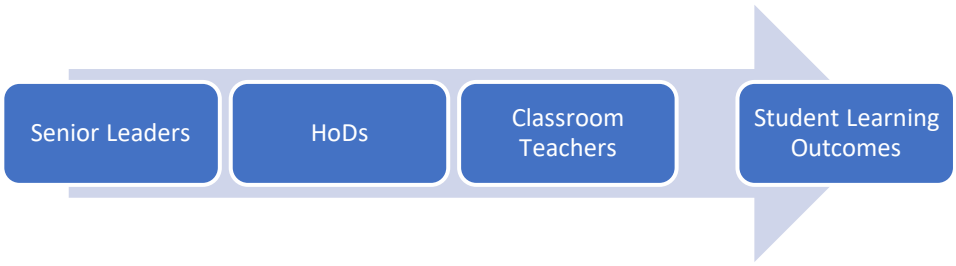
A synthesis of 42 western studies involving middle leadership showed individual teacher work had the most influence on student outcomes, followed by work at a department

level (Leithwood, 2016). Given the role of an HoD is substantive in both these domains, Leithwood suggested HoD leadership was likely to have a significant effect on student learning outcomes. Cardno et al. (2018) presented similar findings when evaluating the influence of school leadership on student learning outcomes.

A meta-analysis of 134 New Zealand and overseas studies and reviews focused on effective leadership practices (Robinson et al., 2009). They found the 'impact of school leadership on student learning outcomes' had an effect size 0.3, indicating a significant correlation between the two factors. Whilst 'school leadership' may be seen as principalship, the sources of influence places HoDs in the middle of the pathway between senior leader influence – teacher influence – student learning outcomes (Figure 1). This is partially due to HoDs being regarded as the direct instructional leaders (Cardno et al., 2018) for teachers within their department(s).

Figure 1

Path of Influence for Leadership in Schools



However, the meta-analysis had a wide scope for inclusion. This meant several very small-scale studies contributed equal weighting to the findings. Additionally, the meta-analysis was directed by the MoE, who were establishing varied middle leader roles within schools at that time. Therefore, their underlying motivations may have played a role in the reporting of the study.

The concept of the HoD being the translator of school practices into teaching practices echoes the findings of an American study of 200 HoDs by Weller Jr (2001) who concluded that "no other position has more potential to increase school effectiveness than the department head position...department heads enjoy the un-equalled opportunity of direct, daily contact with teachers and students" (p. 74). This further implies the school practices are likely to be translated and implemented to classroom teachers via HoDs.

These studies all suggest that HoDs indirectly influence student learning outcomes via leadership practices based on their role responsibilities. Such responsibilities and practices mostly fall under the field of 'school improvement and effectiveness'. Indeed, Leithwood (2016) suggests that the positioning of the HoD in a school has the most potential to increase school effectiveness, somewhat due to their direct and constant contact with teaching staff. This then implies that increasing school effectiveness is a main purpose of the HoD role.

The literature reviewed may have chosen to present an idealistic view of the HoD role to emphasise its importance. However, the less 'pleasant' factors within the role are seemingly lighter in discussion. Addressing the influences of micropolitics, environmental issues, and the leader as a person themselves, are all lacking within most of the literature reviewed on middle leadership and HoDs. These factors may have a significant impact on an individual's ability to 'perform' in an HoD role.

Growth of the HoD Role

It has been suggested that the growth of the HoD role responsibilities is partly due to principals distributing some of their own leadership responsibilities and tasks from senior leaders to middle leaders. This is due to the principal's own increasing role expectations (De Nobile, 2018b; Dinham, 2007; Fleming, 2014). This distribution of responsibilities to the middle leader was recognised over a decade ago by Weller Jr (2001), and Cotter (2011) (as cited in Gurr & Drysdale, 2013). Both suggested reviewing the HoD role, with consideration to whether the emphasis was truly on leadership and learning rather than compliance and administration.

This distribution of tasks indicates HoDs are expected to perform duties which can have significant effects within their organisation (De Nobile, 2018a, 2018b) and on HoD role complexity (Cardno et al., 2018). It is inevitable that accompanying this task distribution and growth is a shift in expectations for HoDs. Due to such growth, the PPTA (2015, 2016a) observed that middle leadership roles in secondary schools have expanded beyond a manageable workload. They noted the expectations and responsibilities are now unattainable in the current conditions. This unmanageable workload has been linked to the wide variety of tasks now expected to be performed within the role (Robson & Bassett, 2017). This, along with other factors, is a key cause of tension in the HoD role.

HoD Mental Well-Being

Whilst student well-being is a well-established area of research, educator well-being has been relatively overlooked (Shirley et al., 2020). Within that lies middle leader well-being. It is recognised that the HoD role is multi-faceted and demands a high level of interpersonal skills (Bassett, 2016; Grootenboer et al., 2019; Gurr, 2019; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013). These skills are regarded as critical for practicing successful leadership for improving student outcomes.

Alongside this oversight, it has been suggested that educators are unable to separate their work and personal identity (Day et al., 2006). This implies their own being is intrinsically linked into their work as an educator and vice versa. Considering these factors, and that literature is showing an increasing focus on burnout within the profession (Weiland, 2021), one can identify a possibly significant link between HoD role responsibilities and their mental well-being. In turn, this links HoD mental well-being and their capacity to engage in their role.

Tensions within an HoD Role

Three main sources of tension in the HoD role were frequently reported in the literature. These are summarised in Table 2 and discussed below.

Table 2

Key Sources of Tension in an HoD Role

Source of tension	Supporting literature
Leading a department within a wider school context	Bassett, 2016; Bennett et al., 2007; Busher and Harris, 1999; Busher et al., 2007; Cardno, 2007, 2020; Cardno et al., 2018; Fleming, 2014; Harris et al., 2019; Leithwood, 2016; Simkins, 2005; Spillane and Coldren, 2011; Van Velsor et al., 2010; Wise, 2001
Time constraints	Bassett, 2016; Cardno and Robson, 2016; Cardno et al., 2018; De Nobile, 2018; Fleming, 2014; Gurr, 2019; Mahfouz, 2018; PPTA, 2015, 2016a,b; Robson and Bassett, 2017; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Wise, 2001
Balancing relationship and collegiality needs with managerial responsibilities	Bassett, 2016; Bennett et al., 2007; Cardno (2007, 2020); Cardno and Robson, 2016; Cardno et al., 2018; De Nobile, 2018; Fleming, 2014; Harris and Muijs, 2002; Harris et al., 2019; Leithwood, 2016

Leading a Department within a Wider School Context. Formally, HoDs are expected to act on behalf of senior leaders (Bennett et al., 2007), therefore have responsibility for translating the wider school agendas to their departmental teachers (De Nobile, 2018b).

However, leading a department within a wider school context can create tensions in the HoD role. This is due to the responsibilities requiring a dual focus on both the needs of the wider school and their individual department (Bennett et al., 2007). HoDs are expected to liaise between senior leadership and teaching staff, translating wider school goals into teaching practice via departmental leadership. Simultaneously, they are expected to be supporting and meeting the needs of their department. Tension exists when the expectations and needs from senior leaders and the department (members) are misaligned (Bassett, 2016; Harris et al., 2019b) or conflicting (Fleming, 2014). This can result in HoDs feeling 'trapped' in the middle, unable to satisfy the needs of both parties.

Time Constraints. Insufficient time to adequately meet HoD responsibilities and expectations is a challenge faced by HoDs. In 2016 the PPTA surveyed those within their association about middle leadership roles, gaining over 4000 responses (approximately 1700 were exclusively curriculum leaders). The overwhelming perception was that "there is now a significant misfit between the time and remuneration available for the role and the demands it poses" (2016c, p. 14). Arguably one of the largest surveys to be taken of New Zealand middle leaders in recent times, the theme of insufficient time to meet the expected role responsibilities recurred frequently in the findings. The conclusions of a related taskforce report noted that the greatest source of pressure within the teaching workforce was the time pressure on middle leaders. This was due to "combining almost full-time teaching loads with complex and critical leadership functions" (PPTA, 2016a, p. 7). Such issues had been raised consistently since 2003.

This issue of time availability results in experiences of stress, pressure and frustration (De Nobile, 2018b). These outcomes are due to inadequate time to perform responsibilities thoroughly (Fleming, 2014), and being overwhelmed by the sheer number of tasks to complete (Cardno et al., 2017; Cardno et al., 2018; PPTA, 2016c). Teacher well-being thrives in environments that make their core work achievable (Shirley et al., 2020). Yet, it is indicated that the core work of the HoD role is not achievable within the time constraints in their working environment.

These findings indicate that the follow-on effects from inadequate time availability may disadvantage student learning outcomes. This is due to reduced time for classroom teaching preparation and leadership (rather than management) within a department.

Collegial Relationships. Perhaps the most complex source of tension for HoDs lies in balancing the need for establishing collegial relationships, whilst also meeting accountability responsibilities. This includes the monitoring and management of teacher performance. It is widely recognised that establishing trusting, positive relationships with staff is needed for effective middle leadership to occur (De Nobile, 2018b; Drysdale & Gurr, 2011; Tamati, 2011). This is supported by the MoE (2012), who emphasise fostering such relationships as a core responsibility of a middle leadership role. Evidence gathered from a previously mentioned meta-analysis (Robinson et al., 2009) suggested the greater the leadership focus is on relationships, the greater the impact on teaching pedagogy and student outcomes.

Alongside establishing collegial relationships with teachers, HoDs are expected to be accountable for those teachers' performance. Meeting both aspects is a dominant cause of stress and tension for HoDs (Bassett, 2016; Cardno, 2007; Fleming, 2014). This is often due to wishing to protect their collegial relationships at the expense of meeting their managerial responsibilities or organisational needs (Bassett, 2016; Cardno, 2007, 2020; Fleming, 2014; Leithwood, 2016). Further to this, it is suggested that "giving or receiving advice undermines the norm of equality" (Bennett et al., 2007, p. 458). This indicates actions for monitoring teacher performance are not conducive to maintaining effective collegial relationships. Such actions also create a possible underlying power imbalance.

Although these tensions are presented separately, they are intrinsically interlinked. For example, Cardno (2020) discusses possible HoD responses when they wish to protect their relationships, but at the cost of meeting organisational goals. The HoD experiences tension related to being the liaison person between their department and the wider school. They also experience tension related to balancing relationships and meeting the management aspect of their role. Such a situation is described as a leadership dilemma, which is explored later in this chapter.

Influences of Tensions on the HoD and their Engagement in the Role

The above tensions are attributed to causing negative outcomes and experiences for HoDs. When faced with such tensions, HoDs are reported to experience a raft of negative feelings: under-prepared or unsupported (Bassett, 2016; Dinham, 2007), lacking energy (PPTA, 2016c), high levels of pressure and stress (Fleming, 2014; Harris et al., 2019b), anxiety (Cardno, 2007; Leithwood, 2016), frustration (Fleming, 2014; PPTA, 2016c), overwhelmed (Bassett, 2016; Cardno, 2020; Cardno & Robson, 2016; Cardno et al., 2018), morally or ethically

challenged (Cardno, 2020; Fleming, 2014), fearful of upsetting others or embarrassing oneself (Cardno, 2020), inadequate (Cardno, 2007), and isolated (Harris & Muijs, 2002). Although these outcomes are generated in a professional setting, their influence and impact lands upon the HoD themselves. That is, the professional experiences within the HoD role affect the HoD as a person. A historical study of 99 primary teachers in England (Nias, 1981) found similar tensions and influences existed then. It is recognised primary and secondary teachers may have different experiences. However, it still raises the question about why the exposed issues continue to be prevalent 40 years later and are seemingly growing in magnitude.

Tensions tied within middle leadership roles can work against HoDs responding positively to leadership responsibilities (Bennett et al., 2007). Similarly, the possibility of potential negative outcomes can generate reluctance to perform role responsibilities (Leithwood, 2016). This may result in responsibilities being avoided altogether. Here, the underlying interpersonal nature of the HoD role needs consideration. If an HoD is facing potentially negative outcomes, this may reduce their capacity to meet the interpersonal needs of the role. This may lead to poor leadership practices, which have been linked to lowered well-being and efficacy for teachers as individuals and as a collective (Harris & Jones, 2017; Seashore Louis et al., 2010). These factors are then linked to student outcomes (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). Poor leadership practices have also been found to cause greater employee stress (Furnham, 2017), and significantly lower levels of personal well-being (Mathieu et al., 2014). This creates a cyclic issue regarding HoD role-responsibilities and well-being. Considering the overall goal of the HoD role is to improve student outcomes, it follows that the above tensions not only have a detrimental effect on the mental well-being of the HoD, but on wider school improvement and effectiveness.

Mahfouz (2018) states “a healthy, positive school culture is created by leaders with emotional stability” (p. 602). This indicates the need for supporting the mental well-being of HoDs. Yet, the literature reviewed illustrates frequent reporting of negative experiences and/or feelings emerging from HoD role responsibilities. Additionally, it seems a deeper humanistic viewpoint is not often explored in the research. This idea is echoed by Shirley et al. (2020). It is somewhat concerning that a role which requires a high level of interpersonal application (Bassett, 2016; Busher et al., 2007; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013; MoE, 2012) is not examined thoroughly in terms of the influence of and influences on the person themselves. It

may be that such an area is overlooked because the reported tensions occur so frequently, the associated influences have become an accepted part of the role.

Leadership Dilemmas

Dilemmas can be categorised into four areas: ethical, cultural, employee, and leadership.

- Ethical dilemma: where a person is has a concern with moral or ethical behaviours, or is facing competing sets of core beliefs and values (Cranston et al., 2014)
- Cultural dilemma: where a person considers it inappropriate or disrespectful to be raising an issue about a person (e.g., an elder/kaumatua/kuia/person of status) (Glover et al., 2016)
- Employee dilemma: where a person has a concern with a leader who is 'above' them in their organisational hierarchy (Anderson, 2013)
- Leadership dilemma: where a person has a concern for meeting the organisational needs and for meeting the needs of an individual (Cardno, 2007)

This research focuses solely on leadership dilemmas. However, before looking to further explore what a leadership dilemma is we must first understand the underlying theories behind it.

Organisational Learning

Organisational learning is "the process through which organizations change or modify their mental models, rules, processes or knowledge, maintaining or improving their performance" (Chiva et al., 2014, p. 689). It is recognised as an important part of school growth for improving student outcomes (Mulford & Silins, 2003). To enable organisational learning, individual learning and development is needed (Basten & Haamann, 2018)**.** It is recognised that developing leadership within a school is needed for cultivating school-wide capacity (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015). It follows that the individual development of leaders within a school contributes to wider organisational (school) learning. This development and learning can be seen through theories of action, outlined below.

Theories of Action: Espoused Theories and Theories-in-Use

Theories of action are the processes in which one's thoughts are linked with their actions. Argyris (2010) identifies two categories: espoused theories and theory-in-use. Espoused theories are those which a person is aware of and 'know' about; they *believe* they

are following the principles of these theories in practice. Theories-in-use represent what a person is doing in practice (their thoughts, behaviours, actions). Argyris suggests that human nature is inconsistent in thoughts and behaviour and not always what is imagined; that espoused theories and theories-in-use are incongruent. This leads into different models of behaviour and reasoning, Model I and Model II (Argyris & Schön, 1974)**.**

Model I. Within Model I, defensive behaviours and norms exist to seek minimisation of negative feelings. The goal is to protect both oneself and others from potential threat or embarrassment (Argyris, 1976a, 2003). The governing values of Model I are to maximise winning and minimise losing, to minimise expressing negative feelings, to define a goal unilaterally and convince others to agree to it, and to be rational (Argyris & Schön, 1974). Model I theory-in-use occurs when one's espoused theory and theory-in-use are misaligned. As such, Model I is exhibited through behaviours such as:

- Approaches centred on avoidance or control
- Defensive dialogue
- Attribution of blame away from self/avoidance of any self-ownership of an issue
- Not validating information
- Unquestioned underlying assumptions
- Developing non-collaborative, unilateral solutions
- Assumption that it is the other party's fault if the outcome has limited or no success

(Argyris, 2010; Argyris & Schön, 1974; Gallos & Bolman, 2021; Piggot-Irvine, 2015).

Employing a Model I theory of action often creates a short-term fix, however, the leader's defensive reactions will "make it difficult to produce the learning that is required to generate fundamental change" (Argyris, 2010, p. 83), therefore preventing organisational learning from occurring. Within this behaviour, a double bind may also exist:

> When employees adhere to a norm that says "hide errors," they know they are violating another norm that says "reveal errors." Whichever norm they choose, they risk getting into trouble. If they hide the error, they can be punished by the top if the error is discovered. If they reveal the error, they run the risk of exposing a whole network of camouflage and deception. The employees are thus in a double bind because whatever they do is necessary yet counterproductive to the organization. (Argyris, 1977, p. 116)

Model I behaviour allows individuals to 'hide' the issue being faced. Short-term, this can appear to be an effective solution as it avoids conflict and discomfort whilst alleviating the problem. However, the issues cannot be *resolved* without exposing what has been hidden. Exposing them would put the individual(s) in a vulnerable position as it would be evident they had been hiding them (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Hence, a double bind occurs. The skills needed for organisational learning require us to overcome double binds and employing Model I theory-in-use. These skills can be found through the Model II governing variables.

Model II. Model II is based on productive behaviours with governing values of: seeking valid information, creating free and informed choice, and develop an internal commitment to both the choices and the active monitoring of their implementation (Argyris, 2010; Argyris & Schön, 1974). When acting under these values, it is believed to bring an honest espoused theory in line with the theory-in-use. Model II is exhibited through behaviours such as:

- Approaches centred on a balance of advocacy and inquiry
- Productive reasoning and dialogue
- Seeking evidence; sharing and checking information
- Reflecting *in* action and reflecting *on* action
- Sharing and collaborating on common goals and understanding
- Withholding assumptions
- Co-constructing solutions
- Joint accountability and monitoring for implementation and improvement

(Argyris, 2003; Argyris & Schön, 1974; Gallos & Bolman, 2021; Piggot-Irvine, 2015; Piggot-Irvine & Doyle, 2010; Senge et al., 2000).

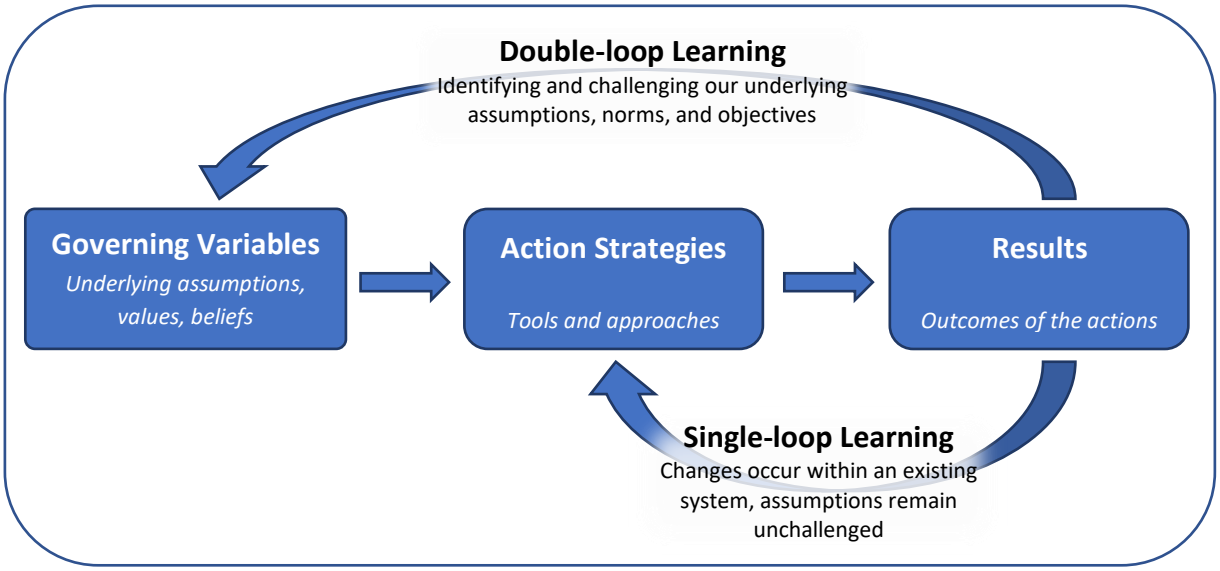
Employing Model II theory-in-use requires continual personal critical awareness, analysis, and reflection, as well as dedication to improvement. Within this, recognition of any misalignment between one's espoused theory and theory in-use is required. The identification of gaps allows for conscious adjustment of default behaviours and the implementation of new productive strategies**,** enabling a shift in practice from Model I to Model II (Argyris, 1990, as cited in Piggot-Irvine & Doyle, 2010). This shift of theories-in-use can be seen to occur through a number of tools or strategies of action, of which two are explored below: single-loop and double-loop learning, and dialogue.

Theory-in-Use

Single and Double-Loop Learning. Argyris and Schön (1974) present two learning processes from which organisational learning can (or cannot) occur: single and double-loop learning (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Double-Loop Learning



Single-loop learning relies on an existing system in which underlying assumptions remain implicit and unchallenged. It exists within Model I theory-in-use. 'Adequate solutions' to the problem do not require individual nor organisational values and norms to be challenged or changed, thus no true learning or progress occurs. Double-loop learning occurs when underlying assumptions and values are explicitly identified and challenged as part of the problem-solving process. Here, action strategies are based upon the modification of underlying behaviours stemming from assumptions, norms and pre-existing practices, rather than simply adjusting a surface action (Argyris, 2003). Engagement in the critical analysis of one's theories of action must occur to enable this behavioural change. It follows that double-loop learning is required for enabling Model II theory-in-use, which in turn is required for true individual and organisational learning. Although double-loop learning focuses on individual learning, adaptions to organisational values may also be required (Basten & Haamann, 2018). However, this is not the focus for this research so is not explored further.

Dialogue. Dialogue is an approach that can be used within Model I or II theory-in-use. It is separated into two branches: defensive dialogue and productive dialogue. Defensive dialogue is associated with the behaviours seen in Model I theory-in-use. It is exhibited through seeking unilateral control or avoidance of a situation (Argyris, 2010).

Productive dialogue can be thought of as the spoken translation of behaviours seen in Model II theory-in-use. It is a tool that can be used for implementing organisational learning (Piggot-Irvine & Doyle, 2010). Productive dialogue requires one to first 'suspend' their underlying assumptions. This allows themselves and others to acknowledge and reflect on them. In turn, this reflection enables authentic collective understanding and thinking (Senge et al., 2000).

Several dialogue models emerged in the reviewed literature (Table 3). Although each has a unique approach, the underlying concepts all stemmed from Argyris' early works on dialogue. These works focused on surfacing and testing assumptions (e.g., Argyris, 1977) and Model I and II theories of action (Argyris & Schön, 1974). By employing productive dialogue strategies and overcoming defensiveness, double-loop learning can occur (Argyris, 2003).

Table 3

Models of Dialogue

Author(s)	Model
Robinson and Lai (2006)	**DEER:** Describe, Explain, Evaluate, Recommend
Cardno (2012)	**Triple I Approach:** Inform, Illustrate, and Inquire
Robinson et al. (2009) *Based off DEER (above)*	**Open-to-learning conversations:** Increase validity of information, Increase respect, Increase commitment
(Piggot-Irvine, 2015)	**Productive Dialogue:** Advocacy, Inquiry, and Internal commitment and monitoring

It follows that applying any of these models could contribute to organisational learning. However, double-loop learning requires a significant level of personal examination and challenge. This leads us into the realm of mental models.

Mental Models

Mental models are "deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action" (Senge, 2006,

p. 8). We are often not conscious of how our mental models effect our behaviour. Yet, they guide us in our thinking and actions (Larrivee, 2000). Two mental models are briefly examined below, due to their immediate relevance to the findings which emerged from this study.

Larrivee (2000) presents a filtering system in which a situation goes through a series of personal filters (past experiences, beliefs, assumptions and expectations, feelings and mood, personal agendas and aspirations) to determine one's response. This filtering system allows one to make sense of the situation. Accompanying this is a model for critical reflection of these filters. Larrivee notes this "involves a deep exploration process that exposes unexamined beliefs, assumptions, and expectations and makes visible our personal reflexive loops" (p. 296). At the centre of this mental model lies one's core beliefs, values, life meanings, and ethics. Engaging in this critical reflection alters the learning processes occurring for the individual and creates a consciousness of the implications and impact on their practices.

Branson (2005, 2007) presents a similar mental model, *The Self*. He argues that "… one's own self-concept is at the heart of how one behaves" (p. 476), thus placing one's self concept at the centre of the model. Branson (2007) presents that a person's inner self and outer self are inter-related and inter-active. This interactivity illustrates that external behaviours stem from one's being: their self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values, and beliefs. Branson (2007) also notes the interface between ones inner self and their outer behaviours is often concealed or misunderstood.

Both of these models emphasise the 'person' or 'self' at the heart of the external responses in practice. The models also illustrate that an awareness of the influences of one's self allows for adjusted learning processes and external behaviours. Thus, these mental model represent an important underlying link for adjusting behaviours from Model I to Model II theory-in-use.

Complex Problems

Complex problems are problems that contain interconnected factors. These factors often have goal and value tensions or conflicting purposes. They often have a degree of conflict (Cardno, 2020). These are also referred to as dilemmas (Cardno, 2007), or wicked problems (Cuban, 2001; Grint, 2020; Rittel & Webber, 1973). The latter is described as "messy, complicated and conflict-filled situations that require undesirable choices between competing, highly prized values that cannot be simultaneously or fully satisfied" (Cuban, 2001, p. 10). Such problems are often left unresolved by leaders. This lack of resolve is attributed to

the cognitive and emotional challenges faced when employing the practices needed for resolution (Cardno, 2001, 2007), or indecisiveness when faced with equally undesirable or conflicting outcomes (Cardno, 2010). To leave complex problems unresolved hinders individual growth, therefore limiting organisational growth. Consequently, when dealing with complex problems, Model I is exhibited through defensive reasoning and Model II through productive reasoning. Complex problems are said to "trigger fear, nervousness, discomfort, and a lack of confidence in the leader's own ability to tackle [the problem]" (Cardno, 2007, p. 48). For this study's context, this not only indicates a significant negative impact on an HoD's mental well-being, but also a risk that the theory-in-use may see HoDs employ Model I approaches. A subset of complex problems are leadership dilemmas, which may arise for an HoD as a leader.

Leadership Dilemmas

Leadership dilemmas are "when organisational needs and the needs of an individual are in conflict" (Cardno, 2007, p. 33). Such dilemmas arise when a leader is required to work alongside others to achieve the organisational goals. If a colleague's professional performance is negatively impacting the needs of the organisation, this is often the cause of a leadership dilemma (Cardno, 2020). Tension exists between the leader doing what is best for the organisation, while simultaneously maintaining a positive collegial relationship with the colleague. Here, the leader's approach to the dilemma ties back to the use of dialogue and their engagement in single or double-loop learning. This leads back to theories-of-action and organisational learning.

The *recurrence* of leadership dilemmas exists when Model I theory is in use. Leaders build up a reliance on their unaddressed defensive behaviours and/or gaps between espoused theory and theory-in-use. A leader may remove themselves from any ownership of a dilemma due to it presenting itself in a new individual. This leads the leader to believe the dilemma cannot have been foreseen. However, within this belief lacks recognition that the dilemma itself is what is recurring. The lack of recognition means any underlying behaviours which are contributing to the dilemma remain unaddressed. A dilemma is truly 'resolved' through the application of productive dialogue and double-loop learning (Model II theory-in-use).

Management of Teacher Performance.

Teacher performance in New Zealand involves teachers meeting the key professional responsibilities outlined in their collective agreement.

These involve teaching responsibilities, school-wide responsibilities, and any management responsibilities (MoE, 2019). The responsibility of managing teacher performance is understood as an important contributor to individual and collective growth within a school. This contribution is due to the overall intention of improving teaching and learning pedagogies, which in turn improve outcomes for students (Cardno & Robson, 2016; Fleming, 2014; MoE, 2012). However, as mentioned in the rationale for this study, it is regarded as one of the more difficult or uncomfortable HoD responsibilities (Bassett, 2016; Bennett et al., 2007; Cardno et al., 2018; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013; Harris et al., 2019b; Leithwood, 2016; 2016c; Wise, 2001). As suggested by Busher et al. (2007), surrounding this potential difficulty and discomfort are further influences from micropolitics, environmental, cultural, and personal factors. It is therefore unsurprising that the management of teacher performance is reported as the most common context for a leadership dilemma to occur (Cardno, 2020).

Whilst there are numerous strategies or models (see Table 3 for examples) for approaching difficult situations, the breadth of application of such strategies within leadership roles is not well researched. Alongside this, literature around school middle leadership seems to consistently report HoDs avoiding or poorly confronting performance issues with teachers.

