

**Border Crossing: Work-life Balance Issues
with Chinese Entrepreneurs
in New Zealand**

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Attestation of Authorship

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

Signed: _____

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Abstract

Work-life balance is a dominant discourse in contemporary Western society. It has been built on a language of large organizations, hence has not been widely considered in relation to the small-medium enterprise sector. As a consequence, scant research has been conducted on the experiences of immigrant entrepreneurs and work-life balance within the small-medium enterprise sector in New Zealand, a country largely populated with migrants and small businesses which account for 96 per cent of the total enterprises. This study aims to fill this gap by firstly exploring the interpretations of the concept of work-life balance by Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs and, secondly, the main challenges they face in achieving work-life balance. This is done by drawing on literatures including those on work-life balance, small-medium enterprises, and immigrant entrepreneurship theories. Primary research was conducted using a critical interpretive approach where the researcher is an insider to the study. This philosophical and methodological approach makes it possible to give a minority group a voice to effect social change and gain further research attention.

Fifteen Chinese business owners, chosen from a variety of industries within the Auckland region, participated in this study. A qualitative methodological technique and semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data for the case study on these entrepreneurs. The results indicate that the majority do not enjoy a sense of work-life balance because they take on filial obligations important for their own culture. They need to work hard to generate financial profit for the benefit of family. About half of them work more than 60 hours per week and three work longer than 70 hours weekly. The motivation for them to work in this way is to provide their family with desirable housing and to enable their children to meet higher education goals.

This study challenges the applicability of the work-life balance discourse among the immigrant entrepreneurs who perceive the concept differently based on their cultural values. The results emphasise the need for business case studies from Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs and research attention on contemporary human resource topics to be given to minority groups.

1 Introduction

Traditionally, work and family have been treated as independent spheres. It was not until the 1960s, when the influx of women participated in a variety of jobs in the labour market, that the separation of “work” and “family” began to be challenged (Clark, 2000; Lewis, 2003). By the 1970s, researchers assumed that work and family life were interdependent and that they were mutually influenced by each other (Clark, 2000). However, work and family were viewed as women’s issues or social issues instead of business issues. They only became business issues when they were introduced into employment policy by human resource professionals in the late 1980s (Frame & Hartog, 2003). In the 1990s, the term “work-life balance” (WLB) emerged and replaced discussions of “work and family”. This implies that work-life issues are no longer only just women’s issues or family issues. Work-life debates are now concerned with the needs of both genders, and the needs of those with family responsibilities as well as those without family obligations (Lewis, 2003).

The concept of WLB has been evolving for more than four decades; hence, there are various definitions of this term (Reiter, 2007). Clark (2000) defines it as “satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict” (p.751). Similarly, Blunsdon, Blyton, Reed, and Dastmalchian (2006) describe WLB as the successful integration of an individual’s life and work. According to Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, and Weitzman (2001), WLB is about how an individual simultaneously balances the temporal, emotional, and behavioural demands of both paid work and non-work activities. Adams, King, and King (1996) suggest that the relationship between work and family can significantly affect both job and life satisfaction. Pocock (2005) believes that WLB requires a broader definition as it links to several parties including individuals, enterprises and larger society.

During the last two decades, scholars and practitioners have developed many frameworks and theories concerning WLB. These include the ‘spill-over’ theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Lambert, 1990) and ‘work and family border’ theory by

Clark (2000). The former suggests that experiences in one domain can affect experiences in the other and the latter introduces the concepts of the work-family interface and corporate culture.

Scholars have found that both organisations and employees can benefit from WLB initiatives. Organisations can enhance recruitment and retention, reduce absenteeism and increase productivity. Employees benefit by maintaining healthy and rewarding lifestyles (Eaton, 2001; Evans, 2001; Konrad & Mangel, 2000; Lambert et al., 2006).