Managing teacher performance can often result in a leadership dilemma due to the responsibility not naturally aligning with other responsibilities within the role. As mentioned previously, HoDs are expected to build professional, trusting relationships with their colleagues. HoDs use such relationships to work with and through those colleagues to achieve the goals of the wider organisation. In parallel to this, they are also required to manage and appraise those same colleagues' teaching performances. When faced with addressing teacher performance issues, heightened anxiety for both parties may be experienced (Cardno, 2020; Fleming, 2014).

HoDs can find teacher performance issues particularly challenging to confront. This is because addressing the issue can create conflict or a lack of trust within the relationship (Bassett, 2016; Bennett et al., 2007; Wise, 2001). Yet, avoiding the issue will allow poor performance to continue and will negatively impact on student outcomes and organisational growth (Cardno, 2020). When faced with these possible outcomes, HoDs are often unwilling or hesitant to 'risk' their collegial relationship at the expense of the school (Cardno, 2007; Fleming, 2014; Leithwood, 2016). Herein lies the root of many 'teacher performance' leadership dilemmas.

The presence and management of leadership dilemmas for HoDs is linked with a range of influences on the HoD: tension, avoidance, anxiety, reluctance towards and avoidance of responsibilities, feeling unsupported and/or inadequately prepared to manage the situation (Cardno, 2007, 2020). Whilst the *occurrence* of leadership dilemmas around teacher performance is somewhat likely in an HoD role, the way in which they are *addressed* has many potential consequences for both individuals and the wider school. This presents the question: How are HoDs navigating and understanding leadership dilemmas?

Micropolitics and Power. Within leadership dilemmas sits an underbelly of power. It is expected that that HoD and departmental colleagues establish meaningful relationships and work collaboratively alongside each other to achieve the organisational goals. Yet, the actions from a leader needed for teacher performance management can seemingly undermine the collegial relationship (Bassett, 2016; Bennett et al., 2007; Forrester, 2011). It can also present an asymmetrical power balance between the HoD and the teacher(s). Mittendorff et al. (2006) raised questions as to how the power emerging from hierarchical positions affects shared meanings between people and how they operate as co-equal within a school. Busher et al. (2007) express the need for deeper investigations into the dynamics of such power relationships. Whilst this is not an area of focus for this review, it is noted as a potential underlying factor.

Literature Review Strengths and Limitations

This review incorporated qualitative and quantitative research studies, literature reviews, meta-analyses, government reports and other literature using a structured search strategy. This approach enabled a more complete overview of the literature in the chosen areas. This overview then allowed for better-informed generalisations to be made. The findings of studies which were deemed more relevant to this research (New Zealand based research, government publications, meta-analyses) were given greater consideration and weighting. Limitations and intrinsic motivations for the publication of these studies were also recognised.

This review has not explored cultural aspects of the HoD role or of leadership dilemmas. It has been previously suggested the western approaches to dilemmas may not be appropriate in different cultural settings (Cardno, 2001; Dempster & Berry, 2003). The bicultural status and multi-cultural societal make-up of New Zealand make this is an area

needing significant consideration. Due to the confines of this study, the exploration of ethnic-cultural diversities is a significant limitation of this review.

Ambiguity of *middle leadership* as a term meant the literature on middle leader roles was not always exclusively focused on HoDs. At times *middle leaders* was used as a sweeping term in literature. This may have influenced the conclusions that were drawn. Some studies included middle leaders as part of a larger cohort of leaders, or had their responses included with classroom teachers without additional responsibilities. Whilst the discussion of these studies usually separated out those classified as middle leaders, the raw results and data findings were not available for cross-referencing.

The literature selected was restricted to being written in English, therefore research from non-English based countries was unable to be included. Literature was also sourced from a range of countries with differing school systems. This may have led to overgeneralisation in applicability to New Zealand HoDs in state secondary schools. However, it was noted that similar themes were shared across literature, regardless of the country of origin.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods

This chapter provides an overview of the methodologies from which the research design has emerged. Although there is a subsection on ethical considerations and limitations at the end of the chapter, specific considerations have been woven throughout.

Research Ontology and Epistemology

A researcher's ontological and epistemological beliefs inevitably affect the methodologies used (Morrison, 2012); epistemological and methodological considerations are required at every stage of the research process (Briggs et al., 2012). The methodological perspective used during the development and justification of the overarching design of a body of research can be defined via the application of research paradigms. A research paradigm provides a philosophical framework from which to base research decisions. Open examination of underlying beliefs and their application to decision-making are needed. These ultimately offer support towards the validity of the research claims. Paradigms are a set of shared beliefs and agreements about how problems should be understood and approached (Kuhn, 1996). They each characterise understandings of knowledge, truth, and the nature of reality with their ontology, epistemology, and methodological views (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Scotland, 2012).

There are several existing and emerging paradigms. However, many stem from the foundational positivist and interpretivist paradigms. The positivist paradigm employs a realist view based around the ontology that there is a single reality which is both objective and objectifiable, existing regardless of any consciousness or knowledge of it (Scotland, 2012). This leads to the epistemology that reality can be observed, measured, and explained. Positivist methodologies lend themselves to quantitative tools which allow for finite observation and analysis to establish knowledge (Crotty, 1998). Conversely, the interpretivist paradigm employs a relativist view based around the ontology that there is no single reality, but multiple realities created by the people within them. Thus, reality must be subjective and differs between people (Scotland, 2012). This leads to an epistemology that reality requires interpretation. The interpretation unearths the meanings behind the reality being explored (Crotty, 1998). It follows that the interpretivist paradigm often suits a qualitative approach, to allow for understanding concepts and their significance.

Both positivist and interpretivist approaches could be justified for meeting the aim of this research. Distinct associations between HoD mental well-being and role responsibilities could be measured through a single, objective lens. This would allow the findings to be applied to a wider population. Similarly, the influences that lie between the same two variables could be explored using an interpretivist lens. The experiences and realities of those in the HoD role would be unique to the individual(s) in question. These dual needs led to a pragmatic response to the research design.

Pragmatism is centred upon human experiences being a continuous interaction of beliefs and action (Morgan, 2014). It focuses on the outcomes and meanings (Denzin, 2012) of the experiences. Knowledge is based upon those experiences, sidestepping traditional ontology and epistemology debates (Creswell, 2014). Leadership dilemmas and HoD mental well-being exist as experiences in a social setting, the consequences dependent on the actions. These aspects of the research topic led to two foundational questions for establishing the overall research design:

What is the nature of the questions I am wanting to answer?

What data can I access to best answer the questions?

Whilst a pragmatic view supports mixed methods research, it does not determine it (Morgan, 2014). However, a convergence of positivist and interpretivist methods was believed to be able to provide a "fuller understanding" (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2008, p. 115) of the interplay of leadership dilemmas and mental well-being. This research uses a parallel, convergent mixed methods model. The development of the model is detailed below.

Overall Research Design

Mixed Methods

There are several approaches to mixed methods design, with the foundations being a parallel or sequential approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). A parallel approach means both aspects of the mixed methods (here, the online survey and semi-structured interviews) are done concurrently. That is, one does not influence or contribute to the outcomes of the other. A sequential approach is where one method is followed by another. Order is important, as the latter method is influenced or determined by information collected from the first method.

In this research, gathering the sample was sequential in design, however the analytical dimension was in parallel. That is, the online survey was distributed, and upon completion

respondents were asked if they would like to be interviewed. This was to minimise researcher burden for contacting a second set of potential participants from the same population. No identifying factors linked the potential interviewees to their responses in the survey. The development and analyses of the survey and semi-structured interviews were completed in parallel. Both methods and analyses existed as independent entities throughout the process. The parallel analyses were then triangulated.

A parallel analytical design was determined as the most appropriate approach for three main reasons. Firstly, a sequential analytic design would give a predetermined path for exploration. The selection of interviewees would have been based on pre-specified response requirements. This would somewhat undermine the exploratory nature of the research topic. Secondly, a sequential design would have required personal assumptions and justifications for what survey responses would be most suitable for follow-up interviews. As I am an HoD, the influence of my own motivations and opinions around the topic could not be authentically removed to the degree it would be an unbiased selection of potential interviewee participants. Finally, a parallel approach in analysis allowed for convergent methodological triangulation. This allowed for a fuller picture of the topic being explored.

The parallel, convergent mixed methods model used to explore the research questions was as follows:

- An online survey was administered to gain knowledge of any influences that lay between HoD role responsibilities related to teacher performance and HoD mental well-being;
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of how and why those influences existed in the HoD role;
- Methodological triangulation was used to converge the findings to best answer the research questions.

Online Surveying and Semi-Structured Interviews

This study's research questions refer to the *degree* to which HoD role responsibilities involving teacher performance and HoD mental well-being influence one another. Part of investigating this degree required determining associations between the two components. Quantitative data analysis offers the ability to establish generalised directional associations. For gathering data, online surveying provides a means for collecting wide-spread and large

numbers of respondents. It also lends itself to probability sampling, where population generalisations can be made (Muijs, 2012). Additionally, online surveying is efficient and requires only minimal resources to reach respondents (Nardi, 2018). Therefore, an online survey was chosen to collect the data needed to determine any associations.

It must be acknowledged that my personal familiarity with quantitative methods pushed somewhat positivist ideals into the research design. However, the social and complex nature of this research topic does not fit with a purely positivist design. It was thus recognised that the online survey methodology was needed to provide 'surface-level' understanding for the research questions, and semi-structured interviews were required to explore the complexity of any interactivities.

The word *degree* was also used to allow for further qualitative analysis. The intention was to explore the perceptions of why and how role responsibilities involving teacher performance influenced HoD mental well-being, and vice versa. The second research sub-question also required insight into how leadership dilemmas were being experienced and understood by HoDs. To explore such influences and experiences, semi-structured interviews were selected as the most appropriate tool for gathering data. Semi-structured interviews provided "an opportunity for creating and capturing insights of a depth and level of focus rarely achieved through surveys" (Forsey, 2012, p. 364). A semi-structured design allows for:

- responsive questioning and probing (Cohen et al., 2018)
- clarification of ideas (Bush, 2012; Cohen et al., 2018)
- the capture of unexpected information (Somekh & Lewin, 2005)
- the use of gestures such as nodding and smiling to encourage the participant in their responses (Walliman, 2006)

Primary questions can be used across all interviews. This ensures foundational consistency in topics covered and appropriately direct discussion (Bryman, 2012; Coleman, 2012). The partial structure then allows for a more 'natural' conversation (Byrne, 2017) and active responsiveness to participant needs (O'Toole & Beckett, 2013)**.** This design helps to manage and mitigate any potential distress which may occur. Managing potential distress was needed when exploring participant mental well-being and experiences.

Interviews often make use of stimuli to help elicit participant responses relevant to the research questions (Cohen et al., 2018). In this instance narratives were used, where participants were asked to share a recent experience/dilemma involving a teacher

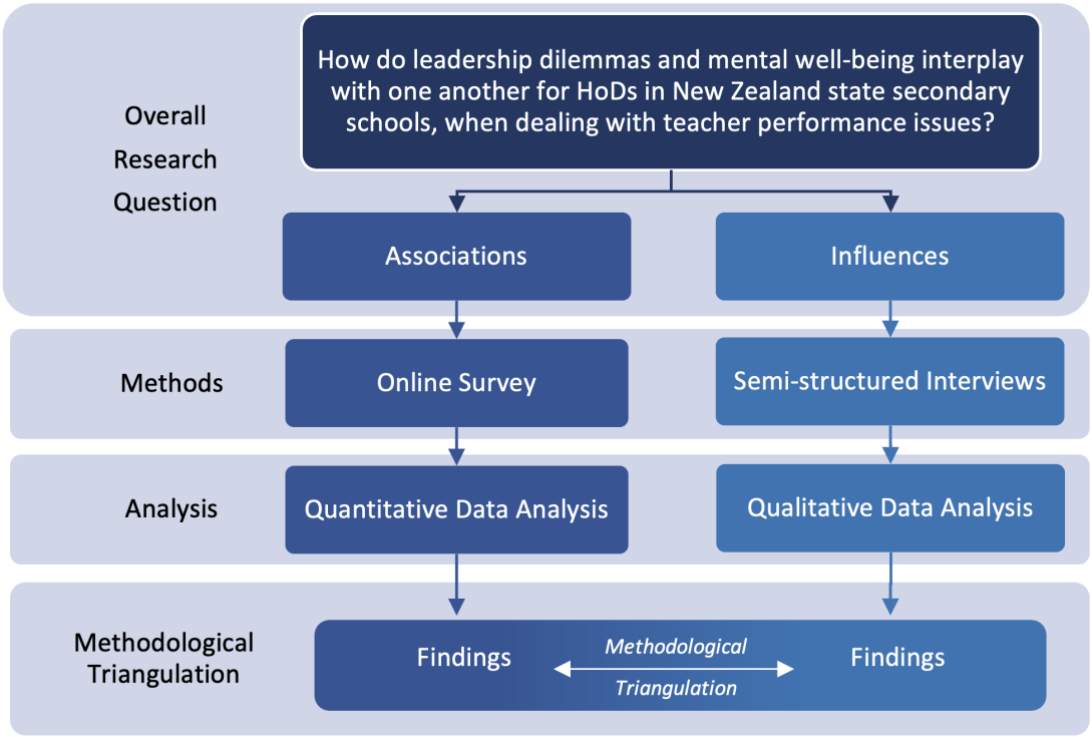
performance issue. The use of narratives is associated with "an interest in people's lived experiences and an appreciation of the temporal nature of that experience" (Elliott, 2005, p. 6). This interest aligns with the pragmatic approach for the research design. Narrative analysis itself was not intended for this study. However, the use of narratives helps guide an interview and elicit further information that may otherwise not be shared. Sharing experiences also helps to empower participants (Somekh & Lewin, 2005) and can assist them in recognising their contribution and value in the construction of dominant themes within the research (Elliott, 2012). This empowerment can aid the level of openness and trust between the interviewer and interviewee, allowing for greater depth of response.

These collective aspects meant semi-structured interviews were the most appropriate tool for understanding the complexities within the research questions. They also offered simple execution during on-going Covid-19 restrictions, and the ability to keep participant responses fully confidential.

Methodological Triangulation

As mentioned previously, this research used a parallel, convergent mixed methods model (Figure 3). Methodological triangulation occurs when findings from both methods are converged, to seek a more complete picture of the phenomenon being investigated.

Figure 3
Summary of Mixed Methods Model



Denzin (2012) notes the use of mixed methods and methodological triangulation demonstrates "an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. Objective reality can never be captured. We only know a thing through its representations" (p. 82). The quantitative data from online surveying was sought to investigate whether engagement in role responsibilities (and leadership dilemmas) related to teacher performance influenced HoD mental well-being, and vice versa. Any associations may allow tentative inferences to be drawn about the population of HoDs in New Zealand state secondary schools. However, the nature of such analyses and conclusions present 'closed' associations (Cohen et al., 2018). There is limited scope for exploring the explanations behind any such relationships. Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews was sought to uncover the complexities of the influences and associations at play. The intention was to generate plausible explanations for how and why HoD mental well-being and leadership dilemmas may influence one another.

The mutual corroboration of the approaches [via methodological triangulation] offered a greater depth of understanding and insight that neither qualitative nor quantitative methods alone could offer (Bryman, 2006; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Online Survey Design

Participants

The target population for this study were HoDs currently working in state or state-integrated secondary schools in New Zealand. Secondary refers to years 9 – 13, therefore HoDs within schools categorised under 'Secondary (year 9 – 15)' and 'Composite (year 1 – 15)' were included as part of the population. For composite schools, only those that worked within the year 9 – 13 cohort were selected. No further exclusion criteria were applied. To achieve a representative sample, random sampling was applied to the population, described further below.

Data Collection

Sampling Method. A randomised, systematic, stratified sample of schools was taken from the most recent MoE database of New Zealand state and state-integrated schools (see MoE, 2020). Schools were restricted to those at a secondary level, as described above.

Stratification involves sampling proportionally from sub-groups (strata) within the population. This stratification prevents any possible over or under-representation (Cohen et

al., 2018) of each sub-group. The defined strata for this research were school decile. School decile was a standardised measure in New Zealand[1] of the socioeconomic make-up of the schools' students, with lower deciles indicating high numbers of students from low socio-economic communities (MoE, 2021c). Schools in lower socio-economic communities may face additional barriers to student learning (MoE, 2021c). As a result, differences may exist regarding the demands upon HoDs. Therefore, adequate representation of the different socioeconomic communities in which HoDs are placed was desired.

The MoE database was ordered into school decile (the strata) then systematically sampled. Here, a random starting point in the database was generated and every n^{th} data point was selected from the start point. This looped around the dataset until the desired number of samples were selected.

The formula used was $n = \frac{Size\ of\ population}{number\ of\ samples\ required}$

Gathering the Sample. The database had a population size of 445 schools, of which 35 schools were required. Hence, $n = \frac{445}{35} = 12.71\ (2dp)$, every 13^{th} data point was selected until 35 school samples were gathered.

This sample size (35 schools, approximately 3 schools per decile, 7.8% of the population) was sought to meet the central limit theorem for normality in statistical analyses and testing. Within each school, there was an assumption of an average of 8 HoDs covering the core curriculum areas put forward by the MoE (2021b). Whilst this could have generated up to 280 or more potential participants, consideration was given to the response rate for online surveys. These were reported to be consistently below 50% (Briggs et al., 2012), and more recently reported as closer to 20% (Dillman et al., 2017).

For the schools selected, HoD contact details were sought publicly via the school website. In the instances of no details available, the school administration was invited to pass on the relevant information.

Further Sampling Information. Of the 35 selected schools, four were excluded and a new random selection within those strata were taken as replacements:

[1] Deciles are calculated based of census data, using the students' household measures such as income, parents on a benefit, occupation, education status, and household crowding. Post completion of this study, the MoE will be formally removing the school decile system and replacing it with an 'equity index' (MoE, 2022). This change does not impact the validity of the data collected or the subsequent findings.

- Two had no website nor information for specific contact;
- One was a full Māori immersion school; the website was unable to be navigated due to language constraints. Additionally, I personally deemed it culturally inappropriate to be sending an English-based survey;
- One had personal links to myself.

From the final sample of schools:

- 31 had HoD email addressed provided on the school website
- Four did not have sufficient information to accurately determine those in HoD roles. For these schools, an invitation to share further contact information was sent to the administration; one of four responded.

The HoDs from each randomly selected school were emailed with the invitation for participation in the survey and were provided with the relevant information. In total, 202 HoDs were contacted. Of these, 87 participated in the survey (43.1%) and 59 complete responses were recorded (29.2%). Whilst many incomplete responses were only missing the final question or submission button, only complete responses could be accepted as having given full consent for the survey and were included in analysis, as per the information page provided (see Appendix C (ii)).

Online Survey Questions and Measures

Qualtrics survey software (2021) was used to administer the survey. Full details of the survey are available in Appendix C (ii). The survey was designed with four main components:

1. Demographic and professional characteristics
2. The Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) (Warwick Medical School, 2006)
3. Influences between HoD role responsibilities and HoD mental well-being
4. Influences between HoD role responsibilities and HoD mental well-being in the context of managing a leadership dilemma.

Mental Well-Being Measure. The WEMWBS is a 14-item well-being scale that was developed in the United Kingdom for broadly measuring mental well-being in a general population (Warwick Medical School, 2006). This measure has been extensively tested for

reliability and validity in a range of populations and countries, from which conclusions have been drawn that it is both a precise and valid instrument to measure mental well-being (e.g., Smith et al., 2017; Stewart-Brown et al., 2011; Warwick Medical School, 2021a). The shortened (S)WEMWBS 7-item scale was considered: testing showing some item redundancy within the original 14-item scale and it being able to produce similarly robust measurements whilst offering greater brevity for completion (Shah et al., 2018). However, the 14-item scale offered both hedonic (subjective well-being) and eudemonic (psychological functioning) dimensions whereas the SWEMWBS offered predominantly hedonic aspects (Smith et al., 2017). As the concept of mental well-being is increasingly regarded as encompassing both dimensions (Disabato et al., 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2001), the complete WEMWBS was determined as the more appropriate of the two for this research.

Role Responsibility Measure. HoD role responsibilities were drawn from the MoE (2012) publication on middle-leaders. These responsibilities for HoDs were supported by other middle-leadership literature (see Table 1). This work and the presented responsibilities were selected for this research due to the position and influence of the MoE within New Zealand. All New Zealand state and state-integrated schools are required to follow the MoE guidelines, standard requirements and adhere to the Education and Training Act 2020 (MoE, 2021a). The publication appeared to be the only clearly identifiable guiding document for middle-leadership roles in New Zealand schools.

Whilst it is explicit within the MoE (2012) publication that the identified role responsibilities were the general expectations for middle-leader roles, the responsibilities were not focused exclusively on HoD roles. Additionally, it was unclear how the responsibilities were determined. A range of literature based on New Zealand research was referenced within the wider document. However, these were not specific to the role responsibilities and no methodological approach nor justification was identified. This created potential issues regarding the robustness and reliability of such a list; it may not accurately represent the HoD responsibilities-in-practice. Despite these limitations, in acknowledging the role of the MoE within New Zealand schools, these role responsibilities were taken to be the most appropriate, relevant, and complete set for the purposes of this research.

A compilation of role-responsibilities based on what had emerged within the literature review was considered. Whilst there was significant cross-over between those emerging responsibilities and the MoE role responsibilities, it was determined this approach was not the

most appropriate for the purposes of the research. Firstly, the compilation and definition construction of each of the role responsibilities would have been subjective in nature. Although a systematic review could have reduced this bias, no reliability or validity testing would have occurred to assess the appropriateness of the determined responsibilities. Secondly, the literature reviewed spanned a range of countries and types of research. It could not be assumed that all research findings would be relevant to the specific population of New Zealand HoDs in state secondary schools. Finally, the literature reviewed was based on a specific search and inclusion criterion, therefore certain role responsibilities may have been missed or would not be prominent. For these reasons, it was determined that constructing a list from the literature review may have reduced the validity and robustness of the results for the quantitative aspects of this research.

Section 1: Demographic Characteristics

Section 1 was designed to gain information on participant demographic characteristics. Questions 1 – 3 asked about gender, school size, and years' experience in secondary education, via multi-choice questions.

The time brackets for the HoDs years' experience in Question 3 (Figure 4) were considered in relation to the recent Covid-19 pandemic.

Figure 4

Question 3: Example of Time Brackets

3. How many years' experience do you have as an HoD?

- ○ Less than 2 years
- ○ 2 – 5 years
- ○ 6 – 10 years
- ○ 11 – 15 years
- ○ 16 – 20 years
- ○ Over 20 years

It is recognised in recent research (See Education Review Office, 2021; Flack et al., 2020) that Covid-19 had a significant impact on the education sector. Research highlighted issues of exhaustion and heightened anxiety within the teaching profession. The category of 'less than 2 years' experience' was included to allow for additional testing for differences between sub-groups. Specifically, it allowed separation for those HoDs whose experience had

been during the Covid-19 pandemic, which involved significant periods of lockdowns and other response measures for schools in New Zealand.

Question 4 sought information on subject areas of the participants' department(s). It was recognised that subject department roles may be either amalgamated or split, dependent on factors such as resourcing and school size. Therefore, it was important to allow for multiple selections. An 'other' category was also included to ensure every participant was represented in their subject area.

Section 2: The Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale

The WEMWBS was obtained for use via a non-commercial licence for research purposes (Appendix C (i)). Statements and response categories were presented identical to the original scale. An adaption to the original descriptor was made to match the survey intentions and position the participants appropriately in the research:

> Original: *Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last two weeks.*
>
> Adaption: *Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please select the category that best describes your experience of each over the last two weeks, in relation to your work environment as an HoD.*

The addition of "*in relation to your work environment as an HoD"* was required to place the participants within the setting for the overarching concept: HoD mental well-being. As the research is focused on the well-being of HoDs in relation to their professional capacity, this addition was deemed necessary.

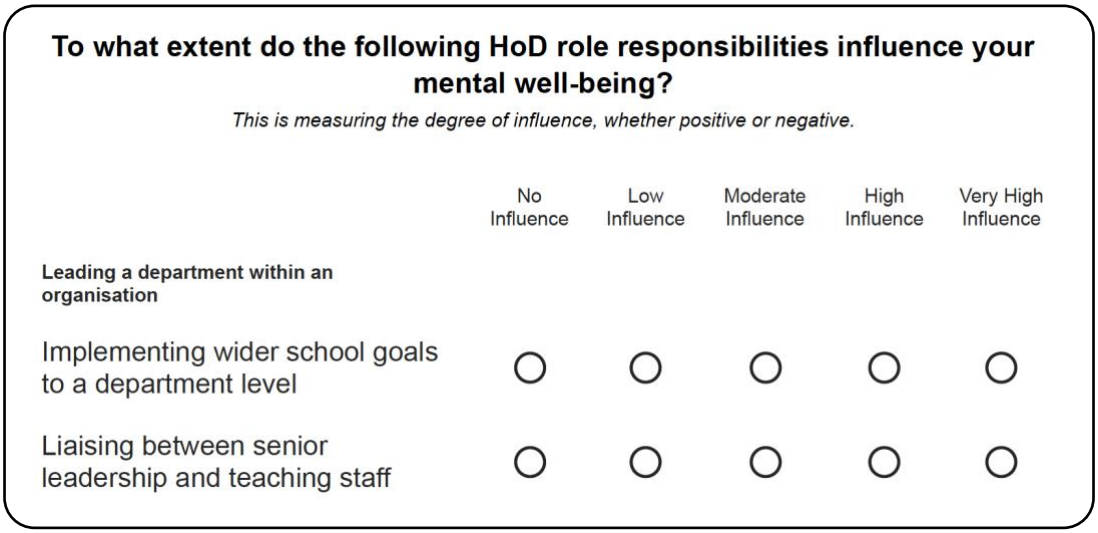
It was considered that a broader time frame was needed rather than the two-week period. This was due to a school year having various fluctuating demands, and the WEMWBS being used as a single point in time rather than longitudinal. However, the validation studies for the WEMWBS are all based on the two-week period (Warwick Medical School, 2015). Adjusting this would have compromised the validity of the tool as a measure of well-being within this research. The 14 statements for the WEMWBS can be found in the complete survey in Appendix C (ii).

Section 3: Influences Between HoD Role Responsibilities and Mental Well-Being

Questions 6 and 7 related to the influences between HoD role responsibilities and HoD mental well-being. Question 6 addressed the level of influence of role responsibilities on HoD mental well-being. Question 7 reversed this, addressing the influence of HoD mental well-being on the ability to meaningfully engage in HoD role responsibilities. These questions were designed to identify role responsibilities that were most influential on, or most influenced by, HoD mental well-being. The role responsibilities listed were separated into three sub-groups to aid ease of response. Figure 5 provides an extract of question 6 to provide further clarity for the design justifications below.

Figure 5

Extract of Design for Questions 6 and 7



The following considerations were made in the design of the categorical response:

- Number of response categories
- Use of direction (positive/negative influence)
- Response bias

These considerations are presented below.

Number of Response Categories. Five Likert-type scale descriptors were chosen for the response categories. Likert scales typically make use of a 5-point rating scale (Nardi, 2018), although it is common for scales to lie between 5 and 11 points (Toepoel, 2017). The descriptors for levels of influence were a set of 'commonly used' Likert descriptor choices built

within the Qualtrics software. These were selected to provide a level of familiarity to the participant. A 7-point scale was considered due to a 5-point scale offering less differentiation and reducing the level of precision in the responses (Toepoel, 2017). However, it was decided that a 5-point scale was appropriate for the depth of the questions being asked. It also provided consistency with the number of response categories in the WEMWBS.

Use of Direction. When considering the influence of a specific role responsibility on an HoDs mental well-being, there is both the degree of influence and whether that influence is positively or negatively geared. For questions 6 and 7, it was possible that the influence of any given role responsibility on mental well-being (and vice-versa) could be both positive and negative, depending on the context. It was therefore determined to measure the *level* of influence, rather than the *type* of influence.

Questions 9 and 10 developed this concept further by determining the directional influence when accounting for leadership dilemmas within each role responsibility. This was because a leadership dilemma provided a contextual placement for the participant.

Response Biases. Response bias refers to both the intentional and unintentional tendencies for participants to provide answers that are not truly representative of their views, opinions or feelings (Nardi, 2018). Relevant potential response biases were considered within the categorical response design, due to their potential influence on the validity of the data collected.

Central tendency bias: where respondents have tendencies to choose ratings in the middle of the rating scale and avoid the extreme ends (Nardi, 2018). This is potentially an issue when using a 5-point scale as such a tendency effectively restricts the likely response options to 3 scale points. This then limits the precision of the results and subsequent conclusions that can be made.

Extreme response bias: the opposite of central tendency bias, where respondents choose to exaggerate their views in areas they feel strongly about, to emphasise their point. For example, a participant may indicate that *all* role responsibilities are highly influential on their mental well-being due to feeling overwhelmed with work tasks on the day they respond.

To counter both potential biases, special consideration was given to the intensity descriptors (no, low, moderate, high, very high influence) to reduce interpretations of extremity. Due to the number of recruited participants, and because the responses were

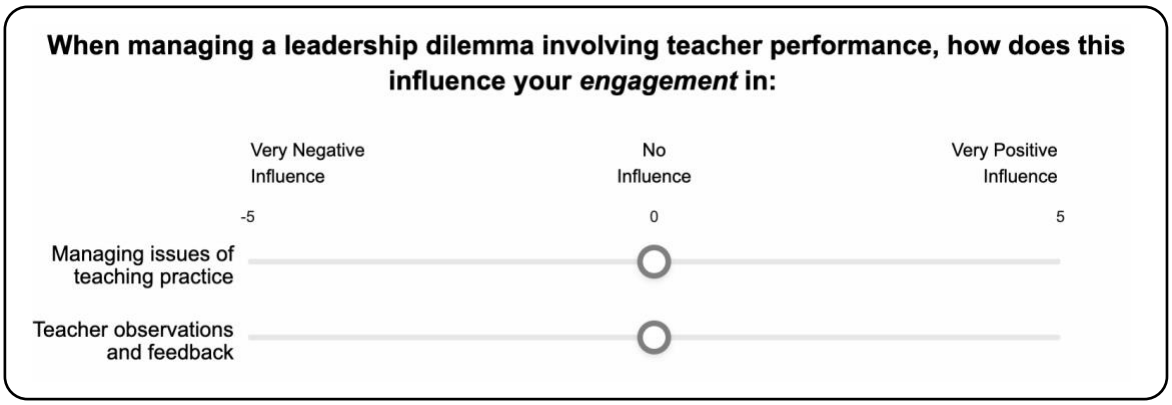
analysed collectively, individual participants that tended towards any of these biases were not expected to have a significant effect on the overall results and validity of findings.

Section 4: Influences Involving Leadership Dilemmas

Leadership Dilemma Influences. Questions 8 and 9 (see Figure 6 for extract) related to the influences of leadership dilemmas on engaging in role responsibilities and on HoD mental well-being. The context was specified as managing a leadership dilemma involving teacher performance. The role responsibilities listed were those used previously, however only responsibilities which directly related to teacher performance were included. These were determined by the responsibility being centred on teachers.

Figure 6

Extract of Question 8



The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 did not indicate leadership dilemmas themselves as having a positive influence on leaders' mental well-being. However, there was an implied possibility if successfully applying a dilemma resolution model (see Cardno, 2020). As there was a possibility of a positive influence, this was included in the scale to ensure the data collected would accurately represent the perceptions of the participants.

The same scale points in questions 6 and 7 were applied to questions 8 and 9 to ensure consistency for the respondent and for analysis. However, questions 8 and 9 required a directional (positive or negative) response. To allow for 5-points on each side and a neutral middle category this took the number of categorical responses to 11. 11 descriptors may have felt overwhelming to the respondent. Additionally, it would cause user-friendly design issues regarding the layout and fit of the questions on the screen. Therefore, a sliding scale was used. This helped to minimise visual design complexity and provided a different type of response

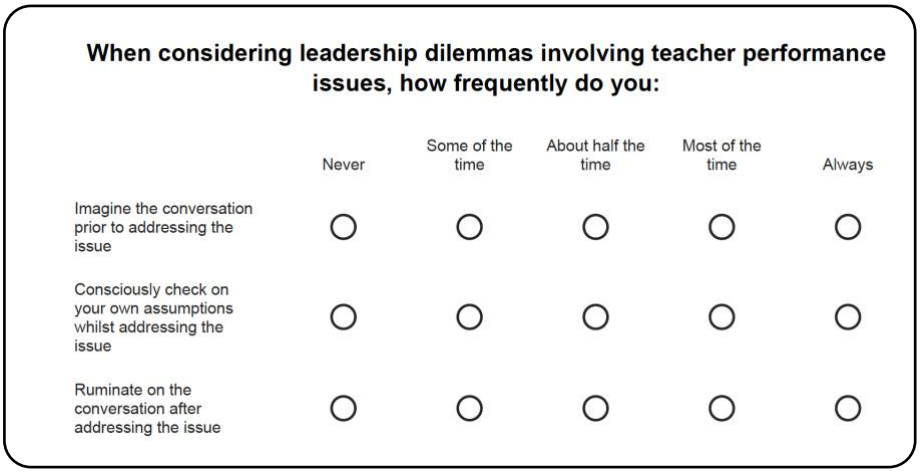
format, both being factors said to improve survey completion rates (Dillman et al., 2014). However, the increased ambiguity in response 'meaning' requires consideration when interpreting findings; one participants' interpretation of a scale point may not be the same as another.

The introduction of a bi-directional sliding scale created the potential for a neutral response bias. This occurs when a middle or neutral category is provided. Literature debates whether to include a midpoint (see Cohen et al., 2018; Nardi, 2018). In doing so, this may give the respondents the option to 'sit on the fence' or choose this option due to indifference or lack of understanding. Not including a central category eliminates this issue as it forces the respondents to 'choose a side'. However, this may misrepresent their views if they are genuinely neutral (Muijs, 2012). This would then result in unreliable findings from the analyses. As it is possible for 'no influence' to occur, it was included as a central category.

Leadership Dilemmas: Theory-in-Use. Question 10 (Figure 7) sought to provide basic indications of participants' internal responses to leadership dilemmas.

Figure 7

Question 10: Theory-in-Use



The questions presented behaviours typical of Model I (the first and third behaviours) and Model II (second behaviour). This question was added after the initial survey was designed, following the literature review. Whilst theory-in-use behaviours were not a specific focus of the study, this information gave a greater context for the overall positioning of the participants as HoDs.

Finally, question 11 asked respondents to identify any dilemma management models they had recently employed. These dilemma management models were a wider group of

models which were linked to the example models of dialogue (Table 3). This information allowed for grouping of HoDs dependent on dilemma management approach.

Online Survey Data Analysis

IBM SPSS Statistics version 28.0.1 software was used for all data analyses.

Analysis of Section 1: Demographic Variables (Q1 – 4)

Descriptive statistics, including medians, means, standard deviations, and percentages were used to understand the demographic variables and distributions of the participant characteristics.

Analysis of Section 2: WEMWBS (Q5)

WEMWBS scores [min 14, max 70] were grouped via a statistical approach, using the United Kingdom cut-points (Warwick Medical School, 2021b):

- Low mental well-being [14 – 42]
- Average mental well-being [43 – 59]
- High mental well-being [60 – 70]

It was recognised that this study's target population and the United Kingdom population are not directly associated with each other. However, the United Kingdom cut-point values were initially determined from a sample of the general population (n=7020) and have undergone numerous tests for reliability and validity against other well-being measures (Warwick Medical School, 2015, 2021b). Additionally, the scale was designed to measure general mental well-being. Calculating cut-points specific to the New Zealand HoD population may have unintentionally hidden differences in WEMWBS scores and their associations with other variables in the analyses.

Analysis of Sections 3 and 4: Influences (Q6 – 9)

Descriptive Statistics. Means, medians, and standard deviations were calculated for the level of influence of each item in the questions. Medians were included to gain a fuller understanding of the centrality of the responses, as they are not affected by extreme values or the size of variability in responses.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). ANOVA tests were conducted to determine any potential differences between mean scores for groupings by gender, subject, HoD experience, WEMWBS, and use of leadership models. Significance level was set at *probability* (*p)* < 0.05

for identifying differences between means[2]**.** That is, if the ANOVA test comes back with $p \leq 0.05$ when comparing means of two or more groups, this indicates there is a statistically significant difference between the groups' mean values.

It is recognised that when only two groups were being tested (gender, use of dilemma model) an independent samples t-test could have been used[3]. However, for ease of communication of results and understanding, ANOVA was used for all mean score comparisons. This does not affect the validity of the results.

When significant differences were presented within an ANOVA, Fisher's least square difference (LSD) post hoc test was then applied to identify which specific groups were significantly different.

Internal Consistency: Likert Scales. Internal consistency of the Likert scale used for all items within questions 6 – 7 was assessed through the calculation of Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient (Table 4). This value should be 0.7 or more to indicate sufficient reliability of the scale used (DeVellis, 2017).

Table 4

Cronbach's Alpha Scale

Cronbach's alpha (a)	Internal consistency
$a \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.8 \leq a < 0.9$	Good
$0.7 \leq a < 0.8$	Acceptable
$0.6 \leq a < 0.7$	Questionable
$0.5 \leq a < 0.6$	Poor
$a < 0.5$	Unacceptable

Principal Component Analysis (PCA). PCA was used to perform factor analyses on the items in questions 6 and 7. The aim of PCA is to reduce the number of items (variables) into a smaller number of factors (components) whilst also maintaining as much information as possible within those factors (Pallant, 2020). That is, it seeks to identify factors that are composites of the variables, whilst maximising the amount of variance in the data that can be explained by the reduced factors. The reduced factors can be thought of as 'themes' within

[2] A p-value is the probability of obtaining the observed results purely by random chance.

[3] A t-test can determine whether the means of exactly two groups are statistically different from one another. ANOVA can determine whether the means for three or more groups are statistically different from one another. They share the same foundational statistical assumption of normality in the data.

the responses (Humble, 2020). Each factor contains variables which show to have similar associations with the variable being measured.

PCA Suitability Criteria. The following criteria were used to determine suitability of PCA:

1. The Kaiser-Meyer Olkin [KMO] measure of sampling adequacy was used to assess whether adequate correlation(s) existed between the individual items within each of the questions (6 and 7). The measure also provides an indication of whether the sample is adequate for performing factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2013). A KMO statistic greater than 0.5 indicated sufficient sampling adequacy for analysis (Kaiser & Rice, 1974)
2. Bartlett's test for sphericity, $p \leq 0.05$ (Pallant, 2020)
3. Correlation matrix: correlations should mostly be ≥ 0.3 (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2013)
4. Determinant in correlation matrix > 0.00001 (Field, 2018)

Once suitability of PCA was determined by satisfying the above criteria, the data within each question were subjected to a secondary factor analysis. The following approaches were used:

1. The number of factors of interest was determined based upon Kaiser's criterion of accepting factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 (Pallant, 2020).
2. An oblique (oblimin) rotation was applied to assess an appropriate rotation to find the best fit for the loading factors. If component correlations were mostly 0.32 or greater, this indicated there was enough overlap of variance in the factors to warrant an oblique rotation. If the correlations were mostly less than 0.32, this determined an oblique rotation was unnecessary and a orthogonal rotation could be applied (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2013). In the case of an orthogonal rotation, a varimax rotation was used.
3. Suppression of small coefficients below 0.4 was set for factor loadings (Stevens, 2009).

Percentages Distributions. Percentage tables of the responses to questions 8 and 9 were calculated. This allowed for greater understanding of the distribution of responses (both negative and positive), as mean values would not be meaningful in this instance. Percentage tables for responses to question 10 were also calculated, as this was a categorical variable rather than a Likert scale item.

Semi-Structured Interviews Design

Participants

A sample of three participants were selected from those who submitted their interest after completing the online survey. The intended research design initially planned for four or five participants for interviewing, which were adequate for the study's needs. However, data was collected during a major time of national and worldwide disruption due to Covid-19. The realised research design meant the number of participants was reduced to three. This was the only controllable factor amid many restraints (Covid-19 restrictions, timing of data collection, bounds of the thesis). Participants were considered for interviewing if they met the following criteria:

1. They met the inclusion criteria outlined in the section 'Online Survey Design: *Participants'*
2. They volunteered to participate in an interview by clicking a link at the end of the survey.

The link at the end of the survey took the participants to a separate, secondary survey, which ensured the participant could not be traced back to their responses. This action enabled protection of the anonymity of participant responses and elimination of potential 'prior knowledge' bias from myself.

From the list of potential interview participants, a simple random sample was taken using a random number generator. The sample was redrawn if any of the following instances occurred:

- There was not a range of school deciles (e.g., all above decile 7)
- There was not a range of experience in the role (e.g., all had less than 5 years' experience)

Further consideration was given if the sample of three were:

- Entirely European/Pakeha
- Entirely one gender
- Entirely one subject (e.g., mathematics)

Once the selection was made, potential participants were sent an introductory email containing the study information and consent form (Appendix B (ii) and (iii) respectively). A follow-up phone call was offered to provide the potential participants the opportunity to ask any further questions before responding with their confirmation of participation.

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three HoD participants. The interviews took place between January and March 2022. Participants were sent a reminder email prior to the interview occurring. During the interviews, the interview question guide (Appendix B (i)) was used. Interviews were approximately 45 minutes in length and were audio recorded, using a pre-allocated participant pseudonym for identification within the recording. All recordings were transcribed by a professional transcription service.

Interview Questions

The primary interview questions were constructed from the research questions presented in Chapter 1. The nature of a semi-structured interview allows for the interviewer to adapt to the individual participants' responses and use their judgement for what secondary questions, if any, should follow (Cohen et al., 2018). The optional prompts and secondary questions were only used when deemed appropriate by myself (as the interviewer).

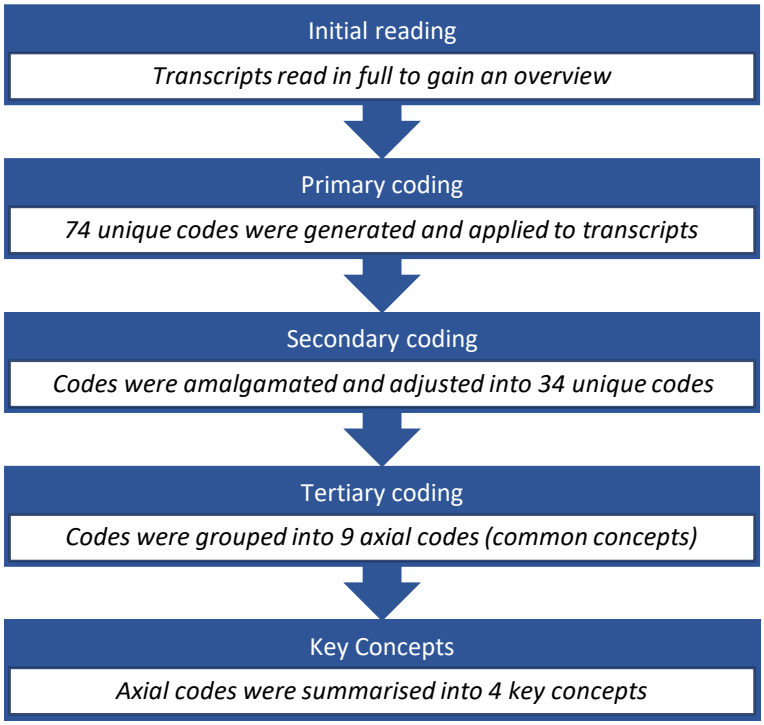
Semi-Structured Interviews Data Analysis

Interview transcripts were analysed using open and axial coding. Open coding uses a specific theme, idea, or label to encapsulate a statement meaning. Statements which share the same ideas are given the same code(s) (Cohen et al., 2018). Axial coding is a method of grouping together open codes whose meanings hold the same or a similar foundational thread (Cohen et al., 2018); it is the creation of axes which are central to a range of interconnected codes.

Data were coded in a five-stage process (Figure 8) described below.

Figure 8

Overview of Qualitative Analysis Data Coding Process



Initial Reading

Creswell and Creswell (2018) emphasise the importance of reading through the transcripts before commencing coding and analysis. This is to achieve an overall sense of the central ideas and meanings that are present. Transcripts were initially read through as a body of text to get an impression of the messages being conveyed by the participants.

Primary Coding – Open

Following the initial read-through, open coding was used during the first analysis of the interview transcripts. For determining the codes to be used, arguments range from going into analysis 'blind' and ignoring relevant theory and literature (Glaser & Strauss, 2004) to having all codes pre-decided, *ex ante*, based on literature and the research question(s) (Gläser & Laudel, 2013). The first is thought to allow true faithfulness to the data, whilst the second directs the researcher on what to look for based on previous knowledge.

Although codes were not predetermined in this study, different concepts had emerged from the literature review and were in mind upon analysis of the transcripts. It would be seemingly impossible to separate previous literary learnings from underlying thought processes during analysis. It followed that many of the initial codes had links to what had been presented in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. This aligns with what Cohen et al. (2018)

present, noting what is in mind is then modified or adjusted according to the data. Initially 74 unique open codes were used; an example of this coding can be found in Appendix B (iv). Sentences or words were highlighted, and key concepts noted beside them.

Findings from the quantitative analysis were not used in any way for determining the codes, as per the parallel design.

Secondary Coding – Open

Cohen et al. (2018) suggest data may be re-coded on subsequent readings to allow for greater discrimination and amalgamation. This helps to prevent unnecessary specificity. The initial 74 codes were reviewed and amalgamated upon a second reading. This process was repeated multiple times. Transcripts were re-read on separate occasions and codes adjusted, added, or removed, until I (the researcher) was satisfied all critical information was identified appropriately. This process was carried out first via a transfer of the primary (hard copy) coding to a digital (soft copy) version, with search functions then used for comparison and amalgamation of codes. The end of this stage of the analysis resulted in 34 unique codes.

Tertiary Coding – Axial

Following the open coding processes, codes were grouped into similar concepts via a two-stage process of axial coding.

Stage 1 saw the 34 unique codes rearranged manually into common concepts. On occasion, some codes fit within multiple concepts. In these instances, the transcript content was reviewed, and the codes allocated or adjusted dependent on the context. This process resulted in 9 axial codes being created. These are presented as sub-concepts found in the Chapter 5 results. The formation of these axes can be found Appendix B (v).

Stage 2 involved the 9 axial codes being reviewed and grouped into key concepts which would become the structure for the Chapter 5 analysis. Four key concepts and one minor concept were identified. However, after reviewing the aim and research questions, the minor concept was placed as a sub-group within one of the key concepts. These were:

Key Concept I: HoD Expectations

Key Concept II: The HoD as a Person

Key Concept III: Learning Processes

Key Concept IV: Hierarchy and Politics

The first key concept initially separated out HoD role responsibilities and the accompanying expectations and experiences. However, the role and the experiences as separate entities weren't doing justice to the data as they were spoken about together by the participants. Therefore, these concepts were combined in analysis.

The findings from the quantitative survey analysis and qualitative semi-structured interviews analysis are presented in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively, followed by the triangulation of the findings. These are then discussed in Chapter 6.

Ethics and Limitations

Ethical Considerations

This research and its accompanying methodologies were submitted to and approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee [AUTEC], prior to any contact with or involvement of potential participants.

Throughout the research design, care was taken to ensure participants were well-informed, actively gave their voluntary consent to participate, and their anonymity, privacy and confidentiality was protected. These processes were outlined thoroughly in the approved AUTEC ethics application for this research and have been illustrated throughout this chapter.

It was recognised that questions regarding the research topic could potentially have a negative impact upon participants. For the online survey, guidance towards appropriate sources for managing this were provided within the online survey information sheet. Additionally, questions were purposely designed to minimise any potential cause of distress.

For semi-structured interviews, I (as the interviewer) was able to actively respond to the participants' needs. The interviewer must use their best judgement to gauge any emotional distress (Forsey, 2012) and take action to support participant well-being. Support may have included providing verbal assurances, checking if they would like to continue, and stopping audio recording if they wished to share (as a cathartic response to distress (Forsey, 2012)) but not have it on record. No participants requested to stop recording.

One personal consideration was my own position as an HoD in a composite school in New Zealand. Several measures were put in place to ensure there were no conflicts of interest:

- My position as an HoD and name were provided within the introduction email for the survey link to ensure transparency for all participants. The school I worked at was not

given, however this information was available publicly should a participant have wished to know.

- When randomly selecting schools for the survey, any schools selected for which I had significant professional or personal links were excluded from the sample. Random sampling continued until the desired sample size was met.

A small subset of potential HoD participants were identified as also having significant senior leadership positions within their school (e.g., deputy principal, principal). This was mostly HoDs in schools with rolls less than 200 students. It was determined that these potential participants could still be invited to the survey. If needed, one of the demographic questions about participants role(s) included an 'other' category which allowed for grouping in analysis. This consideration was necessary due to potential power imbalances that may be felt between middle and senior leader positions, thus giving a different meaning to their responses.

Limitations

Validity of Data. Validity is used to assess the accuracy for which the research undertaken describes and reflects the phenomenon it is representing (Briggs et al., 2012). This section focuses on the validity of the data collection processes. That is, whether the design of the online survey and semi-structured interviews could produce data able to be used to answer the research questions.

For the online survey design, various measures were taken to ensure the data collected was accurate, reliable, and unbiased. Where possible, pre-existing measures that had already been statistically tested for validity were used, such as the WEMWBS. For semi-structured interviews, validity was established by ensuring that multiple perspectives were gathered on the same primary questions.

Due to both the breadth and size of the sample taken for the online survey, and through applying robust statistical testing and analysis, the initial findings could be *tentatively* applicable to the population of HoDs in New Zealand state secondary schools. By triangulating the findings from both the online survey and the semi-structured interviews, this is another form of showing validity within the data (Cohen et al., 2007). However, it is not suggested that the triangulated findings are fully applicable to the wider population, much like the survey findings. This is due to the lack of external validity testing of the study design.

Participation in the online survey and semi-structured interviews was self-selected, and data was self-reported. This brings the validity of the data responses into question. Participant response biases were discussed and mitigated during the online survey design process and findings were reported as HoD perceptions. However, consideration of a social desirability bias and researcher bias were also needed. These are outlined below.

Social Desirability Bias. A social desirability bias is when sensitive questions are answered in a way that conforms to societal norms and expectations to protect one's image. This bias is important to consider when asking participants to answer as professionals within their field; they may not want to seem "incompetent" or acknowledge areas that are *lacking* in their practice. Consequently, participants may choose answers which portray themselves positively. Coincidentally, this has roots within the concepts of espoused theories and theories-in-use, presented in Chapter 2.

Ensuring anonymity within a survey helps to combat these biases (Cohen et al., 2018). However, further consideration is needed when interpreting interview responses. Participants will only offer what they are prepared to reveal (Walford, 2007), and may be driven by hidden agendas (Somekh & Lewin, 2005). The semi-structured interviews gave potential for exaggeration or non-disclosure, and for participants to portray themselves in a "more favourable light" (DeMaio, 1984, p. 266). One way to mitigate this would have been to also interview the other parties involved in the dilemmas. However, this presents ethical issues due to the confidential nature of the interviews. Instead, critical researcher judgement and awareness (Coleman, 2012) was used, and caution exercised when placing emphasis on individual responses.

Personal Influence. Regardless of how 'removed' a researcher attempts to be, researcher bias and interpersonal influences will be present (Cohen et al., 2018; Coleman, 2012). Interpretation of responses, responsive questioning, and influences of my own experiences and beliefs needed purposeful consideration. Recording the interviews mitigated some of these factors. Recording allowed for re-checking of information and identification of any researcher bias that may have been present (Walliman, 2006). The written transcript also allowed for the participants to review their individual responses and amend or remove any content they wished. However, I was both the researcher and part of the 'population' being researched. Therefore, heightened awareness of my cognitive processing was required.

Chapter 4: Quantitative Data Results

Demographic Characteristics

The total sample size from the online survey was 59 participants. There were a further 28 participants who partially or fully completed the survey, however the submission button was not clicked. Consequently, their responses were not included in analysis, as per the requirements of participant consent in the survey information page. In the case of missing data in a submitted response, those participants were not included in the analysis calculations for that area.

Of all participants, 49% (n = 29) were male and 51% (n = 30) were female. Eighty five percent (n = 50) of participants had 11 or more years of experience in secondary education. Gender and experience characteristics are displayed in Table 5 and Table 6 below.

Table 5

Teaching Experience in Secondary Education

Secondary years' experience	n	%
2 – 5 years	1	1.7%
6 – 10 years	4	6.8%
11 – 15 years	15	25.4%
16+ years	35	59.3%
Unknown	4	6.8%
Total	59	100%

Table 6

Gender and Total HoD Experience

		Total HoD experience						
		Unknown	Less than 2 years	2 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	11 – 15 years	16+ years	Total (%)
Gender	Male	0	4	10	4	7	4	29 (49)
	Female	4	6	7	10	0	3	30 (51)
Total		4	10	17	14	7	7	59 (100)

School size distribution is displayed in Table 7 below. Most participants (75%, n=44) had a school size between 501 – 1500 students.

Table 7

School Size

Number of students	n	%
500 or less	5	8.5%
501 – 1000	23	39.0%
1001 – 1500	21	35.6%
1501 – 2000	6	10.2%
Over 2000	4	6.8%
Total	59	100%

When categorised by subject (for which the participant was the HoD), all subjects were represented. The largest subject represented was Physical Education and Heath (25%, n = 15), followed by English (17%, n = 10). When grouping by HoD subject during analysis, Visual and Performing Arts were amalgamated to allow for appropriate analysis.

Influence of HoD Role Responsibilities on Mental Well-Being

This section provides results for question 6.

Summary Statistics

Participants rated their perception of the level of influence each HoD role responsibility had on their mental well-being. The lowest possible rating was 1 (no influence on mental well-being) and the highest was 5 (very high influence on mental well-being). The summary statistics are summarised in Table 8 below.

HoD role responsibilities reported to have the highest level of influence on mental well-being were curriculum development ($\mu = 3.6$, med=4) and administration requirements ($\mu = 3.59$, med = 4). All HoD role responsibilities were reported to have a moderate or high level of influence. That is, no responsibilities were reported as having no or low levels of influence, for either mean or median values.

Table 8

Level of Influence of Role Responsibilities on HoD Mental Well-Being

HoD role responsibilities	Mean (μ)	Median (med)	Standard deviation (Std. dev.)
Curriculum development	3.60	4	0.836
Administration	3.59	4	1.009
Managing issues of teaching practice	3.36	3	0.852
Leading/facilitating professional development and learning	3.33	3	0.925
Implementing wider school goals to a department level	3.32	4	0.918
Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment	3.31	3	0.94
Liaising between senior leaders and teaching staff	3.28	3	0.988
Mentoring and/or coaching teachers	3.19	3	0.945
Appraisal of teachers	3.03	3	0.991
Teacher observations and feedback	3.03	3	0.858
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems	2.98	3	0.868
Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict	2.84	3	1.089

Note:
1 = no influence 2 = low influence 3 = moderate influence 4 = high influence 5 = very high influence

The above scale descriptors also apply to Tables 11, 12, 13, and 14.

Principal Component Analysis

PCA was carried out on the variables in question 6; the level of influence of HoD role responsibilities on mental well-being.