In the past decade, researchers have found that WLB is linked to organisational citizenship behaviour (Bolino & Turmley, 2005; Messer & White, 2006), which refers to employee behaviour that is above and beyond the call of duty and is therefore optional and not rewarded in the context of an organisation's formal reward structure (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994). Thus, organisational citizenship behaviour promotes the effective functioning of the organisation. Bolino and Turmley (2005) claim that since organisational citizenship behaviour can influence organisations in positive ways, it is possible for the employees who engage in such behaviours to face negative consequences. For this reason, some scholars (Bragger, Rodriguez-Srednicki, Kutcher, Indovino & Rosner, 2005; Lambert, 2000, Lambert et al., 2006) claim that such behaviour is related to work-family conflict. Bolino and Turmley (2005) also believe that engaging in such behaviour can result in role overload and job stress, thereby creating a sense of work-life imbalance.

New technology (Crooker, Smith & Tabak, 2002; Blyton & Dastmalchian, 2006), organizational culture such as overtime culture (Higgins & Duxbury, 2005), task culture (Alas & Vadi, 2004), and work intensification (Roberts, 2007) can also contribute to work-life imbalance.

Small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) are a unique environment in which to examine WLB as business and family are often intertwined in the same space, for example, the home based businesses. According to Cameron and Massey (1999), the family is never free of the business and the business is never free of the family within a

SME environment due to the complex boundaries between the individual, the family and the business. However, as Harris, Lewis and Massey (2005) point out, most of the studies of WLB are based in a large organisational context, and few studies in SMEs have been found. The traditional boundaries of work and life in SMEs are often not blurred. SMEs have fallen behind their larger counterparts in implementing WLB programmes (Arnold & Bevan, 2000).

According to Mason and Waring (2007), the New Zealand Government has allocated significant political and financial resources to WLB for almost two decades. However, the existing literature seldom mentions the business case for SMEs (Harris et al., 2005). The researcher is wondering why this is the case since SMEs make up the largest number of enterprises (96 per cent of the all enterprises) and employ the largest portion of the workers (30 per cent of all employees) in New Zealand (Ministry of Economic Development, 2006a). Yet, little is known about how those owner managers run their business life and personal life. A review of literature shows that there is no generally accepted SME definition and it is complex to define an SME (Coetzer, Cameron, Lewis, Massey & Harris, 2007).

The categorisation of SMEs by size differs in various countries. In the United States, a small business can have up to 500 employees (Small Business Administration, 2006) whilst in the UK, a medium enterprise is categorised as one which has fewer than 250 employees (Small Business Service UK, 2005). Even in New Zealand, there is disagreement between scholars and government departments. For example, Massey (2005) defines a micro business as having fewer than 5 employees, a small business as having 6-49 staff and a medium-sized business as having between 50 and 99 employees. From a government perspective, SMEs are defined as enterprises with 19 or fewer employees (Ministry of Economic Development, 2006b).

SMEs have proved an attractive business environment for recent migrants. Several scholars assert that through running and managing small businesses, immigrants have achieved upward social and economic mobility (Amit and Muller, 1995; Lofstrom, 2002). Some immigrant entrepreneurs are “Push” entrepreneurs who are pushed to start

a business as they are dissatisfied with their current position (Amit & Muller, 1995), which can be explained by the disadvantage theory (Kupferberg, 2003). Some are “Pull” entrepreneurs since they are attracted to engage in business activities by their new venture ideas and initiate venture activity (Amit & Muller, 1995). This can be supported by ethnic resource and ethnic enclave theories (Basu, 2004; Dana, 2006; Sequeira & Rasheed, 2006). There are a number of other theories associated with immigrant entrepreneurship such as the stepladder (Henderson, 2003; Raijman & Tienda, 2000), opportunity structure (Waldinger, Aldrich & Ward, 1990), risk taking (Gilmore, Carson and O'Donnell, 2004), middleman minority (Boyd & Xu, 2003; Bonacich, 1973) and sojourning theories (Zhou, 2004), which will be discussed in Chapter Two.

The Chinese have traditionally been the largest non-Polynesian, non-European ethnic community in New Zealand. Both early Chinese arrivals and recent immigrants have a preference for self-employment in running small businesses (Cameron & Massey, 2002; Ip, 2003). Many pioneer Chinese immigrants were sojourners who were motivated to come for “gold” (Ng, 2001, 2003) while more recent newcomers in the 1990s are attracted to New Zealand by the relaxing lifestyle, clean and green environment, political stability and a better education opportunities for their children (Friesen & Ip, 1997). Both groups experienced considerable challenges settling in New Zealand. The former suffered from a series of discriminatory laws such as poll-tax while the latter are often disadvantaged in the labour market. Early Chinese settlers and recent arrivals have shown a strong ability to challenge tough situations and succeed in establishing their own businesses due to the virtues of Chinese culture (Ip, 2003; Ng, 2001, 2003).

Little research has been done on WLB in the Chinese community, in particular from the perspective of immigrant entrepreneurs. As Wei (2007) cites, the government launched its “Work-Life Balance Project” in August 2003 to help New Zealanders to better manage their WLB. Nevertheless, none of the case studies from “The Project” was from the Asian community. This indicates that not all the communities in New Zealand are given equal attention in terms of WLB. Some minority groups, the Chinese for example, are excluded from such agenda. Hence, no one knows whether they have any

knowledge about WLB, or of how hard and how long they work.

As the Prime Minister, the Honourable Helen Clark (2005) said, the Chinese community is making a huge economic and social contribution to this country and the government both recognises and values their importance in New Zealand. According to Statistics New Zealand (2007a), the Chinese population in New Zealand is constantly growing. Given this situation, to conduct research it is necessary to explore what WLB means to Chinese business people and how they manage their business and personal life in New Zealand. This is significant because of the rapidly growing population of Chinese people in this country and their dynamic participation in the activities of the New Zealand economy.

1.1 Aims of the Research

Given the fact that there are 15,483 Chinese migrant businesses in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2007c), it is important to examine their motives for self-employment. It will be also meaningful to explore how they handle their multiple tasks and how they manage their personal and business lives. There have been no specific studies conducted on WLB issues for Chinese entrepreneurs. This research aims to examine the key factors that impact on Chinese immigrant small business owners in achieving a sense of WLB in New Zealand and the ways in which they deal with WLB issues. The specific objectives of this research are to:

- ✧ Contribute to the theoretical WLB literature from the perspective of a specific ethnic group in New Zealand.
- ✧ Explore the interpretation of the concept of WLB by Chinese migrant entrepreneurs.
- ✧ Determine the main factors that have led Chinese migrant entrepreneurs to experience perceived work-life imbalance.
- ✧ Discover the strategies Chinese migrant entrepreneurs use to deal with WLB

challenges and the sources of support they have used to restore a sense balance.

- ✧ Make recommendations about communicating the concept of WLB to Chinese people.

To achieve the above aims, this research has been conducted using a critical interpretive approach, in which the relationship between the researcher and the participants is subjective and the researcher is an insider. My position as a member of the same minority ethnic group as the participants has had important methodological implications because we have shared the same cultural backgrounds and experiences of migration. Being a student, an employee and a mother, I also have confronted work-life imbalance. With such personal experience, I can demonstrate empathy with them. The critical interpretive approach provides an understanding to the interpretation of WLB by Chinese entrepreneurs as it helps to investigate the nature and sources of inequalities and injustices that contribute to the exclusion of the Chinese community from the prevalent WLB discourse.

Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs are excluded from the WLB discourse because they are the 'Other', being SME owners and from a minority group. This philosophical and methodological approach makes it possible to get below the surface and understand the social setting from the position of the 'Other'. Semi-structured interviews were designed for the data collection, and case study analysis was employed for this study. These techniques enable the researcher to obtain rich and meaningful qualitative information, and also make it easier to communicate with those with less power than dominant ethnic group in New Zealand, respectfully and collaboratively, since the researcher is an insider. This research advocates for the building up of a channel of mutual understanding and communication between the Chinese community and the New Zealand government by giving Chinese entrepreneurs a voice and research attention.

1.2 Thesis Structure

This thesis consists of six chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter Two will review existing literature of WLB, SMEs and immigrant entrepreneurship. This includes an examination in definitions of WLB and employee responses to WLB programmes through the engagement in organisational citizenship behaviour, followed by an exploration of factors leading to work-life imbalance. A variety of definitions of SMEs used by scholars and government departments in different countries, the characteristics of SMEs, and their contribution to the diverse economic systems, will also be discussed. Immigrant entrepreneurship theories and Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs in New Zealand are also explored in this chapter.