Internal consistency and suitability testing: Cronbach's alpha returned a value of 0.823, indicating good internal consistency and reliability of the scale in the question. Suitability criteria for factor analysis were met, with:

1. KMO = 0.749
2. Bartlett's test $p < 0.001$
3. Most correlation values ≥ 0.3
4. Correlation determinant = 0.016

The final model resulted in four factor loadings with an eigenvalue cut-off of 1, orthogonal varimax rotation with Kaiser normalisation, and suppression of small coefficients with absolute value less than 0.4 on factor loadings. The factor loadings are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Rotated Component Matrix: Role Responsibility Influence on HoD Mental Well-Being

HoD role responsibilities	Eigenvalues			
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Implementing wider school goals to a department level	.866			
Liaising between senior leaders and teaching staff	.811			
Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment	.594	.430		
Managing issues of teaching practice	.518	.439		
Teacher observations and feedback		.834		
Appraisal of teachers		.801		
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems			.813	
Mentoring and/or coaching teachers			.686	
Curriculum development			.660	.456
Leading/facilitating professional development and learning			.543	
Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict				-.714
Administration				.711

This created the following four factors for grouping HoD role responsibilities level of influence on mental well-being (Table 10):

Table 10

Role Responsibility Groupings for Influence on HoD Mental Well-Being

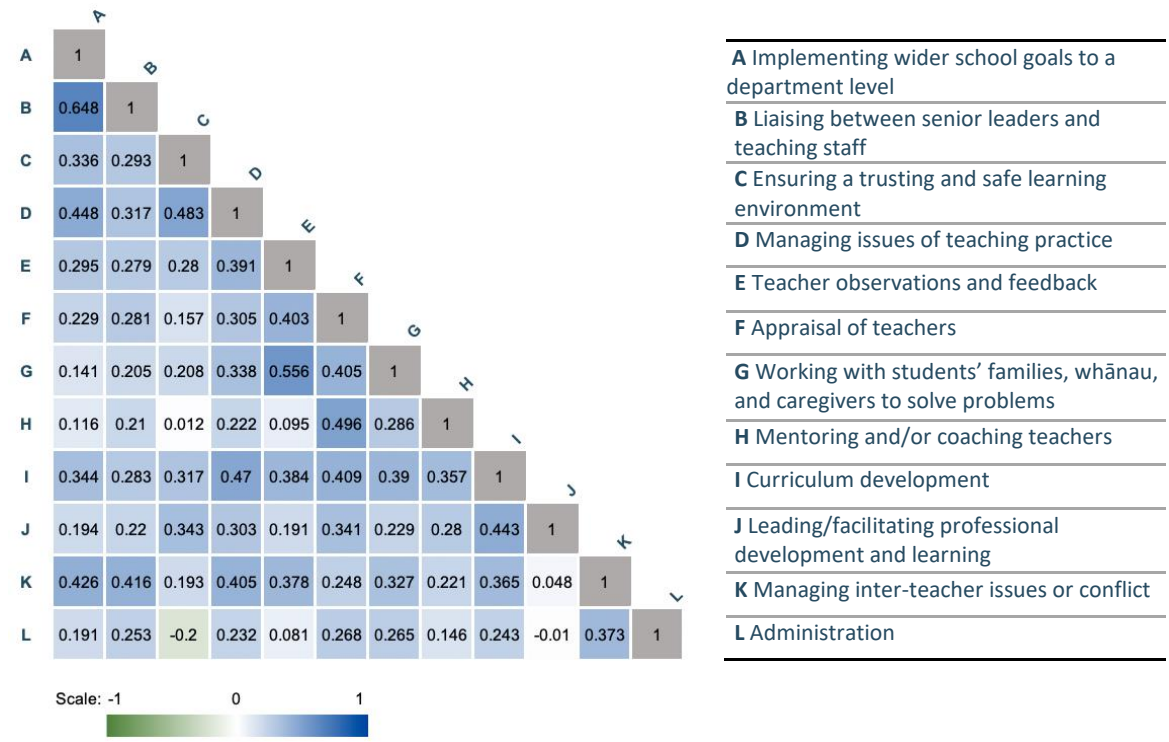
Group	Role responsibility
Factor 1	Implementing wider school goals to a department level Liaising between senior leaders and teaching staff Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment Managing issues of teaching practice
Factor 2	Teacher observations and feedback Appraisal of teachers
Factor 3	Working with whānau to solve problems Mentoring teachers Curriculum development Leading/facilitating professional learning and development
Factor 4	Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict Administration

All variables (role responsibilities) were included in the final model due to high factor loadings.

A visual representation of the correlations between each of the role responsibilities and their influences on mental well-being is shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Correlation Matrix: HoD Mental Well-Being Influences on Role Responsibilities



The closer the correlation value is to 1 (or -1), the more closely correlated (related) the two variables are to one another.

ANOVA

ANOVA was conducted to determine any potential differences between mean scores of perceived role responsibility influence on HoD mental well-being. Groupings were by gender, subject, experience, WEMWBS, and use of leadership models.

Significant differences ($p \leq 0.05$) were found when grouping by gender, HoD experience, WEMWBS classification, and employment of a formal dilemma management model. No significant differences were found when grouping by school size.

Differences Between Means: Gender.

When separating by gender, mean scores were found to be statistically significantly different for the variables *Administration* ($p = 0.047$) and *Teacher observations and feedback* ($p = 0.013$) (Table 11).

Table 11

Role Responsibility Influence on Mental Well-Being, separated by Gender

Role responsibility	Gender	n	Mean	Std. dev.
Administration	Male	28	3.86	1.044
	Female	30	3.33	.922
	Total	58	3.59	1.009
Teacher observations and feedback	Male	28	2.75	.844
	Female	30	3.30	.794
	Total	58	3.03	.858

Differences Between Means: Total HoD Experience. When separating by total years' HoD experience, significant differences in means were found for *Teacher observations and feedback* (p = 0.023) (Table 12).

Table 12

Role Responsibility Influence on Mental Well-Being, separated by HoD Experience

Role responsibility	HoD years' experience	n	Mean	Std. dev.
Teacher observations and feedback	Less than 2 years	10	3.40	.843
	2 – 5 years	17	2.65	.606
	6 – 10 years	14	3.21	.699
	11 – 15 years	7	2.57	1.134
	16+ years	6	3.50	.548
	Total	54	3.02	.812

Post-hoc tests were used to identify between which groups the significant differences lay, using Fisher's LSD. This resulted in significant differences between all groups: Every 'experience' group was statistically different to at least one other group. No discernible patterns in significance were identified.

Differences Between Means: WEMWBS. This analysis was conducted on a sample size of 56, due to some participants not completing every question in the WEMWBS section of the survey. WEMWBS classifications were grouped using the United Kingdom standardised cut-points.

The variable *Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems* returned a significant difference between groups (p = 0.018) for its level of influence

on HoD mental well-being. Post-hoc tests indicated a significant difference between those classified as 'low mental well-being' and those classified as 'average mental well-being' (Table 13). As only 2 of the valid 56 samples registered as 'high mental well-being', valid generalised comparisons of this group could not be made.

Table 13

Role Responsibility Influence on Mental Well-Being, separated by WEMWBS

Role responsibility	Mental well-being classification	n	Mean	Std. dev.
Working with families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems	Low mental well-being	17	2.47	0.514
	Average mental well-being	37	3.14	0.918
	High mental well-being	2	3.50	.707
	Total	56	2.95	0.862

Differences Between Means: Use of a Dilemma Management Model. When grouping by use of a model, a significant difference in level of influence on mental well-being was found for the responsibilities *Mentoring and/or coaching teachers* (p = 0.024) and *Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems* (p = 0.02) (Table 14).

Table 14

Role Responsibility Influence on Mental Well-Being, separated by Model Use

Role responsibility	Model	n	Mean	Std. dev.
Mentoring and/or coaching teachers	No model used	36	2.97	.910
	Model used	22	3.55	.912
	Total	58	3.19	.945
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems	No model used	36	2.78	.832
	Model used	22	3.32	.839
	Total	58	2.98	.868

Influence of Mental Well-Being on HoD Role Responsibilities

This section provides results for question 7.

Summary Statistics

Participants rated their perception of the level of influence their mental well-being had on each HoD role responsibility. The lowest possible rating was 1 (no influence of mental well-being) and the highest was 5 (very high influence of mental well-being). The summary statistics

are in Table 15. On average, participants perceived all HoD role responsibilities to be moderately or highly influenced by HoD mental well-being. HoD mental well-being had the highest level of influence on the role responsibilities: *Implementing wider school goals to a departmental level* (μ = 3.55, med=4), *Curriculum development* (μ = 3.55, med = 4), and *Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment* (μ = 3.44, med = 4).

Table 15

Level of Influence of HoD Mental Well-Being on Engagement in Role Responsibilities

HoD role responsibilities	Mean (μ)	Median (med)	Std. dev.
Implementing wider school goals to a department level	3.55	4	0.807
Curriculum development	3.55	4	1.015
Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment	3.44	4	0.958
Managing issues of teaching practice	3.31	3	0.92
Mentoring and/or coaching teachers	3.31	3	0.94
Leading/facilitating professional development and learning	3.29	3	0.916
Liaising between senior leaders and teaching staff	3.27	3	0.904
Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict	3.25	3	1.004
Administration	3.22	3	0.994
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems	3.16	3	0.996
Appraisal of teachers	3.07	3	0.997
Teacher observations and feedback	3.02	3	0.892

Note:
1 = no influence 2 = low influence 3 = moderate influence 4 = high influence 5 = very high influence

The above scale descriptors also apply to Tables 18, 19, and 20.

Principal Component Analysis

PCA was carried out on the variables in question 7; the level of influence HoD mental well-being had on engaging in role responsibilities.

Internal consistency and suitability testing: Cronbach's alpha returned a value of 0.906, indicating excellent internal consistency and reliability of the scale within the question. Suitability criteria for factor analysis were met, with:

1. KMO = 0.812
2. Bartlett's test $p < 0.001$
3. Most correlation values ≥ 0.3
4. Correlation determinant = 0.001

The final model resulted in two factor loadings with an eigenvalue cut-off of 1, oblimin rotation with Kaiser normalisation, and suppression of small coefficients with absolute value less than 0.4 on factor loadings. The factor loadings are presented in Table 16.

Table 16

Rotated Component Matrix: Mental Well-Being Influence on Role Responsibilities

	Eigenvalues	
	Component	
HoD role responsibilities	1	2
Mentoring and/or coaching teachers	.900	
Appraisal of teachers	.846	
Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict	.792	
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems	.718	
Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment	.609	
Managing issues of teaching practice	.584	
Teacher observations and feedback	.501	
Curriculum development		.826
Liaising between senior leaders and teaching staff		.765
Implementing wider school goals to a department level		.738
Leading/facilitating professional development and learning		.729
Administration		.592

This created the two central factors for grouping HoD mental well-being influence on engagement in role responsibilities (Table 17).

Table 17

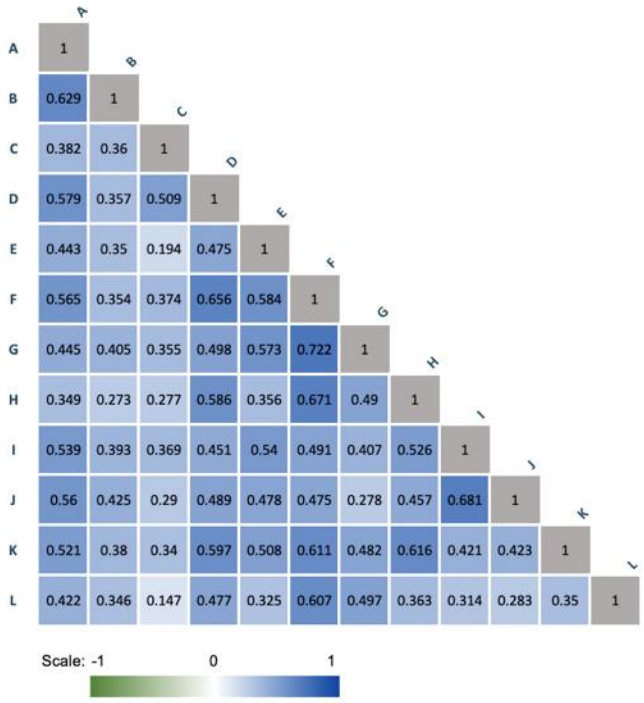
Groupings for HoD Mental Well-Being Influence on Engagement in Role Responsibilities

Group	Role responsibility
Factor 1 (people-centric)	Mentoring/coaching teachers Appraisal of teachers Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict Working with whānau to solve problems Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment Managing issues of teaching practice Teacher observations and feedback
Factor 2 (school-centric)	Curriculum development Liaising between senior leaders and teaching staff Wider school goals Facilitating professional learning and development Administration requirements

All variables (role responsibilities) were included in the final model due to high factor loading scores. A visual representation of the correlations between role responsibilities influenced by mental well-being is shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10

Correlation Matrix: Role Responsibilities Influenced by HoD Mental Well-Being



A Implementing wider school goals to a department level

B Liaising between senior leaders and teaching staff

C Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment

D Managing issues of teaching practice

E Teacher observations and feedback

F Appraisal of teachers

G Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems

H Mentoring and/or coaching teachers

I Curriculum development

J Leading/facilitating professional development and learning

K Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict

L Administration

The higher the correlation value is to 1 (or -1), the more closely correlated the two variables are to one another.

ANOVA

ANOVA was conducted to determine any potential grouping differences between mean scores for the perceived influence of HoD mental well-being on engagement in role responsibilities. Groupings were by gender, subject, HoD experience, WEMWBS, and use of dilemma management models.

Significant differences ($p \leq 0.05$) were found when grouping by gender, WEMWBS classification, and use of a dilemma management model. No significant differences were found when grouping by school size or HoD experience.

Differences Between Means: Gender. When separating by gender, mean scores were found to be statistically significantly different for the variables *Administration* (p = 0.026) and *Teacher observations and feedback* (p = 0.049) (Table 18).

Table 18

Role Responsibilities Influenced by HoD Mental Well-Being, separated by Gender

Role responsibility	Gender	n	Mean	Std. dev.
Administration	Male	27	3.52	.935
	Female	28	2.93	.979
	Total	55	3.22	.994
Teacher observations and feedback	Male	27	2.78	.934
	Female	28	3.25	.799
	Total	55	3.02	.892

Differences Between Means: WEMWBS. Using the specified cut-point values, mean scores were found to be significantly different for the variables *Implementing wider school goals to a department level* (p = 0.031) and *Administration* (p = 0.007).

For both variables, post-hoc Fisher's LSD tests indicated a significant difference between those classified as low mental well-being with those classified as average well-being. No significant differences were identified with those classified as high mental well-being. However, this group only had a sample size of two, so comparisons should not be made. A summary is in Table 19.

Table 19

Influence of HoD Mental Well-Being on Role Responsibilities, Separated by WEMWBS

Role responsibility	Mental well-being classification	n	Mean	Std. dev.
Implementing wider school goals to a department level	Low mental well-being	17	3.94	.659
	Average mental well-being	34	3.32	.806
	High mental well-being	2	3.50	.707
	Total	53	3.53	.799
Administration	Low mental well-being	17	3.82	1.015
	Average mental well-being	34	2.91	.866
	High mental well-being	2	3.00	1.414
	Total	53	3.21	.928

Differences Between Means: Use of a Dilemma Management Model. When grouping by use of a dilemma management model, mean scores were found to be significantly different for the variables *Administration* (p = 0.015) and *Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict* (p = 0.033) (Table 20).

Table 20

Influence of HoD Mental Well-Being on Role Responsibilities, Separated by Model Use

Role responsibility	Model	n	Mean	Std. dev.
Administration	No model used	34	3.47	.929
	Model used	21	2.81	.981
	Total	55	3.22	.994
Manging inter-teacher issues or conflict	No model used	34	3.03	.969
	Model used	21	3.62	.973
	Total	55	3.25	1.00

Influences Involving Leadership Dilemmas

This section provides results for questions 8 and 9.

Influence of Leadership Dilemmas on Engagement in HoD Role Responsibilities

Overall, the majority of participants indicated that when managing a leadership dilemma involving teacher performance, they perceived this had a positive influence on their engagement in HoD role responsibilities involving teacher performance, bar administrative needs. Due to the scale in question 8 having both positive and negative values, mean and median scores did not offer any meaningful information. Percentage distributions of responses can be found in Table 21, which present a clearer picture of the findings.

Table 21

Percentage Distributions: Influence of Leadership Dilemmas on Role Responsibilities

Role responsibility	Negative Influence	No Influence	Positive Influence
Teacher observations and feedback	25.5%	13.6%	64.4%
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems	13.6%	30.5%	55.9%
Appraisal of teachers	22.1%	22%	55.9%
Managing issues of teaching practice	25.5%	13.6%	60.9%
Administration	35.7%	16.9%	47.5%

When managing a leadership dilemma, the majority of participants indicated this had a positive influence on their engagement in *Teacher observations and feedback* (64.4%, n = 38), and *Managing issues of teaching practice* (60.9%, n = 36). Less than half (47.5%, n = 28) indicated this had a positive influence on engaging in administration requirements, and 35.7% (n = 21) indicated a negative influence. See Appendix C (iii) for the full percentage distribution.

ANOVA

ANOVA was conducted to determine any potential differences between groups' mean scores for the influence of leadership dilemmas on their engagement in role responsibilities. Groupings were by gender, subject, HoD experience, WEMWBS, and use of dilemma management models. Significant differences were found when grouping by WEMWBS classification. No significant differences were found when grouping by gender, school size, HoD experience, or use of a dilemma management model.

Differences Between Means: WEMWBS. Initially (and as presented previously) differences were calculated between the three groups (low, average, high). However, the 'high mental well-being' group had only two responses. As their results were comparable with the 'average mental well-being' group, these two groups were amalgamated for the remaining ANOVA analyses.

Table 22

Influence of Leadership Dilemmas on Engaging in Role Responsibilities, Separated by WEMWBS

Role responsibility	WEMWBS classification	n	Mean	Std. dev.
Managing issues of teaching practice	Low mental well-being	17	-.76	1.89
	Av/high mental well-being	39	1.44	1.65
	Total	56	.77	1.99
Teacher observations and feedback	Low mental well-being	17	-.12	1.80
	Av/high mental well-being	39	1.54	1.82
	Total	56	1.04	1.95
Appraisal of teachers	Low mental well-being	17	-.65	1.77
	Av/high mental well-being	39	1.51	1.72
	Total	56	.86	1.99
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems	Low mental well-being	17	-.41	1.81
	Av/high mental well-being	39	1.36	1.84
	Total	56	.82	1.99
Administration	Low mental well-being	17	-1.29	2.49
	Av/high mental well-being	39	1.21	2.22
	Total	56	.45	2.56

When separating by WEMWBS classification (low, average/high) this changed the way in which leadership dilemmas influenced HoD engagement in role responsibilities. Those classified as average/high mental well-being perceived leadership dilemmas had a positive influence on their engagement in role responsibilities involving teacher performance. However, those classified as low mental well-being perceived leadership dilemmas had a negative influence on their engagement in those role responsibilities (Table 22).

Influence of Leadership Dilemmas on HoD Mental Well-Being

When managing a leadership dilemma involving teacher performance, over half of the participants indicated this had a negative influence on their mental well-being (Table 23).

Table 23

Percentage Distributions: Influence of Leadership Dilemmas on HoD Mental Well-Being

Leadership dilemma within the role responsibility	Negative Influence	No Influence	Positive Influence
Inter-teacher issues or conflict	67.8%	10.2%	22.1%
Managing issues of teaching practice	64.4%	8.5%	27.2%
Appraisal of teachers	57.6%	15.3%	27.1%
Administration	52.6%	25.4%	22.1%
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems	50.8%	20.3%	28.9%
Teacher observations and feedback	52.6%	18.6%	28.9%

Of note were leadership dilemmas involving inter-teacher issues or conflict, where 67.8% of participants reported the dilemma having a negative influence on their mental well-being, and 27.2% of all participants reporting a moderate to very high negative influence on their mental well-being (see Appendix C (iii) for full distribution). Also of note were leadership dilemmas involving teaching practice, where 64.4% of participants reported the dilemma having a negative influence on their mental well-being, and 22.1% of participants reporting the level of negative influence as moderate to very high.

ANOVA

ANOVA was conducted to determine any significant differences between groups' mean scores for leadership dilemma influences on HoD mental well-being. Groupings were by gender, subject, HoD experience, WEMWBS, and use of leadership models.

Significant differences were found when grouping by WEMWBS classification. No significant differences were found when grouping by gender, school size, HoD experience, or use of a dilemma management model.

Differences Between Means: WEMWBS. When separating by WEMWBS classification (low, average/high) leadership dilemmas were reported to have a negative influence on mental well-being for both groups. However, those classified with low mental well-being reported a significantly higher (negative) level of influence (Table 24).

Table 24

Influence of Leadership Dilemmas on HoD Mental Well-Being, Separated by WEMWBS

Role responsibility	WEMWBS classification	n	Mean	Std. dev
Appraisal of teachers	Low mental well-being	17	-1.59	1.28
	Av/high mental well-being	39	-.21	2.20
	Total	56	-.62	2.06
Managing issues of teaching practice	Low mental well-being	17	-1.71	1.93
	Av/high mental well-being	39	-.56	2.38
	Total	56	-.91	2.30
Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict	Low mental well-being	17	-2.18	1.78
	Av/high mental well-being	39	-.51	2.50
	Total	56	-1.02	2.42
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems	Low mental well-being	17	-1.18	2.22
	Av/high mental well-being	39	-.10	2.08
	Total	56	-.43	2.16
Administration	Low mental well-being	17	-1.00	1.87
	Av/high mental well-being	39	-.33	2.08
	Total	56	-.54	2.03

Learning Behaviours

Theory-in-Use Behaviours

Question 10 looked at internal thought behaviours reported by participants when considering a leadership dilemma involving teacher performance (Table 25).

Eighty three percent of participants (n=49) reported imagining the conversation prior to addressing the issue for either *most* or *all* occurrences. All participants reported experiencing ruminating at least some of the time after addressing an issue. Eighty five percent of participants (n=50) reported ruminating '*most of the time'* or *'all the time'*.

Table 25

Theory-in-Use: Internal Thought Behaviours

Theory-in-use behaviour	Never	Some of the time	About half the time	Most of the time	Always	n
Imagine the conversation prior to addressing the issue	0 (0%)	6 (10.2%)	4 (6.8%)	19 (32.2%)	30 (50.8%)	59
Consciously check on your own assumptions whilst addressing the issue	0 (0%)	5 (8.5%)	14 (23.7%)	26 (44.1%)	14 (23.7%)	59
Ruminate on the conversation after addressing the issue	0 (0%)	5 (8.5%)	4 (6.8%)	13 (22%)	37 (62.7%)	59

Separating by use of a dilemma management model did not show significant differences to the distribution of responses.

Use of a Dilemma Management Model

Of all participants, 39% (n=23) reported using a formal dilemma management model, of which approximately half (12 of 23 responses) were 'approaches to learning conversations' (Robinson et al., 2009). The remaining 61% (n=36) reported not employing any formal dilemma management model when faced with a leadership dilemma. Participants were able to select more than one model. The results are summarised in Table 26.

Table 26

Reported Learning Models used for Dilemma Management

Learning model	n (reported multiple model categories)
Approaches to open-to-learning conversations *(Robinson et al., 2009)*	12 (6)
Talanoa	6 (3)
The ladder of inference	4 (2)
Dialogical coaching	3 (2)
Deliberate acts of facilitation *(LeFevre et al., 2020)*	2 (2)
Single/Double-loop learning	2 (2)
Model I and Model II *(Argyris and Schön, 1974)*	2 (2)
D.E.E.R *(Robinson and Lai, 2006)*	1 (1)
Defensive and productive dialogue	1 (1)
Triple I (I3) *(Cardno, 2012)*	1 (1)
Other model	4
No formal model used	36

Summary of Survey Findings

The key aspects of the above findings form part of the core contributing factors for the methodological triangulation of findings presented at the end of Chapter 5.

The findings illustrated a moderate to high level of influence of all HoD role responsibilities on HoD mental well-being. The level of influence was significantly different when comparing gender, HoD experience, WEMWBS, and model use groups. These associations were bi-directional; the findings also showed there was a moderate to high level of influence of HoD mental well-being on engagement in role responsibilities. All responsibilities were at least moderately influenced by HoD mental well-being. Differences in the levels of influence of mental well-being were found for gender, WEMWBS, and model use groups.

The way in which leadership dilemmas involving teacher performance influenced engagement in role responsibilities was dependent on WEMWBS. On average, leadership dilemmas had a positive influence on engagement in role responsibilities if HoD mental well-being (WEMWBS) was classified as average/high. However, this influence on engagement in role responsibilities was negative if mental well-being was classified as low. Leadership dilemmas were found to have a negative influence on HoD mental well-being, irrespective of well-being classification.

Chapter 5: Qualitative Data Results

The semi-structured interviews data analysis resulted in the formation of four key concepts (Figure 11). Each key concept has sub-concepts, providing further structure to the results presentation. This chapter presents the concepts as separate entities. The intention is to provide clarity, whilst allowing the reader to form their own conclusions. However, these concepts were intertwined in their communication. Throughout this chapter a visual overview of the interactivity between the four key concepts is developed. This interactivity is discussed in Chapter 6.

Figure 11
Key Concepts

HoD Role Expectations	The HoD as a Person	Learning Processes	Hierarchy and Politics
• Role expectations • Experiential conditions	• HoD well-being • Coping Mechanisms	• Ways of thinking • Attributes • Support	• Structural barriers • Multi-directional needs

Before exploring these key concepts, the participants' experienced leadership dilemmas are summarised. This is to enable greater understanding of the context of the participant responses. The quotes provided throughout the chapter are from the three HoD participants. They have been given the pseudonyms Sarah, Emma, and Rangi.

Participant Leadership Dilemmas

Definition of a Leadership Dilemma

Participants offered varied definitions of leadership dilemmas. However, there was a common understanding that a leadership dilemma involved a situation which did not have a simple approach for being resolved. Decisions and choices needed to be made.

Sarah understood a leadership dilemma to be where meeting the needs in one area would create negative or unappealing outcomes for the needs in another area. Misalignment between the needs exacerbated the dilemma. She recognised personal factors were involved but did not believe they had a place in the professional setting. Sarah acknowledged her expectations and lived reality did not match.

Emma defined a leadership dilemma as when conflict occurred between her primary responsibility of ensuring students were safe and had access to learning, and her parallel

responsibility of supporting department members. Two and three-way tensions were noted as a product of the dilemma, due to wanting to do the right thing for all parties involved.

Rangi defined a leadership dilemma as a situation where he found himself considering different options and needed to strategize the approach to the situation and how messages were delivered. He observed that a dilemma called for an individual to gather facts and weigh up the value of their immediate response(s).

Leadership Dilemma Experiences

Participants shared a leadership dilemma experience they had involving teacher performance. These are summarised below as reference points.

Sarah: A long-standing teacher in the department also held a middle leadership role as a dean. The teacher had significant long-term health issues and was encouraged to step away from the role by those who were close to her. The teacher chose not to step down. As HoD, Sarah found she was taking on the majority of the teacher's workload because she knew the teacher was unwell. Sarah saw the only other option as taking the teacher through intensive support and guidance programmes. Sarah did not choose this option. She believed it was unfair for the school to knowingly allow the teacher to continue as a dean, then put them in a support programme for not being able to meet their full professional responsibilities. Sarah noted these programmes would have taken the same amount of her time as her taking on the workload of the teacher. Sarah observed everyone was "passing the buck" and nobody was taking responsibility for the situation.

Emma: A teacher in the department was a Provisionally Certified Teacher (PCT)[4] and was struggling with a class. Various areas in the school had provided significant support and mentorship for this. The teacher decided to take control of the situation by engaging the students through using inappropriate material with censorship ratings which were not adhered to, therefore breaking the law. Upon initial inquiries from Emma, the teacher's recounts did not match the complaints and feedback from the community. Emma felt the teacher was embarrassed about losing control of the class, so they did not immediately own their behaviour. This escalated the situation further. Emma indicated she had a good relationship with the teacher and initially experienced feelings of empathy and annoyance for

[4] A PCT is a teacher who holds a provisional practising certificate which allows them to teach in New Zealand. All beginning and new teachers in New Zealand hold a provisional certificate until they have been endorsed for meeting the standards of the teaching profession (Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2022).

them. These quickly developed into a sense of panic for how to manage the situation. Senior leaders and the PCT coordinator were also involved in managing and resolving the issue.

Rangi: A teacher in the department was the ex-HoD and on a competency programme. The competency processes had been complex and drawn-out, existing before Rangi stepped into the HoD role. Rangi observed the teacher had a negative mindset and hostile attitude, due to Rangi being the new HoD. Rangi described the teacher's attitude as "they've given my job to you; I'm not going to help you". Within this, he observed that the teacher was trying to ride out to his retirement and was taking multiple days off a week. Rangi was working alongside the teacher to re-engage him in the rewards of classroom teaching.

Key Concept I: HoD Role Expectations

"The list of responsibilities is enormous, and I guess with the allocation of time to complete those responsibilities, the weight of that falls with me rather than the other members of the department who have management units." - Emma

This section presents HoD role expectations raised in relation to leadership dilemmas, and the conditions in which those expectations were experienced (Figure 12).

Figure 12

Key Concept I: HoD Role Expectations

HoD Role Expectations									
Role expectations						Experiential conditions			
Structural and Staff requirements	Staff retention	Problem Solving	Staff support	Relationships	Role responsibilities	Time barriers	Protecting staff	Shouldering workload	Acceptance

The contributing evidence of the subsections are presented together to best reflect the context of the data. Terms are defined as follows:

Role responsibilities: requirements found within HoD position descriptions; professional obligations

*Role expectations***:** the internal (self) and external (others) expectations of what an HoD role entails

Although role responsibilities and expectations had significant overlap, they were not equal.

Role Responsibilities and Expectations

Role responsibilities arising within the interviews aligned with the MoE (2012) guidance on middle leader responsibilities. When focused on leadership dilemmas, responsibilities included:

- fostering collegial and trusting relationships
- offering staff support
- ensuring staff were meeting their professional responsibilities
- resolving conflict
- ensuring staff were treated fairly and with respect
- establishing faculty structures and systems

All responsibilities were communicated as having an overall focus of supporting student learning outcomes.

The above responsibilities existed within expectations of *what they looked like* in practice. It was often unclear whether the expectations were internal (from the HoD), external (from others), or both. All participants accepted these expectations as part of the HoD role, even when acknowledging the expectations were not part of their contractual responsibilities.