In Chapter Three, the philosophical and methodological approach utilised for this research is outlined. A critical interpretive approach was adopted in order to represent the perspective of the less powerful, and to give participants a voice in the WLB discourse. Semi-structured interviews were employed for data collection and fifteen Chinese immigrant business people within the Auckland region were involved in this research. A qualitative methodological approach was employed for the case study analysis. Ethical issues surrounding this research will be discussed and limitations of the research will also be identified.

Chapter Four will present an analysis of participants' demographic and business information. It will firstly examine their gender, country of origin, age, education and marital status. Then, their work related background, including their occupational roles in their home country and in New Zealand, will be discussed. Finally, their current business information such as the type, size and ownership will be explored in detail. Their motives for establishing their own businesses and working long hours will also be analysed.

Chapter Five will focus on participants' responses to the issues of WLB, and particularly on identifying the key factors that underpin work-life imbalance. Four interlinked main themes emerge, namely, personal motivations, familial obligations,

finance and health. Sources of support which participants used to restore a perception of WLB are also presented.

The concluding chapter will summarize the main results of the research. Firstly, Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs in the WLB language can be seen as the “other”. They are excluded from this agenda as they are both an immigrant minority and SME owners. Secondly, this chapter provides four sample cases that reflect Chinese migrant entrepreneurs’ WLB experience in New Zealand and it also advocates such cases should be seen on WLB research web-pages. Thirdly, it is recommended that the government should give this minority group research attention and empower them to effect social change to improve their social circumstances. Finally, future research directions will be also identified.

2 Literature Review

This chapter reviews the literature in three main areas, namely, WLB, SMEs and immigrant entrepreneurship. It begins with an examination of definitions concerning WLB and employee responses to WLB programmes through engagement in organisational citizenship behaviour. Next a variety of definitions of SMEs used in different countries, their characteristics and their contributions to the different economic systems are examined. The responses and strategies of SMEs to the issues of WLB will be explored. Finally, a series of immigrant entrepreneurship theories will be reviewed and Chinese entrepreneurs in the New Zealand context will be discussed.

2.1 Work-life Balance

This section explores the literature on WLB. The first part focuses specifically on the background and definitions of this term. The next part includes a discussion of the benefits of WLB programmes for individuals and organisations, employee responses to WLB programmes through engagement in organisational citizenship behaviour and an exploration of the factors that underpin work-life imbalance.

The concept of WLB originated in a Western context (Lewis, Gambles & Rapoport, 2007) and it has been known as “work-family balance” (Clark, 2000; Fouad & Tinsley, 1997; Voydanoff, 2005), “work-personal life balance” (Burke, 2000; Lewis, 2003), “work-life integration” (Blyton & Dastmalchian, 2006; Polach, 2003; Russell, 2005), “work-personal life integration” (Lewis, Rapoport & Gambles, 2003), “work-family interaction” (Halpern, Drago & Boyle, 2005), and “work-family fit” (Clarke, Koch & Hill, 2004). Although these terms are slightly different in their wording, they are similar in meaning as they all focus on the issues of paid work and personal life. According to Lewis (2003), work-personal life debates have been continuing for over four decades and these terms have been evolving over that period of time.

Work and family were treated as independent spheres traditionally (Clark, 2000; Lewis, 2003). However, when the influx of women participated in a variety of jobs in the labour market in the 1960s, the separation of “work” and “family” began to be challenged (Lewis, 2003). From the 1970s, the need for integration of work and family received growing attention (Blunsdon et al., 2006). Similarly, Clark (2000) claims that by the 1970s, researchers assumed that work and family life were interdependent and they were mutually influenced by each other. Nonetheless, work and family issues were viewed as women’s issues or social issues at that time. It was not until the late 1980s, when such issues were presented in employment policy by human resource professionals they became business issues (Frame & Hartog 2003). For example, IBM developed the concept of work and family in the late 1970s and implemented work and family programmes during the 1980s (Hill, Jackson & Martinengo, 2006). In the 1990s, the term “work-life balance” emerged and replaced discussions of “work and family”. From that time on, work-life debates have been concerned with the needs of both genders and the needs of those with family responsibilities as well as those without family obligations. Work-life issues are no longer simply women’s issues or social issues (Lewis, 2003).

Similarly, Clark (2000) also reveals that during the late 1980s and 1990s, research has explored variables other than the two domains of work and family, which add more complexity to the linkages of these two domains, such as the individuals’ roles at work and at home and the supervisor’s supportive role in promoting WLB. Moreover, Rothbard and Dumas (2006) observe that through that period, research on WLB increased significantly. In the last two decades, scholars and practitioners have developed many frameworks and theories concerning WLB. These include the spill-over theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Lambert, 1990), which suggests that experiences in one domain can affect experiences in the other, and the work and family border theory (Clark, 2000) which introduces the concepts of the work-family interface and corporate culture.

As can be seen, the concept of WLB has been developing and changing since the 1960s. Thus, there are many and varied definitions of WLB (Reiter, 2007). However, as Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw (2003) observe, the WLB definitions are not fully consistent with one another and Lewis et al. (2003) point out that the term “work-life balance” remains problematic. Fleetwood (2007) even asserts that the phrase “work-life balance” is a slippery concept as he critiques that some definitions are persuasive while others are confusing. Moreover, according to Crompton (2006), WLB may be a misleading phrase as it implies that employees have managed to achieve balance between their work and personal life.

2.1.1 Defining Work-life Balance

Jones, Burke and Westman (2006) argue that “balance” refers to a 50:50 investment or allocation which is not a desired situation for all people. WLB is not simply a matter of time distributed equally in the workplace and at home. It cannot be weighed or simply calculated by a predetermined formula.

Clark (2000) defines WLB as the satisfaction and good functioning at both work and home with minimal role conflict. People have many roles to play, such as employer, manager, caregiver, parent, partner and child. When role demands from one domain tend to interfere with demands arising from the other domain, role conflict occurs (Tetrick & Buffardi, 2006). Once an individual confronts role conflict, it is unlikely that he or she can enjoy a feeling of balance. Hence, Clark’s (2000) definition means that WLB is how people play a successful role in both work and families with minimal role conflict.

Blunsdon et al. (2006) provide a similar definition of WLB to the one by Clark (2000). They describe WLB as the successful integration of an individual’s life and work. They also elaborate on this term by looking at psychological factors. Thus, they point out that WLB is about achieving a satisfying quality of life, overall satisfaction with less stress in managing role demands. Likewise, Hill et al. (2001) claim that WLB is about how an individual simultaneously balances the temporal, emotional, and behavioural demands

of both paid work and non-work activities. According to Adams et al. (1996), the relationship between work and family can significantly affect both job and life satisfaction. The level of involvement the individual assigns to work and family roles is associated with this relationship.

Based on the notion that people “can” and “should” hold a balanced orientation to multiple roles, Greenhaus et al. (2003) identify the possibility of positive and negative balance in their definition of WLB. According to them, positive balance suggests an equally high level of satisfaction with work and non-work roles while negative balance implies an equally low level of satisfaction with those roles. Their definition has three components that include time balance, involvement balance and satisfaction balance. They conceptualise balance as independent of an individual’s desires or values, which is consistent with the idea of Clark (2000).

In her work and family border theory, Clark (2000) argues that people can shape the nature of work and life to some degree to create a desired balance because individuals are border-crossers. They make daily transitions between these two domains, often refining their foci, goals, and interpersonal styles to fit the demands of each setting. From this viewpoint, WLB means different things to different people or different things to the same person at his or her different life stages. As Lewis et al. (2007) contend, the discourse of WLB can be located both historically and culturally. One can perceive these debates and concerns differently at different periods of time. In addition, people from diverse backgrounds may have different opinions about WLB mainly due to differences in their cultural values (Spector, Cooper, Poelmans, Allen, O’Driscoll, Sanchez, Siu, Dewe, Hart, Lu, De Moraes, Ostrognay, Sparks, Wong & Yu, 2004).