Relationships

The importance of fostering positive, collegial relationships was evident in all participant responses. Relationships were indicated as a central aspect for success within an HoD role. In practice a deeper, non-measurable connection with department teachers was suggested as the necessary foundation for departmental growth.

> Sarah: You're trying to match the resources with the outcomes you want and then there is this huge human element that you're trying to get your head around with other people.

The expectations around collegial relationships lacked consistency. The distinction between professional and personal relationships depended on the expectations of individuals. The three participants were aware their own expectations and boundaries were often different to others' expectations. Sarah noted if a teacher were unhappy with something in their job "they

need to not fear offending me because it's not about me, it's about something that we are doing". Sarah then observed teachers were sometimes hesitant to do this due to their own expectations of the teacher-HoD relationship. This indicated differing relationship expectations occurring simultaneously.

Staff Support

All participants valued supporting teachers in a professional development and learning capacity. They noted supporting teachers as contributors to the wider department helped manage smaller issues and enabled departmental progress:

> Emma: I think time that we can spend with others, working with others, would certainly alleviate some of the issues that we face.
>
> Rangi: [I tell the teacher] we need you, you're good as all of us, we need you ... so you include elements of *"what are you good at?"*

Protection of staff well-being presented similar confusion in expectations of support from HoDs. Sarah highlighted these aspects in a recount of an issue:

> Sarah: Why am I in a position where there is a need for me to say to them that this [inter-teacher friendship conflict] is not okay? And whether it's even right for me to say that. I don't know. Because I can see that our teamwork or the job that we are here for is suffering, it just adds to the pressure of having to make a decision.

When personal external factors were affecting the professional responses of teachers, the expectations of the HoD's role in those situations was ambiguous. At times, the expectations called for personal responses from the HoD and held influence upon their own being.

Problem-Solving

'Supporting staff' often appeared as problem solving. All participants highlighted solving issues (involving teachers) as a regular aspect of their role. *Problem-solving* did not present as an HoD role responsibility in the literature reviewed. However, many of the 'problems' faced by the participants stemmed from endeavouring to meet their understood role responsibilities. This association led to problem-solving as an expected and accepted part of the HoD role.

When facing a leadership dilemma, all participants presented internal questioning as their immediate response. The questions were unbounded, and an initial process for trying to better understand the situation:

> Emma: Oh my god, what are we going to do here? What is the next step? Who do I need to talk to? Who do I need to contact?
>
> Rangi: Hang on let's strategize this, and you want clear options, how do you deliver the message? and you've got to really scope it …
>
> Sarah: Why did this person respond like this? Have they identified the problem clearly?

Participants implied this internal questioning was an expected HoD role response. This expectation was coupled with awareness of the misalignment with their understood HoD role responsibilities:

> Sarah: I tell myself that this is part of my job. I describe these [internal] questions as this is my job description, this is what I'm paid to do, so I should shut up and do it. On the other side, I think why do I have to always deal with these questions because those people are trained professionals too, they're being paid to do their jobs, so why don't they?

The questioning illustrated personal influences and learning processes occurring. However, the ownership of the questioning was attributed to '*being part of the HoD role'*.

Shouldering Workload

Participants all shouldered additional workloads as a way of offering support. There was an implied understanding that taking on additional workloads from staff was part of their HoD role. This role was protecting staff well-being. Emma noted workload was also related to task distribution:

> Emma: There's often a hell of a lot of work that lands on me that is well beyond the four hours' time release I have, but somehow I feel like I should shoulder that, rather than ask other people to shoulder it.

Taking on additional workload was also seen as a tool for staff retention. Participants implied keeping 'good' staff in their department(s) was a factor in determining their actions:

> Emma: I'm always super conscious of not asking too much [of other management unit holders] … they're great people and I don't want to impact them or their well-being and I would hate to lose them from our department.

Retention of staff was also a driving factor for dilemma resolution, as participants believed there was limited availability for new teachers.

Workload

A by-product of meeting role expectations was overall HoD workload. Participants all experienced significant workload pressures. These manifested through an imbalance of time available and the demands within their role:

> Emma: The competition between the things that need to be done is just incredible. Trying to prioritise everything, trying to prioritise how to use the scraps of department meeting time … it's got worse and worse over the last few years.

For Sarah, external expectations of what she was to achieve often did not match the time capacity and resources she had within her role. This led her to conclude "I saw it as being part of my job, but I felt it was unfair at times". This showed an awareness of the inequality between expectation and resourcing. Participants all felt it was their personal responsibility to manage and meet the differing needs within their given conditions of practice. This again indicated an internal acceptance of HoD role *expectations*, regardless of their achievability.

As illustrated by Emma above, time availability was also linked to juggling competing needs. All participants noted the multiple demands placed upon them. Participants suggested a choice was required for which demands they would most sufficiently meet within the time available. At times, the demands were also in conflict. This resulted in increased pressure on the participant. All participants emphasised greater time availability would make the biggest difference for better meeting the needs and expectations of their role.

When participants spoke about the responsibilities and expectations, they also spoke about their person.

Key Concept II: The HoD as a Person

"I'm a person too" – Sarah

This concept focuses on participant understanding of the HoD as a person within the role (Figure 13).

Figure 13

Key Concept II – The HoD as a Person

The HoD as a Person							
HoD mental well-being				Coping mechanisms			
Home Life	Personal values Sense-of-self	Absorbing workload and burdens	Internalisation *guilt, rumination, anxiety*	Boundaries	Balance	Self-preservation through avoidance	Tools for regulation *self-care, acceptance*

HoD Mental Well-Being

The participants had differing levels of separation between their personal and professional lives. Sarah strived to suppress the influences of her professional role on her personal self. Rangi struggled to acknowledge his experiences. He observed there were influences from the role onto himself but wanted to keep the two entities separate. Emma recognised her role as having a significant influence upon herself, noting:

> Emma: Perhaps a person with a different personality to mine would maybe be able to leave some of that work at work, so to speak, but I have a tendency to bring it home, at the very least in my mind, and ruminate over things … there are times when I don't do the best job at perhaps separating myself from some of those things.

Although the participants expressed differing theoretical levels of separation between their personal and professional lives, all acknowledged they co-existed in practice.

The personal impact of meeting HoD role responsibilities and dealing with leadership dilemmas was negatively for all participants. Sarah noted that after dealing with a leadership dilemma "I feel drained so the next situation that arises, I don't know if I have anything left in me to deal with it. It's like running on empty". Participants described feelings of suppression, panic, guilt, stress, anxiety, helplessness, anger, lack-of-control, imbalance, incompetence, frustration, and confusion. These feelings stemmed from leadership dilemmas that arose within their role responsibilities. Such responses were classified as internalisation; they tended not to be visible and were focused inward onto the participant's being.

Two participants acknowledged shouldering additional workload and absorbing emotional burden influenced their 'person'. Shouldering workload resulted in participants feeling they had insufficient time to complete their other responsibilities to the expected standard. When faced with a dilemma, participants felt they had to absorb the dilemma burden, indicating they felt alone when dealing with an issue. Sarah noted additional pressure because "you're second guessing yourself, you're watching what you're saying, you're filtering everything". This indicated cognitive processes occurring.

Exploring leadership dilemmas saw several occurrences where participants noted questioning themselves, their values, and their decision-making. Rangi observed a dilemma "certainly puts you in a spot, [facing] all those values, integrity, honesty…". Participant sense-of-self was also linked to the way they were being perceived by others:

> Emma: [leadership dilemmas] make you really reflect and want to claw back that control. Part of that I imagine is my own issues in terms of how other people perceive me and my ability to lead the learning area.

All participants had a blurred line when addressing the impact of their HoD role on their home life. The impact was multi-faceted: bringing issues home internally, their relationships with family, and suppressing their experiences and feelings.

> Emma: Unfortunately, there are times when those stresses of the day actually negatively impact the relationships that I have with my family because I'm just not able to park them, as hard as I might try.

> Sarah: There was a phase where I would talk about it at home and then I realised that I was re-living the horror at home, so I said okay, the school horror can stay there, so now I don't talk about school, I don't talk about my day.

Rangi: What are your behaviours as you realise this has become too much? Do you go home and carry it and first thing that you do is you talk about it to your wife or your partner …

To manage the various demands, the participants employed a range of coping mechanisms.

Coping Mechanisms

All participants communicated active self-care was needed for them to be able to operate successfully in their roles.

Exercise and Headspace for Self-Care. Exercise was a method participants used for looking after their mental well-being. Rangi described this as "putting money in your health bank" to create a good headspace for engaging in the role. All participants noted they consciously regulated their personal triggers to prevent external projection of their mental space:

Sarah: I know when I'm going to lose it and I always know that this is going to happen and I do something to manage that.

The participant's triggers stemmed from dealing with elements of their role responsibilities.

Acceptance and Avoidance for Self-Care. Another approach to self-care was acceptance of the mental toll that stemmed from their role responsibilities. Sarah noted "I knew it was going to be like this so I would take a moment to acknowledge this is how it's feeling and then move on from that". This gave her a sense of control over the situation. Participant self-care also involved self-preservation via avoidance of an issue:

Sarah: By the third person [presenting a recurring dilemma] I was beginning to feel empty so I would actually avoid her because I didn't know what else I could do to support her.

All participants indicated avoidance was not a suitable solution for their dilemma(s). However, they chose to do so to protect their own selves, as well as manage the situation so they could better fulfil their other HoD responsibilities.

Boundaries. All participants indicated they felt expectations (as HoDs) to be knowledgeable about the intricate 'goings-on' within their departments and teachers. Two

participants emphasised their potential involvement in the personal lives of teachers was challenging:

Sarah: I think lowest point, I just want to say to people can you just leave your personal stuff at the gate? I can't deal with it. It's yours for dealing with. But in real life you don't do that.

Rangi: I don't need to know intimate details of my staff, but if they feel like they're under the weather than where are we going with this? Is it a counselling thing?

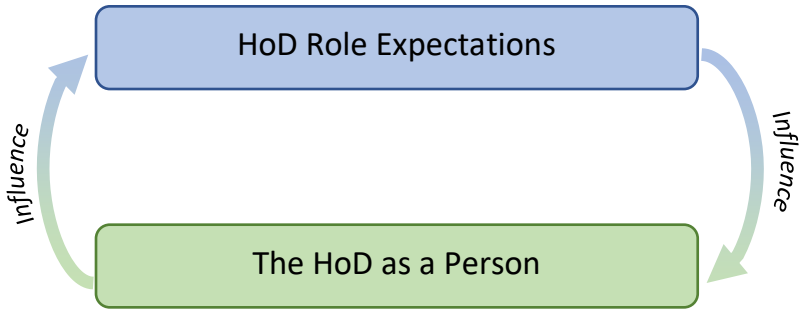
All participants desired clearer boundaries for HoD involvement. However, these boundaries proved challenging when teacher expectations were misaligned with participant expectations.

Links between Key Concepts I and II

The exploration of the first two concepts illustrated a cyclic relationship between HoD role expectations and the HoD as a person (Figure 14).

Figure 14

Cyclic Influences between HoD Role Expectations and the HoD as a Person



The two entities appeared intricately linked in their influences upon one another. The relationship was evident regardless of the participants' intended level of separation.

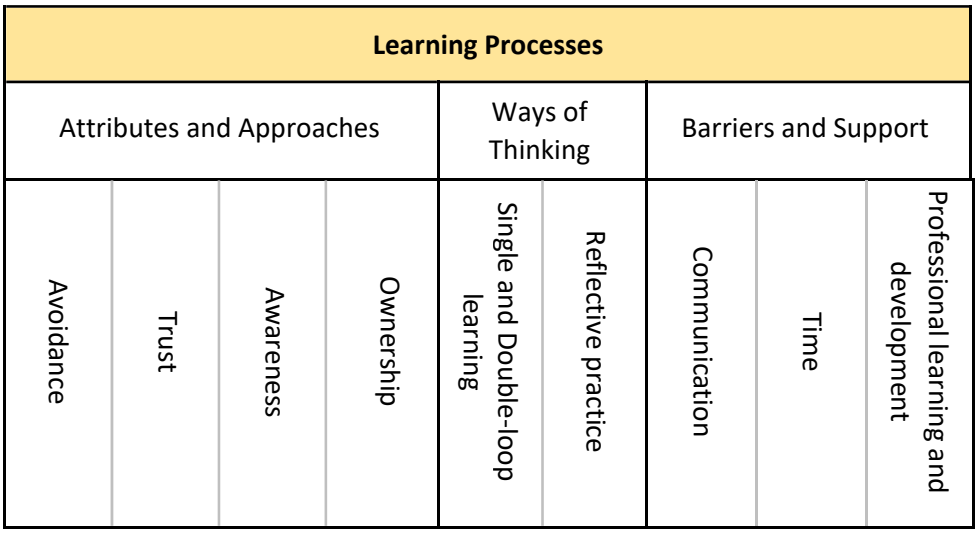
Key Concept III: Learning Processes

"If there was the ability to have the time to do more [reflective coaching], even within our own department, that could be really powerful." - Emma

The participants' recounts of leadership dilemma experiences revealed a range of learning processes and behaviours (Figure 15).

Figure 15

Key Concept III - Learning Processes



Attributes and Approaches

Ownership and Awareness. Ownership of the *issue* within a dilemma was a common theme. All participants addressed ownership in terms of the other teacher(s) involved; only Emma addressed her personal ownership of the dilemma, via reflection-on-practice. Emma had been working with a leadership coach in this area. All participants observed the teacher at the centre of each dilemma had not taken ownership of the issue. This exacerbated the dilemma:

> Emma: Because of his unwillingness to own the issue, own the behaviour, it escalated quite dramatically in a short period of time.
>
> Sarah: It was like *"I've always worked like this, I'll continue to work like this".*

The HoD's role in the teacher taking ownership of the issue was not mentioned. However, this absence in discussion does not confirm its absence in practice. For Sarah, the ownership of the dilemma extended to the wider school structures. She believed the issue was somewhat the responsibility of the senior leaders (see Leadership Dilemma Experiences) as they had enabled the conditions for the dilemma.

Ownership was accompanied by participant awareness of how their actions may impact a situation or person. All participants alluded to the importance of monitoring their own responses:

Rangi: You don't know what triggers people's emotions. I do know that when I'm responding and when I'm thinking.

Emma: The attitude that I bring to things actually really can greatly impact that of others and sometimes I don't give that enough credit.

Trust. All participants mentioned trust when exploring dilemma management processes. Trust between the participants and their department teachers was understood as an important aspect for enabling growth. However, two participants mentioned high trust models could present issues and negatively influence their leadership practices. Sarah indicated a high-trust model was encouraged by senior leaders, but the subsequent outcomes were not desired. Repercussions were directed towards Sarah, from the same senior leaders which encouraged the model. This had a negative influence on Sarah's mental capacity for engaging in her role. Accompanying guidance and support for applying high-trust models had not been provided.

Avoidance. This coping mechanism was also an active aspect of dilemma management used by all participants. Two participants alluded to avoidance of an issue being a strategy used in a wider school setting:

Sarah: I thought that everyone was just passing the buck and no one was really making a decision.

Rangi: You start recognising that everybody's knowing [there's a can of worms] but no one's come to – or they have, but they don't have time to do that.

It was also a strategy used within participants' HoD roles. At times, their instinct was to avoid exacerbating the issue:

Sarah: Of course, there are times when you want to just walk on eggshells and make sure that this little group of people doesn't have to work with this group of people because they're bound to come to blows.

Two participants acknowledged that strategies involving avoidance were not productive actions for dilemma resolution. They were aware their instincts differed to their actions in practice. One participant did not explicitly communicate avoidance strategies; their narrative avoided addressing their internal responses and focused on detailed story-telling. These

stories indicated providing external support (e.g., taking a class) was an approach for dealing with issues.

Ways of Thinking

Although formal models were not mentioned, defensive and productive behaviours within single and double-loop learning were evident in participant responses. Reflecting on practice was the most common thread between the three participants. This was first evident on a surface level through internal questioning when faced with a dilemma. The degree to which participants reflected varied:

- Emma had an external leadership coach who coached her through her internal responses involving her personal fundamental beliefs and values;
- Sarah reflected in relation to the balance between role requirements and the position of her own person;
- Rangi spoke of various educational leadership models. He communicated reflective practice in an outcomes-based manner.

Single-loop learning was also evident for all participants. This was seen through previously mentioned actions such as taking on additional workloads, using avoidance, and putting systems in place to *fix* an issue without addressing the issue itself. These were often done to protect the participants' own self and/or others well-being.

Emma's description of her reflective practices revealed evidence of double-looping learning. This learning came with a personal impact from engaging in those behaviours:

> Emma: It also makes me want to scream some days because the nature of coaching, that constant asking why and trying to probe your own beliefs … While yes, extremely frustrating at times, is hugely valuable in getting me to reflect on my own practice.

The participants' learning processes emerged along with discussions about professional learning, and availability of support in a professional capacity.

Barriers and Support

All participants acknowledged professional learning and development (PLD) was essential for pedagogical change and professional growth. The way this was explored differed across the three participants.

Time. All participants noted discrepancies between the time available for them to work with teachers and the expected level of professional development. There was a common understanding that teachers and HoDs 'chose' what aspect(s) of their practice to focus on, even if multiple areas needed development.

Time was also a factor in addressing leadership dilemmas. All participants saw restricted time availability to address leadership dilemmas as a barrier for achieving more meaningful learning outcomes:

> Sarah: I feel there is not enough time in the world to get to the bottom of things, so I feel we are quite superficial about it when we try to drill down.

This sentiment illustrates the potential negative learning outcomes stemming from the conditions of practice.

Greater time availability for contact between HoDs and teachers was a suggested improvement for establishing greater pedagogical development. Two of the participants linked this suggestion to a reduction in HoD workload and potential leadership dilemmas, due to being able to 'pre-empt' issues. The third did not reflect on the potential impact of this change during the interview. All three participants were synonymous that a greater time allowance for both teachers and HoDs would make a substantial difference in their roles, improving both mental well-being and collective professional capacity.

Communication. A fundamental need for open communication accompanied participant learning processes. All participants saw clear communication as a preventative tool for leadership dilemmas. Sarah saw the outcomes of poor communication as detrimental to departmental and organisational growth:

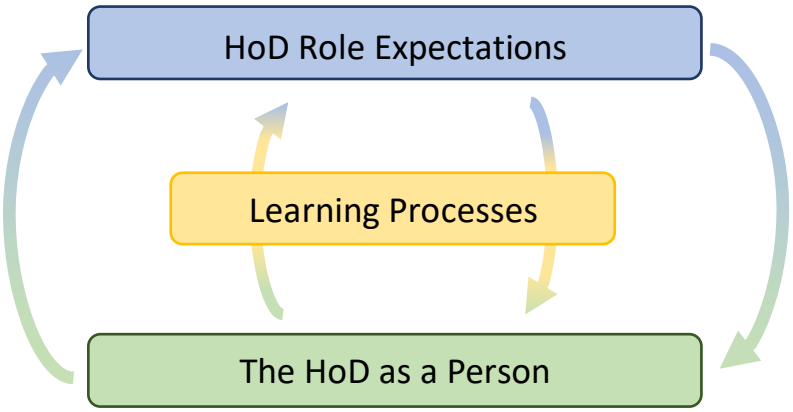
> Sarah: When people do not speak about [an issue] or they have problems with it, then it's quite impossible to improve that system or provide whatever support because I don't know what I don't know.

All participants had experienced insufficient communication escalating teaching practice issues into far bigger leadership dilemmas. Rangi observed "everyone's knowing those things but no one's come to –". This indicated issues were widely known but left unaddressed.

Links between Key Concepts I, II, and III

The learning processes were influential on, and influenced by, both HoD role responsibilities and the participant as a person. The emerging relationships are illustrated below (Figure 16).

Figure 16
Influences Between Key Concepts I – III



Participants' actions for meeting their HoD role responsibilities influenced their learning processes. At times, these learning processes then held influence on the participants themselves. Similarly, the nature of the individual participants influenced the learning processes. These learning processes then influenced the way in which the participants met their HoD role responsibilities. This cyclic relationship existed alongside the structural and political needs of the school.

Key Concept IV: Hierarchy and Politics

"We all hear about how we're all in the same waka, but what no one's told anybody is that actually when you're in the waka you've got to paddle and you've got to know how to use that paddle." – Rangi

The final key concept is based upon the wider leadership structures within a school and the needs, requirements, and expectations within them. The findings were categorised into

two areas: school-wide structural barriers, and multi-directional needs stemming from senior leaders and individual department members. These are summarised in Figure 17.

Figure 17

Key Concept IV – Hierarchy and Politics

Hierarchy and Politics					
Structural Barriers			Multi-directional Needs		
School Mandates	Power and Control	Hierarchy	Methods of Communication	External Expectations	Competing needs *'stuck in the middle'*

Structural Barriers

Hierarchy. All participants mentioned the structures and hierarchies within their school. The commonly understood order of hierarchy was Teacher – Curriculum Leader – HoD – Deputy Principal – Principal, with various leadership positions between. Whilst "hierarchy" was mentioned, participants were hesitant to use language which confined their roles into simple hierarchical positions. Their narratives indicated a greater level of complexity than the presented linear order.

Participants experienced inconsistent and/or insufficient communication from, and between, senior leaders. These were contributing factors to participant workload and mental well-being. Sarah noted a series of principal decisions created "a whole new thing I just felt I was thrown in to". Similarly, Emma observed a lack of communication from senior leaders meant many [great] initiatives were introduced at the same time and middle leaders "bore the brunt of that". This impact was compounded by expectations that the HoD was able to meet all needs, regardless of the timing and achievability. All participants emphasised the necessity of clear communication to enhance engagement in their role, and for their own mental well-being.

Power and Control. Within communication approaches emerged elements of power and control. Two participants recounted employee dilemmas; the dilemma was created by a

person in a leadership role (Anderson, 2013). In each case the dilemma was centred on a principal making decisions which went against the participants' professional and personal values. These employee dilemmas appeared to negatively influence participants' dilemma management practices and their mental well-being.

Power and control were also recognised by all participants at a departmental level. When exploring teacher performance issues, the Teacher - HoD hierarchy had notable effects on two participants. Participants noted feelings of not being in control, as teachers were hesitant to openly share issues. The participant narratives illustrated an expectation of defined areas for when they should be "in control". The source of these expectations was unclear. Emma extended these expectations for control, noting "there's also a sense of I guess whakamā, of shame, that maybe there would be some level of judgement on me as well that this is happening in my domain".

School Mandates. Structural and school requirements were well understood by all participants. For this analysis these are defined as non-negotiable outcomes to be met as part of the professional responsibilities in a role. There was a common understanding that it was an HoD's role to facilitate and communicate any school requirements to their staff. This aligned with the MoE (2012) outline of middle leader role responsibilities.

Participants understood that directions would come from 'above' (senior leaders) for actions required to meet the needs of the school. All participants noted the requirements asked of HoDs were sometimes beyond the senior leaders' control as they were dictated by MoE requirements. These requirements were accepted by all participants. The value of the requirements on educational outcomes were not explicitly mentioned. However, the absence of any *perceived benefit* was evident within the narratives. When discussing strategic planning, Rangi noted "it's a bit like vegetables. We don't like them, but we're going to have to… but it does drag on". There were subtle indications that actioning these compulsory 'tasks' could have a somewhat detrimental effect on the well-being of those involved.

Multi-Directional Needs

All participants spoke of competing needs within their HoD role. Their professional responsibilities required that they simultaneously met the needs of their school, the senior leaders, and their department. Whilst the needs aligned in theory, this was not the case in practice, creating tension:

Emma: I want to do the right thing by my school and by senior leadership so there is often almost a three-way tension there.

The HoD position as a 'filtration' system for communication between teachers and senior leadership was commonly understood across participants. When combined with managing competing needs, this was explicitly communicated as detrimental to the participants' mental well-being. Feelings of tension, energy, tiredness, and pressure were all raised. At times, it came down to the basic competition between tasks:

Rangi: [Paddling in the waka] the person behind you and in front of you is just trying to tell you keep moving, and you're trying to watch the principal, but you should actually be watching what's on your water and you are getting tired.

These feelings were exacerbated when competing needs were also in conflict with one another, resulting in a 'choice' to be made. This was illustrated by Sarah:

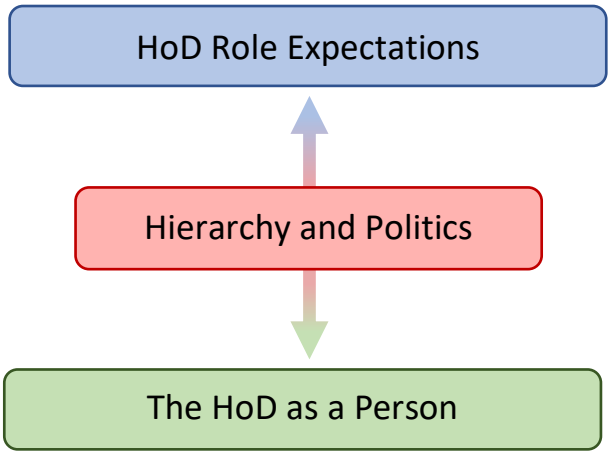
Sarah: Do I focus on the mandate? Do I focus on the people? If I'm very kind to my people and that goal is not being achieved or we aren't even making any progress towards the goal, then I feel incompetent, ineffective, because I've been nice to my people, that's the only satisfaction I have.

In these instances, focusing on one responsibility was at the detriment of another. This resulted in participants feeling they were facing an impossible situation to be meeting all their role responsibilities to a satisfactory standard. It was unclear where the 'standards' had originated. When these conflicting needs were more complex, they became a leadership dilemma for the participant. The undertones of the expectations to *meet* all competing needs emerged as external expectations pushed onto HoDs.

Throughout this section influences of school hierarchy and politics upon the HoD were evident. This influence was on HoD role responsibilities and HoD mental well-being (Figure 18). There were no clear indications of influences in the converse direction, nor between the key concepts 'Hierarchy and Politics' and 'Learning Processes'.

Figure 18

Influences of School Hierarchy and Politics



Key Concept Summary

The qualitative data analysis presented four key areas of influence between HoD mental well-being and engagement in role responsibilities: HoD expectations, The HoD as a person, learning processes, and hierarchy and politics.

HoD expectations encompassed the idea that role *expectations* and role *responsibilities* are not synonymous in practice. Expectations accompanying the role stemmed from the HoD themselves and others around them. These expectations impacted the lived experiences in the HoD role, and those experiences then impacted HoD mental well-being.

The HoD as a person illustrated mental well-being is both influenced by, and influential on, engagement in role responsibilities. Coping mechanisms used to protect well-being influenced how role responsibilities were carried out.

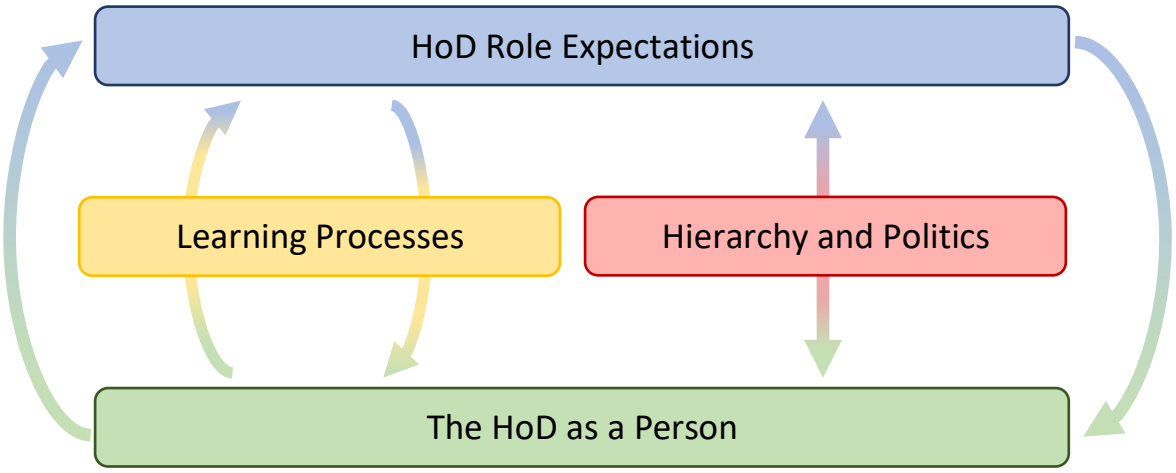
Learning processes that emerged from engaging in the HoD role exhibited the influence of personal attributes on approaches, uncovered single and double-loop learning, and presented various external barriers which were influential on the learning processes.

Finally, the hierarchical and political positioning of the HoD in a school showed the structural barriers which linked role expectations and mental well-being together. These were accompanied by pressures stemming from expectations to simultaneously meet multiple needs.