Polach (2003) asserts that cultural differences affect family decisions while MacDonald, Phipps, and Lethbridge (2005) posit that cultural background may have an effect on role expectations. In Yang’s (1996) study of the outcomes of work and family conflict, special attention has been drawn to different cultural values which are commonly known as individualism and collectivism. In individualistic cultures, value conflicts between work and family roles may be typical since people with this cultural

background tend to separate themselves from work and family domains. On the other hand, the roles people play in work and family in collectivistic cultures are more likely to be integrated.

One explanation for this, as Spector et al. (2004) point out, may be that people in western countries are more likely to live in nuclear families. Their key concern tends to be their own goals and preferences, and those of their direct nuclear families. In a collectivist culture, however, people see themselves as part of a larger social network which may include extended families and workgroups. Therefore, the former type of culture focuses on personal autonomy whereas the latter seeks for belongingness needs. In other words, individualism expresses the independent self while collectivism relates more to the interdependent self.

Yet, people from the same cultural background or even the same person in different career stages may value WLB differently. Barham, Gottlieb and Kelloway (1998) discover that managers work longer hours than their subordinates. A worker who aspires to move up to managerial level must also stay at work after standard working hours to be viewed as performing sufficiently. Blunsdon et al. (2006) describe this as “presenteeism” where people work long hours to show their commitment. This phenomenon has received some researchers’ attention. For example, Brett and Stroh (2003) raise the question: Why is it that managers work over 61 hours a week? Barham et al. (1998) believe that this is because managers’ jobs are normally important to the organisation. They are responsible for keeping the daily operation functioning smoothly as well as ensuring that tasks are assigned to employees reasonably. Therefore, managers are prepared to stay behind due to their complex and central role to the organisation. There is also a relationship between managers’ willingness and organisational rewards. Kofodimos (1990) asserts that organisations put pressure on managers to invest a great deal of energy into work, and reward them for doing so. Similarly, Brett and Stroh (2003) found from their study that the best explanations for managers working longer hours were the financial and psychological rewards.

Harris, Lewis and Massey (2005), and Lewis et al. (2007) argue that long working hours for some people may be viewed as a personal choice. These people include those in professional or managerial roles and small business owner-managers. As Loscocco and Leicht (1993) state, owners of small operations must be willing to work long hours in order to achieve business success. They are likely to have sole responsibility for deciding how hard they wish to push for business growth and how much financial benefit to take from the business. Therefore, some small business operators may decide to allow work to dominate over other aspects of life. They may be driven by personal goals for their business and financial obligations, and thus they may not see or care that working long hours will result in work-life imbalance.

Some other people, especially those from a lower socio-economic background, are often driven to ensure that their income covers their outgoings. They work longer hours and some participate in two jobs or more with the purpose of generating enough financial benefits to support their family (UMR Research, 2003). However, the findings from the survey by Sturges and Guest (2004) indicate that most participants in their study place their personal life as the first priority. Those participants believe that conflict between work and life domains would increase by working long hours. They may choose to leave the organisation if the balance between work life and personal life becomes out of kilter.

It is clear that the “right” balance is a very personal thing; no easy or quick fixes can be found and there are no “one size fits all” solutions (Lewis et al., 2003). The cited definitions of WLB are not completely consistent with each other (Greenhaus et al., 2003) as they are from diverse perspectives and reflect different cultural backgrounds, career expectations, and personal choices. The existing literature of work and life balance has acknowledged the degree of its inconsistency. In order to successfully implement WLB programmes, organisations need to consider the definition of WLB in depth.

As a large number of studies on WLB have been conducted in the last two decades, some researchers have found that organisations gain benefits through implementing

WLB initiatives, which also have impact on the employees' organisational citizenship behaviour. The following section is going to examine these areas.

2.1.2 Work-life Balance and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Some scholars have found that both employees and organisations can benefit from WLB initiatives. By adopting those programmes, organisations can reduce recruitment costs and improve employee performance. As a result, organisations can increase their business profit (Eaton, 2001; Evans, 2001; Konrad & Mangel, 2000; Lambert et al., 2006; Papalexandris & Kramar, 1997). For these reasons, many organisations provide WLB initiatives partly to assist employees to balance their work and life but mainly to obtain those benefits for the organisations themselves at the same time. WLB initiatives consist of various individual benefits including flexible work arrangements, leave programmes and dependent care (Lambert et al., 2006; Macky & Johnson, 2003).