Throughout this chapter relationships and degrees of influence were also established *between* the key concepts (Figure 19).

Figure 19

Influential Relationships Between Key Concepts I – IV



The HoD role and the HoD as a person sit in a cycle of influence, regardless of the espoused degree of separation. Within this cycle sit learning processes. HoD role expectations influence the learning processes occurring, which in turn influence the expectations of the HoD role. Likewise, the person themselves influences the learning processes occurring. In turn, those learning processes influence expectations of the HoD role.

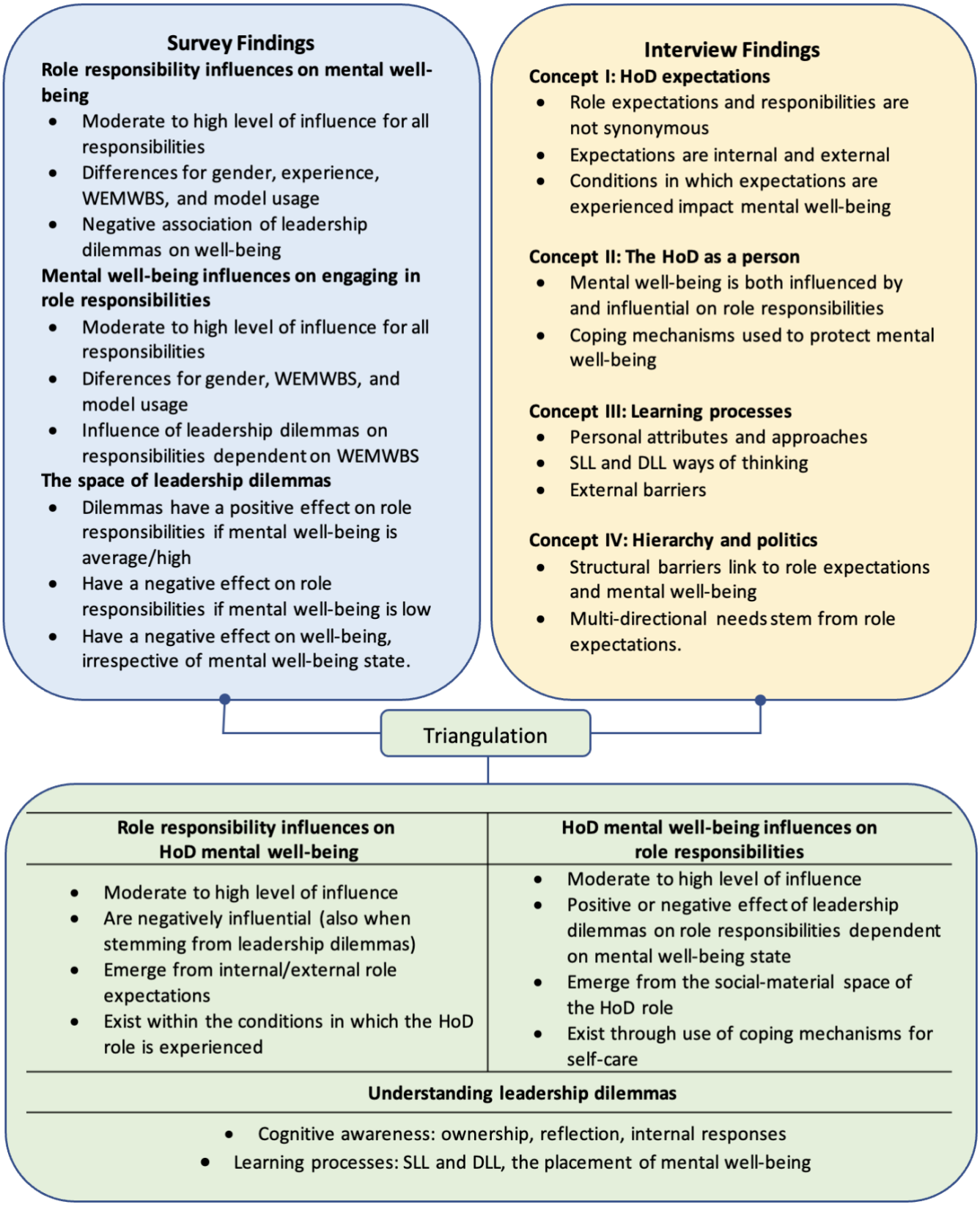
Separate to the learning processes lie the 'systemic' factors of hierarchy and politics. These factors were seen to influence both the HoD role expectations and the HoD as a person. This analysis did not indicate the relationship was bidirectional; the hierarchical and political factors were not identified as being influenced by the other key concepts.

These findings were triangulated with the quantitative results (Figure 20). These are discussed in Chapter 6.

Triangulation of Findings

Figure 20

Outcomes of the Triangulated Findings



Chapter 6: Discussion

This chapter discusses the results presented within Chapters 4 and 5, focusing on the triangulated findings in reference to the overall research questions. The model developed at the end of Chapter 5 forms the foundation for which this chapter is presented.

Overview of Findings

Methodological triangulation (Figure 20) revealed three major areas of findings in relation to the interplay of leadership dilemmas and mental well-being for HoDs: role responsibility influences on HoD mental well-being, HoD mental well-being influences on engagement in role responsibilities, and understanding leadership dilemmas. The first two focus on the perceived influences between role responsibilities involving teacher performance and HoD mental well-being through their:

1. Association *(magnitude, direction)*
2. Origin and emergence *(where the influences stem from),* and
3. Conditions of practice *(where the influences exist in practice)*

The third major finding is focused on understanding leadership dilemmas as the space in which HoD learning processes and leadership practices emerge. Cognitive awareness and theories-in-use occur as a product of HoDs comprehension of, and engagement in, leadership dilemmas involving teacher performance.

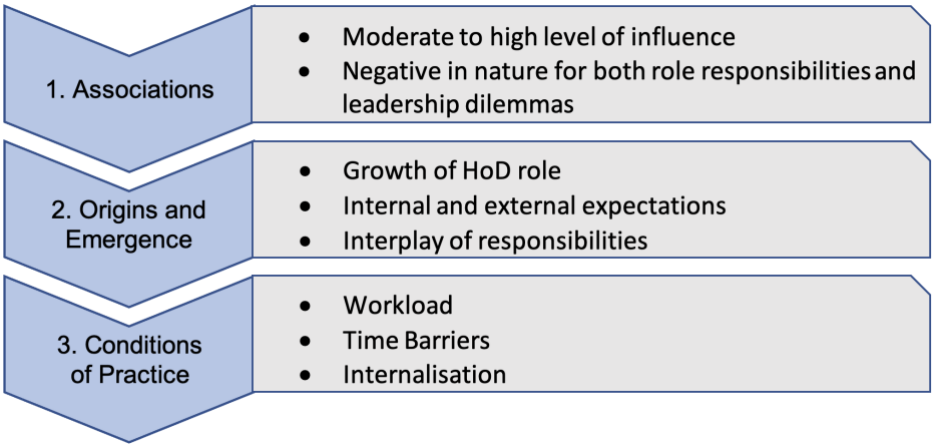
These three major findings are discussed in the proceeding sections. For conciseness *'HoD role responsibilities related to teacher performance'* will be referred to as *'role responsibilities'* and *'leadership dilemmas involving teacher performance'* will be referred to as *'leadership dilemmas'* for the remainder of this chapter. Should a distinction be required, this will be made clear to the reader.

Role Responsibility Influences on HoD Mental Well-Being

The triangulated data suggested that role responsibilities had a negative, moderate to high level of influence on HoD mental-well-being (1). These influences emerged from the growth of the HoD role, internal (self) and external (others) expectations, and the way in which role responsibilities interacted with one another (2). The influences were experienced through workload demands and internalisation of response (3) These are summarised in Figure 21 below.

Figure 21

Role Responsibility Influences on HoD Mental Well-Being



Associations

Defining the Association. Literature suggests educators are unable to fully separate their work and personal identity, with the two intrinsically linked to one another (Day et al., 2006; Fleming, 2014). This concept is reflected in this study's findings, which revealed a moderate to strong level of influence of role responsibilities on HoD mental well-being. Qualitative data illustrated these influences varied in practice. HoDs could have astute awareness of the influences upon themselves, whilst others chose a surface level acknowledgement and actively tried to 'block' any effect of the role upon their person. For the latter scenario, the way in which two HoD participants communicated their approaches to role responsibilities indicated they grappled with separating out their work from affecting their well-being and home-life. This approach indicates what the quantitative data had illustrated; that there was an interplay between role responsibilities and HoD mental well-being and separation appeared to be an impossibility.

The Strength and Nature of the Association. Data showed engaging in leadership dilemmas had a negative influence upon HoD mental well-being. Key attributes of these influences were feelings of overwhelm, tension, anxiety, burnout, and guilt for not completing all role responsibilities to the desired level. These feelings align with research on the effects of time availability on a middle leader (De Nobile, 2018b) and on teacher burnout due to prolonged stressors such as workload, emotional exhaustion and professional inefficacy (Weiland, 2021).

Quantitative data analysis revealed use of a dilemma management model was not a significant factor for how leadership dilemmas influenced HoD mental well-being. Whilst this

may seem contradictory, this factor is the HoD's own reporting of their use of a model. *Knowledge of* a dilemma management model and *knowledge-in-use* may not align, and the gap between espoused theory and theory-in-practice is addressed by Argyris and Schön (1974) as existing in everyday practices. However, HoD existing mental well-being state (WEMWBS) was a significant factor when looking at how leadership dilemmas influenced HoD mental well-being. Those classified as low mental well-being were more negatively influenced by managing a leadership dilemma than those who were classified as average or high mental well-being. This finding emerges later as a negatively geared cyclic relationship.

Special Note: Associations and Timing. The timing of this research requires consideration due to occurring during the Covid-19 outbreak. The national surveys run by NZCER (Alansari et al., 2022; Wylie et al., 2018) offer some insight, having gathered comparable data on morale and workload in both 2018 and 2021 from a significant pool of secondary teacher and middle-leader respondents across New Zealand. The negative influences of role responsibilities on mental well-being seen in this data could be linked to the reported lower level of teacher morale in 2021. NZCER suggested this morale shift reflected a period of substantial change in education including NCEA reform along with Covid-19, rather than being attributed exclusively to teacher workload.

However, the NZCER findings also showed work-related stress in 2021 as comparable with previous years. Only one third of respondents (n = 294/816) reported the level of work-related stress as manageable. In 2018 this was 31% of respondents (n=204/663). These findings are reflected within this study's qualitative analysis. Stress manageability in this study was observed through feelings of overwhelm, anxiety, and being unable to meet internal and external expectations of the role responsibilities (including teaching load). These findings present a justifiable inference that, whilst Covid-19 and associated events may have contributed to the influences of role responsibilities on HoD mental well-being, the negative association would remain regardless of its presence.

Origins and Emergence

Growth in Role Responsibilities. The growth and increase in HoD role responsibilities has been partially attributed to senior leaders distributing responsibilities and tasks onto middle leaders, due to their own increasing role expectations (De Nobile, 2018b; Dinham, 2007; Fleming, 2014). Furthermore, the increasing workload of school principals likely means

instructional curriculum leadership is delegated to middle leaders (Bassett, 2016). This 'reallocation' is paralleled in the survey data. HoD role responsibilities with the highest level of influence on mental well-being were curriculum development (μ = 3.60, med=4) and administration requirements (μ = 3.59, med = 4). However, all role responsibilities surveyed returned a moderate or high level of influence on HoD mental well-being. This indicates the quantity of responsibilities to meet is a factor for consideration. The qualitative data supports this hypothesis; the "sheer quantity" of tasks seemed unfathomable for HoDs to achieve within their time provisions. This mirrors the findings on workload from the New Zealand middle leadership taskforce report (PPTA, 2016c), noting the workload had become unmanageable. The practical consequences of workload and time constraints are presented as conditions of practice. These consequences indicate the quantity of HoD responsibilities is a factor for the negative influences on HoD mental well-being.

Expectations of Role Responsibilities. Findings revealed that the expectations which accompanied role responsibilities contributed to the influences on HoD mental well-being. Often it was not the actioning of the responsibility itself, but the expectations put upon the HoD that held influence on their mental well-being. This was because many of the HoDs actions were determined by their understanding of what was expected of them. These expectations stemmed from both their own internal assumptions and expectations of the role, and the external expectations put upon them. The line became blurred when separating 'job responsibility' from 'expectation of job responsibility'. This lack of clarity is paralleled in various New Zealand educational literature. *Expectations* arise in significant publications based on teacher voice (Alansari et al., 2022; PPTA, 2016a), defining the middle leader role (MoE, 2012) and in meta-analysis of empirical research into middle leadership (Bennett et al., 2007). Yet, none of these studies adequately address what *expectations* means in practice. This suggests the influences of role responsibilities on HoD mental well-being may stem from the differing and unbounded expectations of what meeting those responsibilities should look like in practice.

Interplay of Role Responsibilities. Data revealed four central factors (Table 27) for role responsibility influences on mental well-being: the HoD as a mediator and bridge (1), management of teacher performance (2), change processes (3), and compulsory engagement

(4). These reflect both the origins of where the influences emerge and the foundation for the conditions in which the role is experienced.

Table 27
Groupings of Role Responsibility Influences on HoD Mental Well-Being

Factor 1 *The HoD as a mediator and bridge*	Implementing wider school goals to a department level Liaising between senior leaders and teaching staff Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment *Managing issues of teaching practice
Factor 2 *Management of teacher performance*	Teacher observations and feedback Appraisal of teachers
Factor 3 *Change processes*	Working with families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems Mentoring and/or coaching teachers Curriculum development Leading/facilitating professional learning and development
Factor 4 *Compulsory engagement*	Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict Administration

*Note: This responsibility fell within both Factor 1 and Factor 2 – the connecting element between the two areas.

Influence from the HoD as a Mediator and Bridge. The responsibilities in this element represent the spaces in which HoDs practice. The HoD is positioned as a bridge and/or mediator between senior leadership, teachers, and students within a school. Positioning of the HoD has been previously identified as a central source of tension in the HoD role (see Table 2). This is due to the dual focus required for meeting multiple, sometimes conflicting needs**.** This study's data echoed these sentiments. Negative influences from mental well-being were the product of HoDs juggling competing needs whilst simultaneously trying to find outcomes to satisfy all parties. This sat within the overarching scope of ensuring successful student learning outcomes. The expectations upon HoDs to meet these multi-directional needs are one of the conditions of practice in which the HoD role exists.

Influence from Managing Teacher Performance. HoD management of teacher performance again positions the HoD as a bridge, this time between teachers and student learning outcomes. The role responsibilities directly related to teacher performance all demand 'personal input' from the HoD; professional judgements and feedback on teaching practices are required. The qualitative data showed expectations and understandings of these

judgements were not consistent amongst HoDs. Whilst some viewed them existing entirely within a professional sphere, others saw them as being influenced by the personal sphere and the relationship held between the teacher(s) and the HoD. Balancing relationship and collegiality needs with management and accountability responsibilities is another a central source of tension in the HoD role (see Table 2).

When looking specifically at managing issues of teaching practice, the data showed multi-directional needs and expectations of HoDs were again at the forefront of the influences on HoD mental well-being. HoDs needed to ensure that the student learning outcomes were being met whilst simultaneously supporting the teacher in pedagogical learnings, their well-being, and considering any potential implications on the existing collegial relationship. Here, leadership dilemmas were found to have a significantly negative influence on HoD mental well-being. In these situations, time pressures, internal questioning, and absorbing workload to protect staff and students became regular conditions of practice for the HoD.

Influence from Change Practices. These role responsibilities represent HoD involvement in collaborative change practices. Leading pedagogical growth through curriculum and teacher development is presented as a key function of middle leaders (MoE, 2012). Additionally, research suggests HoDs constant involvement with classroom teachers means their role could have the most potential for increasing school effectiveness related to improving measurable student outcomes (Leithwood, 2016). Quantitative data results showed engaging in curriculum development had the largest influence on HoD mental well-being, with facilitating PLD the fourth largest of 12 responsibilities presented. Both responsibilities being highly influential factors may indicate their importance as understood by HoDs.

Influences from change practices may also be explained by underlying expectations in what HoDs should be achieving in relation to meeting wider school goals. Data showed misalignment between the expectations and what was achievable in practice. This misalignment had negative implications on HoD mental well-being. The realities of these projected expectations reflect the findings of Bassett (2016) who observed “whilst middle leaders in this study were expected to lead the curriculum and the improvement of teaching and learning, much of their curriculum leadership role is focused on the management of assessment” (p. 103). This observation alludes to the misalignment of expectation and practice in this area. Bassett also revealed middle leaders felt a sense of ‘injustice’ that they

were expected to be supporting their teams without adequate professional support for themselves to do so successfully. This is directly reflective of the feelings of unfairness and insufficient support which emerged in this study's findings. This indicates that HoDs engaging in change practices can negatively influence their mental well-being when there is misalignment between the expectations and resource availability.

Influence from 'Compulsory' Engagement. Data revealed 'Managing inter-teacher issues' and 'Administration' were the HoD role responsibilities which were somewhat separated from the leadership of teaching and learning practices. Managing inter-teacher issues was suggested by the MoE (2012) as being related to limited resources within departments. Yet, the qualitative data revealed these could be inter-personal conflicts external to the school environment. Despite this, the HoD was still required to step in when these personal conflicts started to impact departmental progress and student learning. HoD involvement was necessary to ensure the overall functioning of their department; an expectation of the HoD role.

Similarly, administration responsibilities were understood as a compulsory and time-consuming part of the role. However, these were not seen as direct contributors towards meeting school goals and improving overall learning outcomes for students. The purpose of administrative tasks are framed by the MoE (2012) in a different and more positive light. However, the sentiments seen within this study's data are echoed in earlier research (Cotter, 2011; Gurr, 2019; Leithwood, 2016). All highlight a focus is needed on the balance of (teaching and learning) leadership practices and compliance and administrative tasks for middle leaders.

Qualitative data indicated both inter-teacher conflict and administrative responsibilities were significantly time consuming for HoDs. Subsequential pressures emerged for where to best 'spend' the time available within the role. This is suggested as a pressure point in recent research. The NZCER 2021 study revealed the highest voted change (64%) New Zealand teachers and middle leaders would make was to reduce administration and paperwork (Alansari et al., 2022). HoDs compulsory engagement in these responsibilities may be detrimental to their mental well-being if they feel they are sacrificing time spent on other responsibilities which would better benefit student learning outcomes.

Conditions of Practice

These are the experienced realities of the HoD role in which influences on mental well-being appeared. The dominant conditions of practice were:

- Workload
  - ⇒ Managing competing needs
  - ⇒ Absorbing additional workloads
  - ⇒ Mismatch of workload and time availability
- Internalisation of influences

Workload

Managing Competing Needs. The triangulated data consistently pointed to the multiple demands placed upon HoDs as a factor that influences HoD mental well-being. Managing competing needs emerged as a condition of practice as:

1. Each need or initiative had its own place within various HoD role responsibilities.
2. Individuals within senior leadership teams had their own initiatives and goals to meet; the actions associated with these fell upon the HoDs to disseminate to and engage their staff.
3. There were underlying expectations that the needs would be met by the HoD.
4. The needs could be in conflict with one another, or with the HoD's personal values, creating a dilemma. These sometimes emerged as employee dilemmas.

The resulting outcomes of these conditions were:

- Workload became too great when managing all of the needs;
- The competition between needs caused feelings of incompetency from not being able to meet them all to the expected or desired standards understood by the HoDs;
- Dilemmas and conflict demanded the HoDs to challenge their sense-of-self, at times calling for them to put aside their personal values.

The findings on workload closely align with those of the PPTA (2016c) middle leadership summary report and the research of Robson and Bassett (2017). The number of initiatives and wide array of tasks faced by middle leaders was addressed as a significant factor for the increasing unmanageability of workload. Based on this, the PPTA put forward

recommendations to the MoE for reducing workload and consequential pressure and stress on middle leaders. Yet, upon review of their findings (two years following publication) they observed "the work overload and stress of middle leaders continues unabated in practice at the school level" (PPTA, 2017, p. 6). These dedicated time allowances have not since changed in the 6 years following the report publications.

This study found the potential conflicts from meeting the varied initiatives caused additional negative influences upon HoD mental well-being. HoDs felt that when faced with conflicting needs placed externally upon them, they were unable to be successful in each area. This created concerns that their role performance may be questioned. Additionally, their personal sense-of-self was lost from continuously meeting the demands/expectations placed upon them, or from the presence of an employee dilemma. Bassett (2016) reinforced both the quantity of initiatives and their conflicting needs as a key source of tension for HoDs. The perceptions of middle leaders were that senior leaders independently pushed their own personal portfolios upon them, often with conflicting or contradictory demands that were simultaneously unattainable. The perceived loss of sense-of-self was also noted; it was reported some middle leaders felt they had no voice yet were expected to act on the decisions put upon them.

Absorbing Additional Workload. The qualitative data suggested absorbing additional workloads was a method HoDs used to ensure the greater functionality of their department. Taking on additional workload was an expected condition of practice to:

- Protect staff in difficult situations or to protect students
- Not overload their staff based on their own time allowances.

As a result, these actions exhausted the HoD's own time and energy resources and their 'home-life' was interrupted; a type of self-sacrifice occurred in order to ensure their department was able to meet the greater needs of the school. The emerging health impacts from middle leader workload are identified clearly in the PPTA (2016a) report, noting the excessive workload demands led to "significant physical and emotional stress" (p. 42). This is further supported in research which shows when additional time is invested into work, it exhausts the time that would be otherwise invested in other valued resources for the person's own health. This results in negative consequences to their physical, social, and/or psychological well-being (Brown & Roloff, 2011).

These conditions of practice illustrate there is a significant mismatch between the workload allocation for HoDs and the time available to complete the tasks. This mismatch is evident in the most recent NZCER findings (Alansari et al., 2022). Only 43% of respondents believed their workload was manageable, and only 36% of respondents agreed the level of work-related stress was manageable (n = 295 of 820). As time is a finite entity, the findings suggest a focus on HoD workload is required.

Internalisation. This study found the experienced role responsibility demands resulted in an array of negative influences on the HoD. These influences existed in part due to an unspoken expectation for the HoD to be meeting every party's needs within a school: students, teachers, senior leaders, and the wider community. As one participant stated, "because I'm HoD, I've got to be kind and equally everything to everyone" (Sarah). The PPTA (2016a) notes this same desire of middle leaders "trying to be all things to all people" (p. 43) in relation to excessive workload and stress. This study's qualitative data further exposed that trying to meet these expectations resulted in guilt, rumination, stress, anxiety, challenged personal values, and a loss of sense-of-self; these were all products of the HoD absorbing the accountability for the surroundings and experiences in which they were operating.

Fleming (2014) suggests schools link an HoD's credibility as a leader to the performance development of their teachers, in particular underperforming staff. Leadership dilemmas frequently involve poor teacher performance and are associated with anxiety, avoidance, and unpleasantness (Cardno, 2020). Therefore, a link can be established between HoD accountability expectations for teacher performance, and negative influences on HoD mental well-being.

An array of literature (see Table 1) indicates facilitating professional development for teachers is an established responsibility of an HoD. This understanding is paralleled in the findings of this research. What is unclear is the degree to which the 'credibility' of an HoD is directly related to the (under)performance of individuals within their team. Triangulated data findings revealed that when managing leadership dilemmas involving teacher performance, over two thirds of respondents indicated this had a negative influence on their mental well-being. Internalised feelings of incompetence, anxiety and shame were experienced by HoDs when they were not able to meet the internal and external expectations of what they were to achieve in relation to teacher performance. Cardno (2007) identified these same feelings of inadequacy experienced by leaders who found themselves in a leadership dilemma. It follows

that there is a potential association between an HoDs perceived credibility as a leader and their internalisation of the by-products from engaging in role responsibilities related to teacher performance. That is, HoDs may internalise the negative influences stemming from their role responsibilities to protect their credibility as a leader.

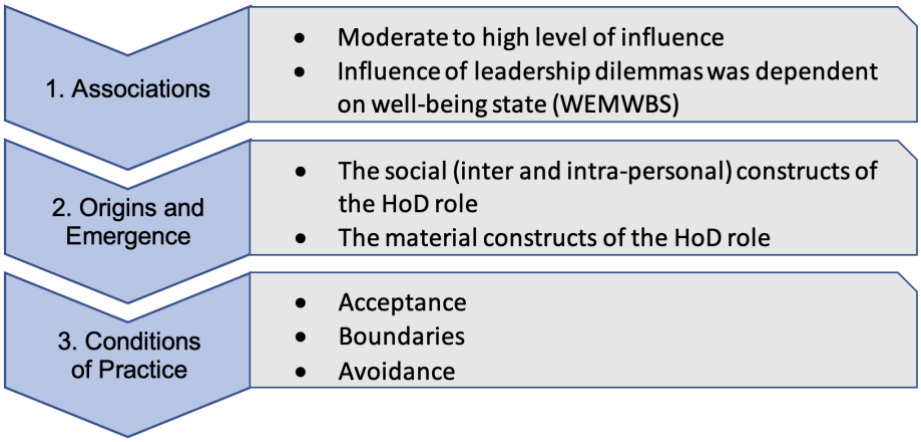
Additional complexity is added once considering the environmental conditions experienced by HoDs. Data revealed time, professional support, senior leader expectations, and other individuals own factors were significant barriers for how role responsibilities were met. The projected role *expectations* and the internalisation of their by-products imply the HoD has both the tools and conditions to reach optimal resolutions, but in practice this is seemingly not the case. This disconnect is evident in past research, which recommended middle leaders needed significant additional support to be truly successful in their leadership roles, as the tools and conditions needed for this were lacking (Gurr & Drysdale, 2013). It follows that HoDs may further internalise the implications from engaging in their role responsibilities due to their experiences not matching their accepted expectations of what the *visible* outcomes should be.

The Influence of HoD Mental Well-Being on Engagement in Role Responsibilities

The findings in this study suggest HoD mental well-being has a moderate to high level of influence on HoD role responsibilities. For leadership dilemmas, the direction of influence (positive or negative) on role responsibilities was dependent on HoD mental well-being (1). These influences emerged within the social and material constructs of the HoD role (2). The influences were seen through using coping mechanisms for self-care (3). These findings are summarised in Figure 22.

Figure 22

HoD Mental Well-Being Influences on Engagement in Role Responsibilities



Associations

Defining the Association. All HoD role responsibilities measured in this study were found to be influenced at least moderately by HoD mental well-being. That is, no role responsibilities were perceived to be independent of HoDs mental well-being. The mental well-being influences can be thought of as projections of the HoDs inner person onto their external behaviours in the role. This is reflective of the mental model of The Self (Branson, 2007) and Larrivee's (2000) personal filter system and accompanying critical reflective process. Both illustrate one's inner self and external behaviours as interconnected and interactive. This supports the notion that an HoD's mental well-being is influential on their engagement in role responsibilities.

This study's lack of evidence for school size, HoD experience, and subject as influencing factors suggest the experiences of HoDs are not significantly dictated by external components lacking a 'human' element. Conversely, gender, WEMWBS classification, and use of a dilemma management model were all found to be factors for how mental well-being influenced engagement in role responsibilities. Whilst the MoE (2012) states school size influences how leadership is distributed, it does not address how it is processed. The above findings suggest HoDs processing of interpersonal and intrapersonal factors is not proportional to school size or experience.

The Strength and Nature of the Associations. The survey findings showed the role responsibilities most highly influenced by HoD mental well-being were engaging in wider school goals to a departmental level and curriculum development. However, all responsibilities were influenced at least moderately or higher by HoD mental well-being. These findings were echoed in the interview data, where HoDs acknowledged their well-being was influential on an array of their responsibilities, even for those who strived to separate out their person from their role.

Employment of a Leadership Dilemma Model. In this study, those who employed a formal dilemma management model in their practices reported their mental well-being was:

- less influential on administration responsibilities
- more influential on managing inter-teacher issues or conflict

when compared with those who did not employ any model.

These findings may indicate theory-in-use for reflective learning models such as double-loop learning (Argyris, 1976b, 1977) and/or mental models such as those mentioned above. Increased understanding of one's internal being leads to increased consciousness of its influence on external outputs. Inter-teacher issues or conflict demand a 'personal' input from the HoD, and HoDs may be aware of their inner influences. They may also be aware that administration needs would be less influenced by their own being due to the nature of the responsibility. Thus, HoD awareness becomes an influencing factor for how role responsibilities are experienced.

Influences of Leadership Dilemmas. Survey findings indicated managing a leadership dilemma could positively influence HoD engagement in role responsibilities, bar administration. Managing leadership dilemmas had a positive influence on HoD engagement in teacher observations and feedback (64.4%, n = 38) and managing issues of teaching practice (60.9%, n = 36). However, once grouped by WEMWBS classification the influences changed. Those with low mental well-being (approximately one third of all respondents) indicated managing a leadership dilemma negatively influenced their engagement in all role responsibilities presented. It also negatively influenced their mental well-being. This indicates that engaging in dilemmas may have a detrimental effect on already low levels of HoD mental well-being. In turn, this may negatively influence their engagement in role responsibilities. This negative cyclic relationship illustrates the consequential effects on the HoD role if HoD mental well-being is left unaddressed as a contributing factor.

Origins and Emergence

The influences of HoD mental well-being emerged through the social-material space in which the HoD role exists (Table 28). The data showed influences of HoD mental well-being on engagement in role responsibilities were grouped within two factors: people-centric responsibilities and school-centric responsibilities.

Table 28

Groupings of Influences of HoD Mental Well-Being on Role Responsibilities

Factor 1 (people-centric) Social Constructs	Mentoring and/or coaching teachers Appraisal of teachers Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict Working with families, whānau and caregivers to solve problems Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment Managing issues of teaching practice Teacher observations and feedback
Factor 2 (school-centric) Material Constructs	Curriculum development Liaising between senior leaders and teaching staff Implementing wider school goals to a department level Leading/facilitating professional learning and development Administration

The Social Constructs of the HoD Role. The HoD expectations and responses to the responsibilities in this factor are not objective realities, but a result of human interactions. The concept of middle leadership existing as a social construct is presented by Lipscombe et al. (2021), due to the role being varied in definition and dependent on the context and the people experiencing it. All responsibilities in this factor call for the HoD to be forming their own judgements or feedback about a situation. Additionally, they involve intricate personal interactions between participating parties. The qualitative data revealed that judgements and opinions were formed in a professional capacity. Yet, one could not entirely remove their personal influence and biases. It follows that the influence(s) of mental well-being ties these responsibilities together due to the inter-personal nature being required.

Research (see Table 1) emphasises the need for strong collegial relationships to enable authentic leadership and departmental growth. This aspect of the role is also a source of tension (see Table 2) when managing collegial relationships with accountability needs. The qualitative findings in this study revealed that the required connections were much more complex in practice than what they appeared in theory. Expectations of how the interpersonal nature of the HoD role should look lacked consistency and clarity. Whilst HoD responses were those they believed would best benefit student learning, they also acknowledged feeling caught between teachers' individual needs and the needs of the students and the school. There was a consciousness that meeting their role responsibilities (especially regarding leadership dilemmas) could put their professional relationships at risk or be to the detriment

of the individual's needs. These decisions were inevitably affected by HoD mental well-being. HoDs had a personal investment in the individuals and their relationships with them. Thus, their emotional and mental capacity was influential on the eventual decision-making outcomes.

Here exists the beginnings of the competition between the social and material constructs of the HoD role, and the emergence of the internal/external interface of the HoD role.

The Material Constructs of the HoD Role. The responsibilities in this factor represent the external school conditions in which HoDs practice. Qualitative data suggested HoDs experienced tasks within implementing wider school goals and administration as being pushed from the 'top' down. These tasks were accompanied by external expectations of completion, irrespective of the space or support that may have been required to do so.

Quantitative findings showed implementing wider school goals to a department level and administration requirements were influenced by participants' mental well-being classification (WEMWBS). The perceived influences on those responsibilities for those with low mental well-being were far greater than for those with average or high mental well-being. For implementing wider school goals, data suggested that when mental well-being was low the HoD did not have the capacity or strength to approach new and potentially challenging situations. This indicates a 'closeness' between the multiple expectations being experienced when trying to meet wider school goals and the HoD's own mental state. As meeting wider school goals have previously been linked to negatively influencing HoD mental well-being, a reciprocal relationship emerges.

The data in this study did not explicitly reveal why low mental well-being would be a significant factor for influencing engagement in administration requirements. However, the quantity of administration requirements upon teachers and middle leaders has been a significant concern in recent research (Alansari et al., 2022; PPTA, 2016b) with consistent recommendations for the demands to be lowered. The PPTA (2016b) identified the problem as administration requirements being often necessary for the running of the school, yet the time taken to meet them resulted in teachers and middle leaders being taken away from their core business of teaching and learning. Herein lies a possible explanation for the significance of mental well-being on administration requirements. Engaging in administration requirements was found to negatively influence HoD mental well-being (see Factor 4, Table

27). If an HoD is operating with a lower level of mental well-being, they may be less willing to use their remaining energy or well-being capacity to engage in a responsibility that is not directly related to teaching and learning outcomes. The idea of one having a finite capacity in relation to well-being and time and energy resources has previously been discussed (Brown & Roloff, 2011). By extension, there may be a connection between an HoD's engagement in administration responsibilities based on their evaluation of available time resources for application.

Conditions of Practice

The findings of this study showed HoDs employed a range of coping mechanisms as a method of self-care. These methods present themselves as metacognitive practices: the way in which we reflect/think about how we are thinking, and they way in which we use mental frames and assumptions. The employment of these coping mechanisms was directly influential on HoD engagement in role responsibilities.

Acceptance.

Mahfouz (2018) emphasises the importance of self-care for educational leaders to manage stress from tasks, expectations, and demands. This study's qualitative findings suggested a consistent understanding that protection and care for one's own mental well-being and a clear 'headspace' was essential for effective engagement in the HoD role. Whilst research on middle-leader well-being is limited, this finding aligns with recent research on principal well-being (Creasman, 2022). This research emphasised that leaders prioritising their own health and well-being was critical for sustained leadership practices and longevity.

Whilst data showed understanding of why self-care was needed, actions were often reactive rather than proactive. Addressing the root causes of the influences within ones' headspace was not part of the self-care process. From this, another cyclic relationship emerges. High mental well-being helps to engage in role responsibilities. Yet, it is those very responsibilities negatively influencing mental well-being. Within this space HoD self-care existed from acceptance: acceptance of the negative emotional and mental influences which stemmed from engaging in role responsibilities, and acceptance that remedying those influences from their professional role was their personal responsibility.

The reviewed literature identifies various areas for HoD acceptance of responsibility: for their own learning and development (De Nobile, 2018b), for acting on a leadership dilemma (Cardno, 2012), and for their internal thoughts and emotions to exist via mindfulness

(Mahfouz, 2018). However, acceptance that the HoD role could negatively influence mental well-being was notably absent. Drawing back to Factor 2 in Table 28, hierarchical power should be considered within the acceptance of these influences. Field (2019) suggests that "managers driving school improvement might exercise power in order to influence teachers' perceptions of options and of what is acceptable" (p. 1110). External expectations may contribute towards the shaping of what should be accepted parts of the HoD role.

Boundaries. Establishing clear professional/personal boundaries was a coping mechanism used by HoDs in this study. These boundaries were particularly important when teachers' personal lives were influencing their professional workspace. There was an undefined expectation that the HoD could or should deal with these issues due to the eventual influences on the teaching and learning space. HoDs found setting boundaries for when external counselling or mediation services were needed removed unnecessary additional involvement and mental strain on themselves. HoDs also actively tried to protect their personal space; the degree to which their work life affected their home life. Again, this was a type of self-care. By ensuring they had personal time, in particular connecting with their whānau, this nurtured their mental well-being. In turn, the higher level of mental well-being led to higher engagement in their HoD role.

Avoidance. Avoidance actions are associated with Model I defensive behaviours. They are illustrated as a common approach when faced with a leadership dilemma (Cardno, 2012). Data showed avoidance of engaging in role responsibilities and their by-products was a strategy for HoD self-care. This reflects the Model I governing variable of protecting oneself. Communication of avoidance strategies suggested:

1. HoDs were aware avoidance strategies would not resolve issues
2. HoD mental capacity influenced whether avoidance strategies were used
3. The implications of using these strategies were not fully considered, especially when faced with leadership dilemmas.

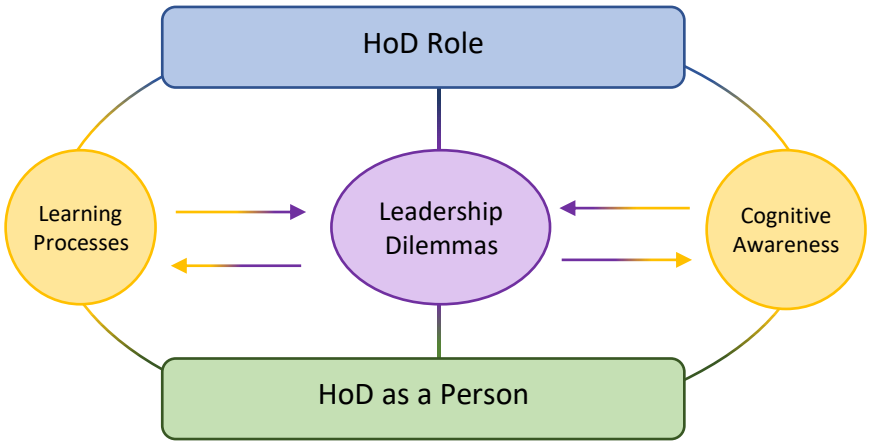
Whilst there was explicit awareness that avoidance strategies were not *best practice,* it was seen as a self-preservation tool to allow the HoD to carry forward successfully in their wider role responsibilities. Such practices mean leadership dilemmas will continue to exist for the HoD and issues that impact student learning will not be addressed effectively (Cardno, 2020).

Thus, the consequences of HoDs using avoidance for self-preservation not only impacts their role but prevents potential organisational growth.

Understanding Leadership Dilemmas

The interconnectedness of the HoD as a person and the HoD role create the conditions for leadership dilemmas to occur; dilemmas are placed at the centre of the internal and external influences acting upon the HoD. The contribution is bilateral; the experienced expectations and conditions of the role create consequences for the HoD. These consequences trigger personal responses and actions, which are then transferred back into the role. This influences the understanding of what the HoD role *is*, and thus creates a complex interactive space (see Figure 23) in which leadership dilemmas exist.

Figure 23
The Placement of Leadership Dilemmas for HoDs



Cognitive Awareness

Model II theory-in-use requires continual critical awareness and reflection to enable double-loop learning to occur. The data presented differing degrees of cognitive awareness when HoDs were faced leadership dilemmas. These were evident in practice via:

- Ownership of issues
- Internal questioning
- (Un)conscious awareness of influences from 'the person'

These practices shaped how HoDs were understanding leadership dilemmas and subsequent learning processes.

A starting point for dilemma management is that a leadership dilemma must be owned by the leader (Cardno, 2020). This differs from owning the *issue(s)* within the dilemma. The commonalities around ownership seen in the data were:

- The teacher not owning the issue
- Others in leadership positions previously not owning the dilemma
- HoDs being noncognisant around owning the dilemma themselves

Cardno (2020) suggests that taking ownership of a dilemma is the foundation for being able to understand and process the dilemma. From there, productive dialogue and shared understanding could occur, within which the teacher could take ownership of the issue. However, this study's findings implied HoDs viewed their position as 'outside' a dilemma. Internal questioning and rumination were dominant responses for the ways in which HoDs understood and processed leadership dilemmas. Recounts of internal questioning described a picture of urgency and lack of understanding. Questioning was focused on others' behaviours, with any 'answers' reached by the HoD influenced by their own internal assumptions and biases. Whilst the internal questioning was intended as an active leadership approach, these behaviours reflect subconscious Model I learning processes occurring for the HoD. Additionally, the HoDs own self-talk, assumptions, and ruminating behaviours all signify the intra-personal aspect of leadership dilemmas.

The qualitative findings revealed varying HoD awareness of the influences around leadership dilemmas. Awareness included:

- HoDs own actions influencing the potential outcome(s) of the dilemma
- HoDs needing to monitor their own responses and triggers
- HoDs being aware of others' potential responses and triggers

This awareness indicated the beginnings of double-loop learning; actions had a conscious intentionality. Further influences of the HoDs beliefs, assumptions, and biases were not seen explicitly in the data so cannot be discussed. However, in one case the HoD participant was aware of these factors and commented on the value of engaging in reflective practice. They then indicated their conditions of practice in which they could reflect restricted their capacity to do so. This presents the idea that even if self-awareness is present, the cognitive and physical spaces required for reflection within the HoD role need consideration.

Leadership Dilemmas in Practice

Learning Processes: Single and Double-loop Learning. These learning processes emerged as products of HoD practices when faced with leadership dilemmas. Quantitative analysis revealed that when faced with a leadership dilemma, *all* HoD respondents had imagined a conversation prior to addressing it, checked upon their own assumptions whilst addressing an issue, and ruminated on the conversation afterwards. The majority (over 80%) imagined the conversation and ruminated either 'most of the time' or 'always'. The picture painted is inconsistent. Imagining the conversation prior to occurrence implies the HoD has an underlying expectation of how the conversation will go, based off their internal assumptions. Double-loop learning requires withholding internal assumptions (Argyris, 2003) to be able to listen and understand without judgement. This suggests that single-loop learning was regularly in use. Similarly, rumination over events implies the absence of critical reflective learning. However, the data showed the same HoD respondents reported checking on their own assumptions whilst addressing an issue. This is indicative of reflection-in-action (Argyris & Schön, 1974) and double-loop learning. These findings suggest that which was also evident earlier when looking at reported use of a dilemma management model; the espoused theory for productive learning actions and theory-in-use are not aligned.

Single-loop learning often happens as a result from wanting to protect oneself and/or others (Argyris, 1990; Cardno, 2020). This study's data indicated single-loop learning was sometimes a conscious choice for HoDs. The choice to employ Model I behaviours stemmed from two areas: external expectations and demands that restricted HoD capacity to deal with the dilemma (such as time availability), and awareness of what was required for their self-care. This further illustrates the intertwined relationship between the HoD as a person and the HoD role. These choices could be seen as a projection of the conditions of practice experienced within the HoD role. That is not to say that changing the conditions of practice for HoDs would result in Model II behaviours; Cardno (2001) indicates Model I behaviours occur as an instinctual behaviour to protect ones' self when dealing with dilemmas.

The use of Dilemma Management Models. For HoD participants who reported using a formal dilemma management model, data showed their mental well-being was more influential on the way that they managed teacher conflict and issues, and less influential on administration requirements, compared with those who did not use any model. They also experienced a much higher level of influence on their mental well-being for mentoring

teachers. This could be due to such models requiring consciousness of the influences of the person upon the situation. An increased awareness of the inter and intrapersonal aspects of the responsibilities may result in a greater awareness of the influences of and on ones' own mental well-being. Yet, leadership dilemmas negatively influenced HoD mental well-being regardless of whether participants reported using a model (or not). Similarly, the influences of leadership dilemmas on engagement in role responsibilities were not affected by use of a model. It may that participant responses were based on the perception that if they *knew* about a model, they therefore used it in practice. Thus, there are significant limitations for this grouping factor as a discussion point. It cannot be assumed the reported use of a dilemma management model indicates the model is in-use.

The Placement of Mental Well-Being. Quantitative findings revealed that mental well-being classification (WEMWBS) was a significant factor for determining the influences around leadership dilemmas in the HoD role. For participants with average to high mental well-being, managing leadership dilemmas simultaneously had a positive influence on their engagement in role responsibilities and a negative influence on their mental well-being. This indicates that engagement in leadership dilemmas improved their professional capacity, but to the detriment of their personal capacity. Perhaps of greater concern was those with low mental well-being. The influence of leadership dilemmas on both their engagement in role responsibilities and their mental well-being was negative. Findings indicated HoD mental well-being and engagement in role responsibilities co-exist with various levels of influence and dependency. The addition of leadership dilemmas into this space will be of further detriment to both the HoD's person and the role, if not addressed appropriately.

The reader should be wary that the in-practice application of dilemma management models could be a confounding factor for the above findings. Due to the limitations of this grouping variable (discussed above), the negative influences seen for those with low mental well-being should be acknowledged as somewhat over-generalised.

Summary

HoD mental well-being is a central component for engagement in role responsibilities and their accompanying leadership dilemmas, with the two elements co-existing in practice. The findings all suggest the HoD as person sits at the centre of HoD leadership practices. This creates the foundation for the key recommendations presented in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

As far as I can ascertain, this is currently the only research which focuses on mental well-being in relation to role responsibilities for HoDs in secondary schools in New Zealand. It is also among the first to examine the influences between mental well-being and experiences of leadership dilemmas for HoDs.

This study found a bidirectional association between role responsibilities related to teacher performance and mental well-being for HoDs in state secondary schools in New Zealand. HoD role responsibilities were moderately-highly influential on HoD mental well-being. Similarly, HoD mental well-being was moderately-highly influential on HoD's engagement in their role responsibilities related to teacher performance. These influences were often negative in practice. They co-existed in a cyclic nature, dependent on the HoD as a person and the socio-material conditions of the HoD role. Leadership dilemmas sat between the influences of HoD mental well-being and role responsibilities. Engaging in leadership dilemmas had a negative influence on HoD mental well-being. The influence of leadership dilemmas on HoDs engagement in role responsibilities was dependent on the HoDs existing mental well-being state.

Cognitive awareness and reflective learning processes influenced how a leadership dilemma was understood and managed. Potential implications of these metacognitive approaches were responses in HoD leadership practices and influences on the HoD's own mental well-being.

Conclusions

HoD role responsibilities related to teacher performance and HoD mental well-being can be conceptualised as interactive and inter-dependent**.** Regardless of the degree to which HoDs seek to separate their personal 'self' from their role, the two components do not exist independently in practice. This interconnectedness echoes the work of Branson (2005; 2007) and Larrivee (2000), who illustrate ones' self (concept) and ones' external behaviours are deeply inter-related.

Role Responsibility Influences on HoD Mental Well-Being

Engaging in HoD role responsibilities involving teacher performance was found to be moderately to highly influential on HoD mental well-being. The influences stemmed from three key areas:

- Increase in role responsibilities;
- Internal and external expectations of what the HoD role should look like in practice;
- Interactions between role responsibilities, stemming from trying to meet multiple needs.

These areas of the role presented negative influences on HoD mental well-being. Managing leadership dilemmas involving teacher performance was also found to have a negative influence on HoD mental well-being.

HoDs identified their ability to meet their role responsibilities to the *expected* standard was unattainable within the working conditions of the role. HoDs personally absorbed accountability and the negative by-products from engaging in their role responsibilities. From this, I propose two hypotheses:

1. The collective external *and* internal expectations contribute towards what is accepted (by the HoD) as part of the HoD role;
2. HoDs may internalise and accept negative influences stemming from their role responsibilities to protect their credibility as a leader. The internalisation allows the HoD to be seen externally as meeting the *expected* role responsibilities to the accepted level.

Mental Well-Being Influences on Engagement in HoD Role Responsibilities

This study found HoD mental well-being to be moderately to highly influential on HoD engagement in role responsibilities related to teacher performance. HoD mental well-being was a significant factor for how leadership dilemmas influenced engagement in the HoD role. Mental well-being was influential through the socio-material constructs of the HoD role. The social constructs were people focused. HoD role responsibilities called for decisions, feedback, and judgements from the HoD themselves. These were the external projections of the HoDs internal thoughts and processes. The material constructs were those which existed around

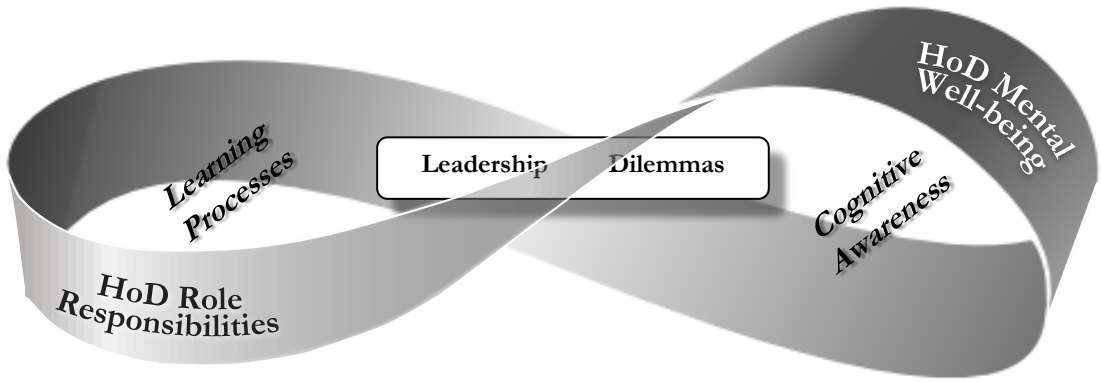
the role. They required tasks and actions which were external to the HoD. The ways HoDs processed the inter and intra-personal elements of their role influenced HoD external behaviours. These processing behaviours are reflective of the filtering system by Larrivee (2000). Similarly, how these processes projected onto HoD external behaviours is reflective of the model of 'The Self' (Branson, 2007). Those projections illustrate the internal-external interface of the HoD person and their role.

In practice, influences of HoD mental well-being emerged through the HoD employing methods for self-care. These methods influenced the ways HoDs engaged in role responsibilities. Approaches included acceptance of negative role influences upon the HoD, setting [mental] boundaries, and employing avoidance strategies for self-preservation. These self-protection approaches are reflective of defensive behaviours from Model I theory-in-use (Argyris, 1990; Cardno, 2012)**.** These approaches also create a type of double-bind. On the one hand, the approaches protect HoD mental well-being, enabling engagement in HoD role responsibilities. On the other hand, the approaches can have a negative influence on *how* HoDs are engaging with their role responsibilities. This then returns in a cyclic relationship to the HoD's mental well-being. As a result, this may hinder HoD professional learning and organisational learning.

Understanding Leadership Dilemmas

This study indicated leadership dilemmas sit within the interconnected space of HoD role responsibilities and HoD mental well-being. This is shown in Figure 24.

Figure 24
Understanding Leadership Dilemmas



The way HoDs understand leadership dilemmas is influenced by the HoDs learning processes and cognitive awareness. These metacognitive practices are products of the inseparable

interactivity between HoD role responsibilities and the HoD's own mental well-being. The presence of leadership dilemmas in the role influences the ways in which HoDs engage in learning processes. In turn, these are influential on both HoD mental well-being and the degree to which HoDs engage with their role responsibilities. These interactions all exist within the realm of the HoD as a person and the socio-material conditions of the HoD role.

HoDs indicated that dealing with leadership dilemmas could result in positive engagement in their role responsibilities. However, the dilemmas negatively influenced their mental well-being. This could be interpreted as a payoff. That is, the cost of the dilemma improving the HoD's professional practice is the HoD's mental well-being. This ties to a previous suggestion about HoD credibility. HoDs may willingly absorb the negative influences of leadership dilemmas on their mental well-being to protect how they are viewed as a leader.

The overall findings on leadership dilemmas suggest we cannot assume HoDs consciously make the connection between themselves and their role, based on what they are saying. It is also indicated we cannot assume HoDs are processing what is happening in their role and within themselves at a deeper level.

I propose that without HoDs having sufficient understanding of the influences existing around leadership dilemmas in the HoD role, this creates a higher-risk space for middle leadership PLD to occur. The risk is that, without understanding of the influences surrounding leadership dilemmas, the cost of applying 'best practice' approaches may be the HoD's own mental well-being. This risk and 'cost' would be initially owned by the HoD. The consequences of that HoD ownership then transfers to a risk for the wider school and potential organisational growth.

Strengths and Limitations

Strengths

Mixed Methods. The mixed methods approach in this study enabled a greater understanding of the influences between mental well-being and role responsibilities involving teacher performance, for HoDs in New Zealand state secondary schools. The online survey sample was large enough to allow some formative generalisations to be made. Alongside this, the semi-structured interviews provided potential reasons for why and how influences were existing in HoD lived experiences. Methodological triangulation provided a more complete picture for answering the research questions. With an exclusive quantitative or qualitative

approach, some of the inner nuances within the complex relationship of the HoD person and the HoD role would have likely been left undiscovered.

Contribution to the Field. The study is seemingly the first in New Zealand to provide mixed methods evidence which establishes a clear link between the influences of HoD mental well-being and HoD role responsibilities upon one another. This link adds a meaningful contribution to the small number of mixed methods studies focused on the HoD role in New Zealand schools.

Minimal literature on leadership dilemmas specifically looks at mental well-being. Whilst there may be two horns of a dilemma, these need to be seen not just in terms of role responsibilities and relationships but also in terms of mental well- being.

This research looks at what lies behind HoD role responsibilities and leadership dilemmas; it has looked at the 'other side' of the mobius strip (Figure 24). The interconnectivity of HoD mental well-being with New Zealand school leader leadership dilemmas has not actively been considered until now.

Limitations

Applicability of Findings. The online survey response rate was 43.1% and the complete responses able to be analysed were 29.2%. Thus, any conclusions must be considered with caution. The reasons for HoD (non)completion of the survey are unknown and these may be contributing factors to the bigger picture.

This study focused on HoDs in state secondary schools in New Zealand, who are all employed under the same collective agreement. Conclusions may not be applicable to other schooling contexts (e.g., private, primary, or international schools).

Cultural Considerations. A limitation of this study is the absence of cultural considerations. A study on Māori leadership (Roche et al., 2015) revealed mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) and tikanga (customs and practices) are integral to Māori leader well-being. Although there were similarities with some western theories on well-being, differences were evident. The placement of HoDs within differing cultural landscapes may significantly change the ways in which the HoD role and HoD mental well-being influence one another, and the ways in which leadership dilemmas are understood.

Gender Considerations. Quantitative analysis showed gender was a significant factor when looking at role responsibility influences from and towards HoD mental well-being. However, exploring gender as a factor was not a focus of the research aim. Due to this, gender differences were analysed in Chapter 4, but left unaddressed in discussion. Initial investigation indicated gender in educational leadership is a well-resourced area of research. One large-scale study of gender in head teacher (principal) positions identified significant differences in gender for lived experiences and implications on one's being (Coleman, 2003). Thus, this is an area potentially requiring further research. However, the findings from this study were not substantial enough to suggest this as a priority for middle leadership research.

Researcher Bias. A robust approach to thematic analysis allowed for reflexive coding of the interview transcripts. However, all coding and themes generated were by myself as the researcher/author. A secondary researcher was not used to validate the coding and themes, nor conduct independent analysis for collaboration and amalgamation of ideas. Additionally, I have been in an HoD position for the duration of the study. It could therefore be argued there is potential for researcher bias in the thematic analysis and methodological triangulation. At the same time, my experiential knowledge as an HoD may have enabled me to better understand the work of HoDs.

Defining Mental Well-Being. As mentioned in Chapter 1, I purposely chose not to define mental well-being within this study. This choice was to keep the study within the boundaries of a thesis work. I acknowledge that there is far more to mental well-being (and HoD mental well-being) than what has been presented.

Recommendations

Adjust Approaches to HoD Professional Learning and Development

Inclusion of Mental Well-Being Learnings. HoD mental well-being and applying professional learning to HoD practices exist in a dependent relationship; one cannot not exist effectively without the other. Learning about best practices without acknowledging the potential influences on and from HoD mental well-being may limit potential middle leader development. In applying best practice learnings, HoDs may be left vulnerable and personally absorb the costs of the applications. HoD role responsibilities also have a dependency on HoD mental well-being, for effective engagement in the role. HoDs understanding of the

influences, and increased awareness of their personal contributions, will help with this engagement.

It is recommended that middle leadership PLD on best practices should be done in conjunction with learnings about leader(ship) mental well-being. This is particularly necessary for PLD on leadership dilemmas.

Professional Learning and Development for Understanding (Leadership) Dilemmas. The mere existence of leadership dilemmas formed a condition of practice within the HoD role which may negatively influence HoD mental well-being. It follows that HoDs should engage in specific PLD for understanding and processing leadership dilemmas. This should go further than applying 'best practice' theoretical models; the learning should focus on their internal understanding and awareness of the internal processes which are happening and how they are then projected externally onto the situation.

From this, a more generalised recommendation is formed for more PLD related to metacognition; behaviours which optimise the chance and ability for learning to occur (Webb, 2021). Increasing HoD awareness of how differing perspectives and thinking could help with navigating complexity within the HoD role. Metacognitive practices have been suggested to provide benefit for leaders, teachers, students, and general school culture (Webb, 2021). Their application for managing contradictions is also indicated to play a role in organisational transformation from conflict (Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2017).

However, when considering metacognition in relation to ones' inner self, Larrivee notes "the process of becoming a reflective practitioner cannot be prescribed. It is a personal awareness discovery process" (2000, p. 296). Therefore, it is through the conscious and willing employment of intentional metacognitive practices in the HoD role which could optimise HoD leadership practices and enable greater autonomy over the potential influences on their mental well-being. These practices could help to better support HoDs in their role.

Reduce HoD Workload

Reduce Workload to Further Increase Role Effectiveness. This study highlighted that workload faced by HoDs was not proportional to the time allowances given within the role. Further to this, workload was often compiled of competing or conflicting needs, where one need was chosen to be prioritised at the expense of another. Therefore, workload must be reduced to provide HoDs with the physical time and mental space to address their

responsibilities using learned best practices described above. Consideration of the practical timings of competing needs would further help to create the space needed for the HoD to better engage in their role responsibilities and middle leadership practices.

Reduce Workload to Support HoD Mental Well-Being. Workload should also be reduced to help improve HoD mental well-being. The study's findings have shown a complex, bilateral relationship between HoD mental well-being and engagement in the HoD role. An improvement in HoD mental well-being would likely lead to improvements in role engagement. Consequently, departmental growth and organisational learning are more likely to occur. These may contribute to improving student learning outcomes.

Define the HoD Role

A key finding from this research was the HoD role exists as a complex socio-material construct, centred around the HoD as a person. Unbounded internal and external expectations of what HoD role responsibilities should look like in practice shaped the way HoDs were operating and existing within their role. Ambiguity around middle leadership definitions in schools has been emphasised in literature (Bassett, 2016; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013). A clearer understanding of the definition and expectations of an HoD role would help to align the various expectations of practice. This common understanding is needed across the HoD, department members, senior leaders, and the wider school.

Additional Research

Further Research into HoD Mental Well-Being

Although student well-being is a well-established area of research, educator well-being has been relatively overlooked (Shirley et al., 2020). One unintended finding of this research was a picture of the overall mental well-being scores for HoDs. Of all participants (n = 59), only 3.8% were classified by their WEMWBS score as having high mental well-being. Perhaps what is more concerning is that 32% were classified as having low mental well-being. WEMWBS population standards and multiple benchmarking approaches indicate around 15% of a population should fall within each of these categories. Furthermore, it is indicated that scores which fall within the low mental well-being category are indicative of possible/mild/clinical depression (Warwick Medical School, 2021b). Whilst this is outside of the scope of this study's

aims, these findings and the lack of research focused on middle leader well-being suggest that HoD mental well-being requires further attention.

This is particularly crucial considering the current teacher shortage being faced in New Zealand. Additionally, evidence about long-term mental health issues post covid-19 and involving long-covid are emerging (e.g., Peters et al., 2022; Vadivel et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2022). This will inevitably impact students, teachers, school leaders, and their families. Hence, the findings of this study on HoD mental well-being point to an essential direction for future research.

Positioning of Power and Hierarchy in Defining the HoD Role

This study illustrated it was accepted that the HoD role could negatively influence HoD mental well-being. Hierarchical power is something to consider within the acceptance of these influences. Field (2019) suggests that "managers driving school improvement might exercise power in order to influence teachers' perceptions of options and of what is acceptable" (p. 1110). It has been suggested that external expectations may contribute towards the shaping of what should be accepted parts of the HoD role. Thus, the influences of power and hierarchy in shaping the HoD role require further investigation.

Conclusion

The findings of this study have illustrated a complex, cyclic interactivity between HoD role responsibilities, HoD mental well-being, and leadership dilemmas involving teacher performance. HoD mental well-being has been highlighted as a significant factor for consideration in the wider HoD role, and when approaching leadership dilemmas involving teacher performance. Leadership dilemmas need to be considered not only in terms of their competing social and material horns, but also in terms of mental well-being.

HoD learning processes, cognitive awareness, the socio-material conditions of the role and the HoD as a person all influence and contribute to the ways in which the HoD role exists in practice. It is therefore critical that HoD mental well-being is a considered factor for understanding and approaching leadership dilemmas, as well as for future PLD for HoDs as middle leaders. Unless there is intentional PLD about critical reflective and metacognitive practices, HoDs will continue to experience the weight of leadership dilemmas that work against their mental well-being.

Personal Concluding Note

The learning involved in this study felt a little like a double-edge sword for my professional growth. At times, I put my leadership learnings into practice. Other times, I purposely chose not to engage; I knowingly put my leadership practices second. The energy and mindset demanded for both these approaches was not inconsequential to my being. I grappled with learning about 'best' practices, then choosing not to apply the learnings. There is some irony that I would have benefited from this study's own recommendations around professional learning, whilst learning on this research journey.

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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

2 August 2021

Howard Youngs

Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Howard

Re Ethics Application: **21/262 The interplay of leadership dilemmas and mental well-being for Heads of Department (HoDs) when dealing with teacher performance issues**

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

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 2 August 2024.

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 and that all the dates on the documents are updated.

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 and you need to meet all ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

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

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEC Secretariat

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: sjm7584@autuni.ac.nz

Appendix B (i): Interview Questions

Questions	*Optional prompts,* optional secondary questions
Intro questions/small talk 1. Teaching history and time in HoD role 2. Future intentions for career trajectory 3. Size of department and department/school structure 4. Any leadership training	*Motivations for becoming an HoD* *Leader-centric structures* *Line management/direct reports*
1. Definition: **When you hear the term leadership dilemma", what does that mean to you?**	
2. Can you please share an example of a recent leadership dilemma you found yourself in involving teacher performance	What effect/influence did the experience have on your mental wellbeing? What influence did the experience have on your future or immediate HoD leadership practices *involving potentially difficult situations with staff?* Did you apply any formal dilemma management model to your approach? *e.g., open-to-learning conversations, Triple I, DEER, defensive and productive dialogue*
3. In which ways (if any) does your mental well-being influence: a) your ability to engage in your role responsibilities? b) your dealing with potential leadership dilemmas involving teacher performance?	*Examples of role responsibilities: appraisal, leading PD and PL, developing trusting relationships with staff, liaising between SLT and the department etc (full list printed from survey if needed).*
4. In which ways do your HoD role responsibilities influence your: a) mental well-being? b) ability to deal with potential leadership dilemmas?	

AUT
TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU

Participant Information Sheet: Interviews

Date Information Sheet Produced: 2 August 2021

Project Title **The interplay of leadership dilemmas and mental well-being for Heads of Department (HoDs) when dealing with teacher performance issues**

An Invitation
My name is Freya England and I am a head of department at a secondary school in Auckland, NZ. This is an invitation for you to participate in an interview regarding your experiences in my research project.
The research methods have been developed in consultation with academic staff in AUT's School of Education as part of a master's thesis in educational leadership, Paper EDUC998.

What is the purpose of this research?
The purpose of this research is to investigate the following research questions:

How do leadership dilemmas and mental well-being interplay with one another for HoDs in NZ state secondary schools when dealing with teacher performance issues?

1. What are the associations, if any, between leadership dilemmas related to teacher performance issues and mental well-being for HoDs?

2. How do HODs perceive their mental well-being:
    a. influences their engagement with teacher performance issues?
    b. is influenced by teacher performance related dilemmas which arise within their department?

Leadership dilemmas arise when the needs of the organisation (the school) and the individual, or the relationship between individuals, are in conflict (Cardno, 2007, 2020).

This research will contribute partially to the fulfilment of the degree Master of Education Leadership at AUT, and 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?
Participants have been recruited based on their suitability for the research method: interviews. You have been randomly selected following your indication of interest in being interviewed from an online survey attached to this research project and are regarded as someone who fits the inclusion criteria for interviewing. The selection criteria for interviewee recruitment includes: HoDs in Auckland-based NZ state secondary schools.

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, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

A consent form for participating in this section of the research is attached to the same email as this information sheet.

What will happen in this research?
To prepare for the interview you will be asked to recall one or two previous leadership experiences where you have found yourself in a leadership dilemma which involved one or more member(s) of your department staff and is related in some way to teacher performance.
A semi-structured interview will take place in an agreed location such as a public library or AUT library meeting room. Semi-structured means that the questions and interview format are not formalised, and are adapted to the individual responses. Information is shared through narratives of the experiences above, open-ended questioning and prompts.

What are the discomforts and risks?
It is expected there will be little discomfort or risk to you, the participant, as you have full control over the experiences you wish to share, and the interview questions are not designed to be personally intrusive. You may find taking part in the research and sharing your experiences enjoyable.
In some situations, there may be the following risk/s to you:
It is possible others may be aware you participated in the research because you will be seen with me (the researcher) for the interview duration. However, what you reveal will be kept confidential to myself, with the de-identified coded transcript also being available to my AUT thesis supervisor and the professional transcriber, who are required to complete confidentiality agreements.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?
While it is unlikely for you to be affected negatively by taking part, if you reveal information in the process of data collection that makes you distressed, you can stop the data collection at any time. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to review and amend the interview transcript until you are satisfied with the final product to be used for analysis.

You are also offered the opportunity to seek additional help and support following your participation, if needed:
AUT Student Counselling and Mental Health is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to: drop into our centre at WB203 City Campus, email counselling@aut.ac.nz or call 921 9998. Let the receptionist know that you are a research participant and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet.

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on https://www.aut.ac.nz/student-life/student-support/counselling-and-mental-health

What are the benefits?
You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research, however it may help improve the quality of research conducted in an area with which you are associated. However, indirectly, you may find engaging in the interview triggers some reflection for you in regard to your work practices.
As the final product is a research thesis, your involvement contributes to my postgraduate qualification: Master of Educational Leadership.

How will my privacy be protected?
Your confidentiality will be preserved by you not being identified in any part of the research. Any responses used in the final submitted research project will be identified either by an abstract pseudonym or not at all if the data is aggregated (compiled into a summary).

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The cost associated with participation is your time. You can expect that your interview involvement will take 60 minutes, as well as the time required for travel to the interview location and time required to review your transcript.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Please consider this request and if you are interested in participating please contact me within two weeks of receiving this information sheet. If I have not heard from you by then I may follow up my invitation a second time.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

If you wish to receive a brief summary of the results of this aspect of the research, please indicate this on your consent form. This summary will be personally emailed to you after the completion of the research project.

Should you wish to learn of the overall results of this study, you will be able to access the full submitted thesis via the AUT database.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, *Howard Youngs, howard.youngs@aut.ac.nz, (09) 921 9999 extn 9633*

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, *ethics@aut.ac.nz* , (09) 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:

Freya England, sjm7584@autuni.ac.nz, (09) 415 9566 extn 2891

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Howard Youngs, howard.youngs@aut.ac.nz, *(09) 921 9999 extn 9633*

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 2 August 2021, AUTEC Reference number 21/262.

AUT
TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU

Consent Form

Project title: ***The interplay of leadership dilemmas and HoD mental well-being when dealing with teacher performance issues for HoDs in state secondary schools in NZ.***

Project Supervisor: ***Howard Youngs***

Researcher: ***Freya England***

- ○ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 2 August 2021.
- ○ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ○ I understand that notes may be taken during the interview and that it 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○

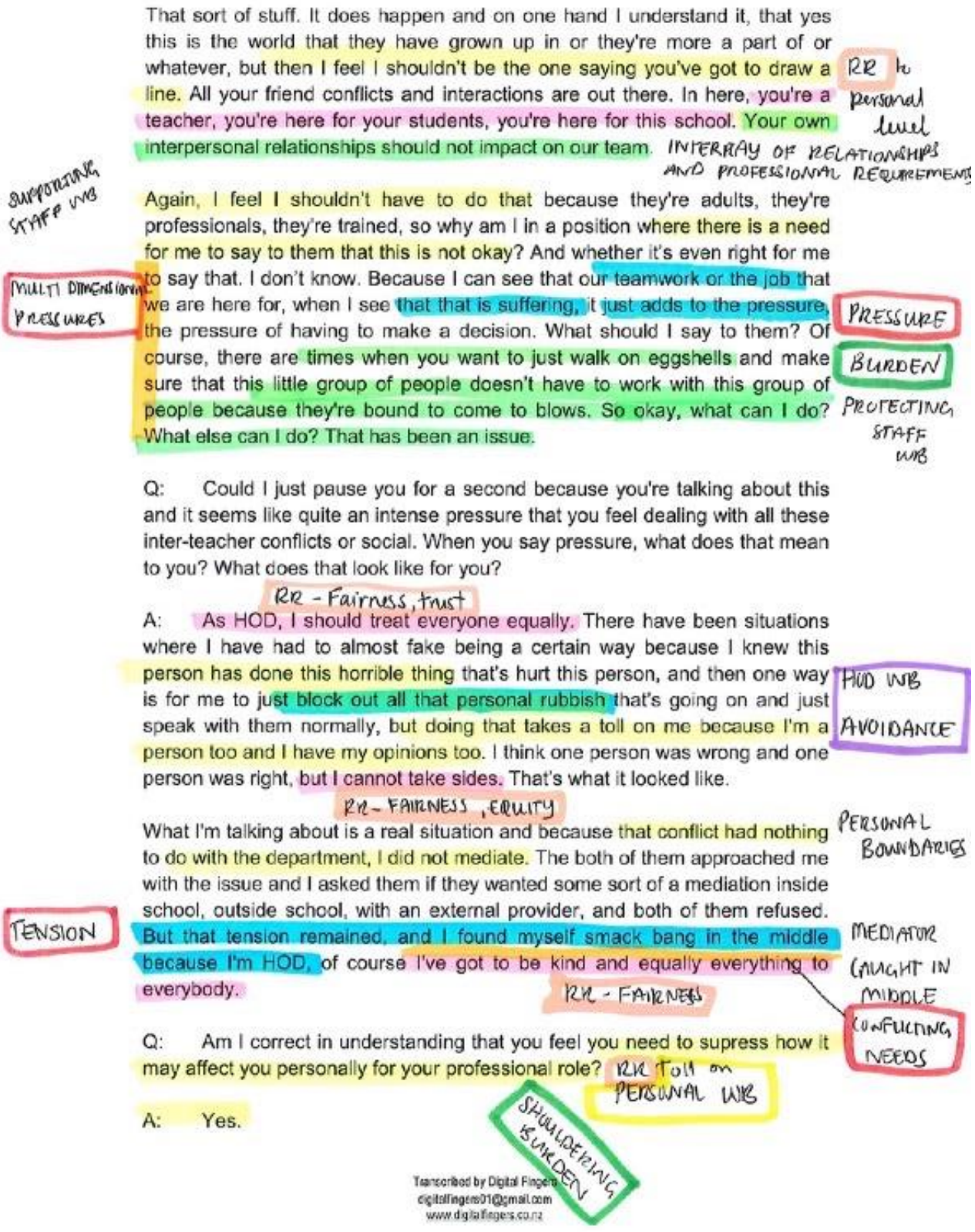
Participant's signature: .....

Participant's name: .....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 2 August 2021, AUTEC Reference number 21/262.

Appendix B (iv): Example of Thematic Coding (Primary)



That sort of stuff. It does happen and on one hand I understand it, that yes this is the world that they have grown up in or they're more a part of or whatever, but then I feel I shouldn't be the one saying you've got to draw a line. All your friend conflicts and interactions are out there. In here, you're a teacher, you're here for your students, you're here for this school. Your own interpersonal relationships should not impact on our team.

Again, I feel I shouldn't have to do that because they're adults, they're professionals, they're trained, so why am I in a position where there is a need for me to say to them that this is not okay? And whether it's even right for me to say that. I don't know. Because I can see that our teamwork or the job that we are here for, when I see that that is suffering, it just adds to the pressure, the pressure of having to make a decision. What should I say to them? Of course, there are times when you want to just walk on eggshells and make sure that this little group of people doesn't have to work with this group of people because they're bound to come to blows. So okay, what can I do? What else can I do? That has been an issue.

Q: Could I just pause you for a second because you're talking about this and it seems like quite an intense pressure that you feel dealing with all these inter-teacher conflicts or social. When you say pressure, what does that mean to you? What does that look like for you?

A: As HOD, I should treat everyone equally. There have been situations where I have had to almost fake being a certain way because I knew this person has done this horrible thing that's hurt this person, and then one way is for me to just block out all that personal rubbish that's going on and just speak with them normally, but doing that takes a toll on me because I'm a person too and I have my opinions too. I think one person was wrong and one person was right, but I cannot take sides. That's what it looked like.

What I'm talking about is a real situation and because that conflict had nothing to do with the department, I did not mediate. The both of them approached me with the issue and I asked them if they wanted some sort of a mediation inside school, outside school, with an external provider, and both of them refused. But that tension remained, and I found myself smack bang in the middle because I'm HOD, of course I've got to be kind and equally everything to everybody.

Q: Am I correct in understanding that you feel you need to supress how it may affect you personally for your professional role?

A: Yes.

Appendix B (v): Example of Thematic Coding (Tertiary)

Role Expectations	The HoD as a person	Learning processes	Power and Politics
Responsibilities	**HoD mental well-being**	**Ways of thinking**	**Structural barriers**
Requirements	Personal wb *vs*	Approaching dilemmas	Hierarchy
Student outcomes	professional wb	SLL/DLL	Control
Equality/equity for		Reflective practice	Power
staff	Personal values	Reflection	Mandates
Relationships	Sense-of-self	Model II	
Staff support	Home life	Distributed leadership	**Multi-directional**
Competence			**needs**
Problem solving	Burden	**Attributes**	'Stuck in the middle'
Staff professional	Weight	Ownership	Competing needs
responsibilities	Energy levels	Awareness	Conflicting needs
	Tolerance	Avoidance	Communication
Workload		Self-preservation	Expectations
Stress	Internalization	Mindset	
Pressure	Guilt	Trust	
Tension	Rumination	Communication	
Wb influence on role	Overwhelm		
wb influence on T&L	Anxiety	**Support**	
busyness		Professional support	
Time	**Tools and coping**	Professional	
Competing needs	**strategies**	development	
Implicit expectations	Self-care	Professional wellbeing	
"Part of the role"	Self-talk	Time	
	Acceptance	Sustaining role	
Protection of staff	Balance	Collaboration	
Protecting staff	Self-preservation		
Staff well-being	through avoidance		
Carrying burden	Boundaries		
Shouldering workload			
Shouldering			
responsibility			
Burnout			
Staff retention			
Relationships			

Appendix C (i): WEMWBS Non-Commercial Licence Email

Submission (ID: 539850196) receipt for the submission of /fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/using/non-commercial-licence-registration

no-reply@warwick.ac.uk <no-reply@warwick.ac.uk>

Fri 11/06/2021 7:04 PM

To: Freya England <sjm7584@autuni.ac.nz>

Thank you for completing the registration for a Licence to use WEMWBS for non-commercial purposes. You now have access to the scales and the associated resources here on our website: https://warwick.ac.uk/wemwbs/using/register/resources. We suggest you bookmark this page for future reference.

The information declared on your Registration Form is documented below. Please retain a copy of this email as a record of your Licence together with the Terms and Conditions you have accepted. https://warwick.ac.uk/wemwbs/using/non-commercial-licence-registration/shrink-wrap_licence_-wemwbs_non-_commercial_v3_8.9.20.pdf.

If you have any questions please contact us via email: wemwbs@warwick.ac.uk

Appendix C (ii): Online Survey

Information Sheet

Participant Information

- survey begins on the following page -

What is the purpose of this research? To investigate how leadership dilemmas and mental well-being interplay with one another for HoDs in NZ state secondary schools.
How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research? Your school was randomly selected from the MOE database, and your HoD contact details were located from your school website.
How do I agree to participate in this research? Your participation in this research is voluntary, confidential, and anonymous. Your consent is implicit in the completion of this survey. Please note you can choose to withdraw from the survey at any point until your response has been submitted. Once that has occurred your data cannot be identified or withdrawn.
What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation? The survey will be open for four weeks for participants. A 'reminder' email will be sent two weeks after initial contact via the software. As the survey is anonymous, the software will send the email only to those who have not yet clicked on the survey link. This information is not accessible to myself (the researcher) or any other persons involved in the research project.
What are the discomforts and risks and how will they be alleviated? It is expected there will be little discomfort or risk to you arising from the survey questions. While it is unlikely for you to be affected negatively, you are able to stop the online survey at any time and not continue. In this instance, no response will be recorded.
What are the benefits? You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research, however it may help improve the quality of research conducted in an area with which you are associated. You may find engaging in the survey triggers areas of professional reflection.
How will my privacy be protected? The survey is run through Qualtrics software. No data that would enable the identification of you will be gathered. Additionally, IP address identification of your digital device has been disabled for the survey so your data cannot be traced back to you. Participation is anonymous, that is, you are unable to be identified from your responses.
Will can I find results of this research? A results summary will be available on www.tinyurl.com/wellbeingresults from February/March 2022.
What do I do if I have concerns about this research? Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Howard Youngs, howard.youngs@aut.ac.nz, (09) 921 9999 extn 9633. Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, ethics@aut.ac.nz , (09) 921 9999 ext 6038.
Whom do I contact for further information about this research? Researcher Contact Details: Freya England, sjm7584@autuni.ac.nz, (09) 415 9566 extn 2891

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 02/08/21 AUTEC Reference number 21/262.

Demographic questions

Q1 **What is your identified gender?**

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female
- ◯ Non-binary / other gender
- ◯ Prefer not to say

Q2 **How many students are at your current school?**

- ◯ 500 or less
- ◯ 501 – 1000
- ◯ 1001 – 1500
- ◯ 1501 – 2000
- ◯ Over 2000

Q3 **How many years' experience do you have:**

In secondary education	
As an HoD at your current school	
As an HoD (total)	

Q4 **What subject area is your department?** *Tick all that apply*

- ☐ English
- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Social Sciences
- ☐ Humanities
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Performing Arts
- ☐ Visual Arts
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Languages
- ☐ PE and Health

☐ Other: ____

Q5 **Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale**

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)

Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts.
Please select the category that best describes your experience of each over the last two weeks, in relation to *your work environment as an HoD*.

	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	○	○	○	○	○
I've been feeling useful	○	○	○	○	○
I've been feeling relaxed	○	○	○	○	○
I've been feeling interested in other people	○	○	○	○	○
I've had energy to spare	○	○	○	○	○
I've been dealing with problems well	○	○	○	○	○
I've been thinking clearly	○	○	○	○	○
I've been feeling good about myself	○	○	○	○	○
I've been feeling close to other people	○	○	○	○	○
I've been feeling confident	○	○	○	○	○
I've been able to make up my own mind about things	○	○	○	○	○
I've been feeling loved	○	○	○	○	○
I've been interested in new things	○	○	○	○	○
I've been feeling cheerful	○	○	○	○	○

HoD perceptions: Influence of role responsibilities on mental well-being

Q6 **To what extent do the following HoD role responsibilities influence your mental well-being?**

This is measuring the degree of influence, whether positive or negative.

	No Influence	Low Influence	Moderate Influence	High Influence	Very High Influence
Leading a department within an organisation					
Implementing wider school goals to a department level	○	○	○	○	○
Liaising between senior leadership and teaching staff	○	○	○	○	○
Administration	○	○	○	○	○
Teacher performance					
Managing issues of teaching practice	○	○	○	○	○
Teacher observations and feedback	○	○	○	○	○
Mentoring and/or coaching teachers	○	○	○	○	○
Appraisal of teachers	○	○	○	○	○
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems	○	○	○	○	○
Professional learning environment					
Leading/facilitating professional development and learning	○	○	○	○	○
Curriculum development	○	○	○	○	○

	No Influence	Low Influence	Moderate Influence	High Influence	Very High Influence
Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment for both teachers and students	○	○	○	○	○
Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict	○	○	○	○	○

Influence of well-being on role responsibilities

Q7 **To what extent does your mental well-being influence your ability to *meaningfully* engage in the following HoD role responsibilities:**

This is measuring the degree of influence, whether positive or negative.

	No Influence	Low Influence	Moderate Influence	High Influence	Very High Influence
Leading a department within an organisation					
Implementing wider school goals to a department level	○	○	○	○	○
Liaising between senior leadership and teaching staff	○	○	○	○	○
Administration	○	○	○	○	○
Teacher performance					
Managing issues of teaching practice	○	○	○	○	○
Teacher observations and feedback	○	○	○	○	○
Mentoring and/or coaching teachers	○	○	○	○	○
Appraisal of teachers	○	○	○	○	○
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems	○	○	○	○	○

	No Influence	Low Influence	Moderate Influence	High Influence	Very High Influence
Professional learning environment					
Leading/facilitating professional development and learning	○	○	○	○	○
Curriculum development	○	○	○	○	○
Ensuring a trusting and safe learning environment for both teachers and students	○	○	○	○	○
Managing inter-teacher issues or conflict	○	○	○	○	○

Influence of LDs on role responsibilities

The following questions are regarding **leadership dilemmas**.

Leadership dilemmas are complex problems that are not easy to solve, and often involve teacher performance issues. A leader must meet the needs and expectations of the school, whilst simultaneously looking after the needs of the individual and maintaining their collegial relationship with them.
When these needs are conflicted or do not align, a leadership dilemma may occur.

Q8 **When managing a leadership dilemma involving teacher performance, how does this influence your *engagement* in:**

	Very Negative Influence	No Influence	Very Positive Influence
	-5	0	5
Managing issues of teaching practice		○	
Teacher observations and feedback		○	
Appraisal of teachers		○	

	Very Negative Influence	No Influence	Very Positive Influence
	-5	0	5
Working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems		○	
Administration requirements involving staff *e.g. reports, grading, moderation etc.*		○	

Q9 When managing a leadership dilemma, to what extent do you perceive the dilemma influences your mental well-being:

	Very Negative Influence	No Influence	Very positive Influence
	-5	0	5
A dilemma involving teacher observations and feedback		○	
A dilemma involving teacher appraisal		○	
A dilemma involving issues of teaching practice *incl. student concerns*		○	
A dilemma involving inter-teacher issues or conflict		○	
A dilemma in working with students' families, whānau, and caregivers to solve problems		○	
A dilemma involving administration requirements *e.g. reports, assessment. moderation etc.*		○	

Q10 When considering leadership dilemmas involving teacher performance issues, how frequently do you:

	Never	Some of the time	About half the time	Most of the time	Always
Imagine the conversation prior to addressing the issue	○	○	○	○	○

	Never	Some of the time	About half the time	Most of the time	Always
Consciously check on your own assumptions whilst addressing the issue	○	○	○	○	○
Ruminate on the conversation after addressing the issue	○	○	○	○	○

LD management models

Q11 **For a recent leadership dilemma, did you apply any of the following dilemma management models:**

- ☐ Approaches to open-to-learning conversations (Robinson et al., 2009 [BES])
- ☐ D.E.E.R (Robinson and Lai, 2006)
- ☐ Defensive and productive dialogue
- ☐ Deliberate acts of facilitation (DAF) (LeFevre et al., 2020)
- ☐ Dialogical coaching
- ☐ Model I and Model II (Argyris and Schön, 1974)
- ☐ Single/Double-loop learning
- ☐ Talanoa
- ☐ The ladder of inference
- ☐ Triple I (I3) (Cardno, 2012)
- ☐ No formal model used
- ☐ Other: ____

Appendix C (iii): Survey results – percentage distribution tables

Percentage Distributions: Leadership Dilemma Influences on Role Responsibilities

	Very negative influence					No influence					Very positive influence
	-5	**-4**	**-3**	**-2**	**-1**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Managing issues of teaching practice	0%	1.7%	5.1%	10.2%	8.5%	13.6%	16.9%	22.0%	18.6%	3.4%	0.0%
Teacher observations and feedback	0%	1.7%	1.7%	6.8%	10.2%	15.3%	23.7%	16.9%	15.3%	5.1%	3.4%
Appraisal of teachers	0%	1.7%	1.7%	8.5%	10.2%	22.0%	20.3%	11.9%	16.9%	3.4%	3.4%
Working with whānau	0%	3.4%	5.1%	1.7%	3.4%	30.5%	18.6%	16.9%	11.9%	6.8%	1.7%
Administration	3.4%	5.1%	3.4%	8.5%	15.3%	16.9%	5.1%	15.3%	18.6%	5.1%	3.4%

Percentage Distributions: Leadership Dilemma Influences on HoD Mental Well-Being

	Very negative influence					No influence					Very positive influence
	-5	**-4**	**-3**	**-2**	**-1**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Managing Issues of teaching practice	5.1%	5.1%	11.9%	23.7%	18.6%	8.5%	8.5%	8.5%	6.8%	3.4%	0
Teacher observations and feedback	0.0%	0.0%	11.9%	13.6%	27.1%	18.6%	10.2%	8.5%	5.1%	5.1%	0
Appraisal of teachers	0.0%	5.1%	11.9%	22.0%	18.6%	15.3%	8.5%	10.2%	6.8%	0.0%	1.7%
Working with whānau	1.7%	8.5%	1.7%	18.6%	20.3%	20.3%	10.2%	6.8%	10.2%	0.0%	1.7%
Administration	3.4%	3.4%	5.1%	13.6%	27.1%	25.4%	8.5%	6.8%	1.7%	3.4%	1.7%
Inter-teacher issues or conflict	3.4%	10.2%	13.6%	18.6%	22.0%	10.2%	5.1%	6.8%	3.4%	5.1%	1.7%

Confidentiality Agreement

Project title: ***The interplay of leadership dilemmas and HoD well-being when dealing with teacher performance issues for HoDs in state secondary schools in NZ.***

Project Supervisor: ***Howard Youngs***

Researcher: ***Freya England***

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