Papalexandris and Kramar (1997) claim that one of the WLB initiatives, flexible working arrangements, can be used as a way of recruiting and retaining staff. Flexibility is the ability to change the temporal and spatial boundaries of an individual's job (Eaton, 2001). Ortega (2006) sees employees as the heart and soul of an organisation and consequently hiring and retaining good employees are priorities for almost every company in all industries. Eaton (2001) points out that all employees occasionally require day-to-day flexibility to manage demands arising from both work and family lives. Many of them need flexibility to take time to deal with family matters, such as visiting children's schools and taking elderly family members to the doctor. Dex and Scheibl (2001) also found from their study that flexible arrangements can help employees address their needs during a family emergency. WLB programmes, such as flexibility, provide an incentive for people to join or stay with the organisations (Konrad & Mangel, 2000). In other words, organisations can improve their recruitment and retention by implementing WLB programmes.

In addition, WLB programmes can help organisations to reduce lateness and absenteeism (Judge & Ilies, 2004; Sturges & Guest, 2004). Lateness and absenteeism

usually happen when employees face family problems. Looking after dependent children is a critical one as working parents need a nurturing and safe place for their children whilst working (Ortega, 2006). Therefore, Gault and Lovell (2005), and Ortega (2006) believe that childcare is an essential programme that assists employees in tackling their main problem. Organisations that offer childcare help to fix employees' problems, thus reducing lateness and absenteeism. In addition, Eaton (2001) notes that other programmes, such as flexible working hours can also help decrease absenteeism. This is because flexibility is linked with job satisfaction and motivation and hence higher organisational commitment can be achieved. Osterman (1995) defines organisational commitment as the employees' willingness to engage themselves with, and offer their ideas and knowledge voluntarily to the workplace.

Organisations can increase productivity by enhancing recruitment and retention, reducing lateness and absenteeism. This is because better recruitment and retention enable organisations to attract and maintain a qualified workforce. Talented staff can then provide more innovative and creative ideas to facilitate increased productivity. Besides, low rates of lateness and absenteeism can help increase productivity as employees can be fully employed. Moreover, when all employees come to work punctually, no one is required to cover for latecomers. Disagreement and conflict between managers and employees due to the requirement of extra work may be reduced and result in creating a harmonious environment and improving employees' morale. This may also encourage workers to put further effort into completing their tasks due to an unwritten contract between employers and employees. Employees may be motivated physically and psychologically to exert extra effort when they perceive that their employers are providing them with a better working environment and potential career prospects or other competitive conditions. These factors may shape the employees' behaviour in ways that benefit organisations. This is known as organisational citizenship behaviour (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Schnake, 1991).

2.1.2.1 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Over the past decade, a number of studies have focused on the link between WLB and organisational citizenship behaviour (Bolino & Turmley, 2005; Bragger et al., 2005; Messer & White, 2006). Organisational citizenship behaviour, as defined by Konovsky and Pugh (1994), is employee behaviour that is above and beyond the call of duty and is therefore optional and not rewarded in the context of an organisation's formal reward structure. Similarly, Schnake (1991) describes organisational citizenship behaviour as the behaviour that goes beyond the formal job descriptions and is desired by an organisation. Coming to the workplace early, helping colleagues who cannot reach expected performance standards, volunteering for extra tasks, providing suggestions that can improve the department or organisation, are some examples of organisational citizenship behaviour. It is clear that organisational citizenship behaviour promotes the effective functioning of the organisation.

Some researchers have found that supportive leaders or supervisors play a key role in influencing organisational citizenship behaviour (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine & Bachrach, 2000). Podsakoff et al. (2000) suggest that employees who are given satisfying tasks and work from transformational or supportive leaders are likely to engage in organisational citizenship behaviour. In contrast, when a supervisor is not supportive of an employee's family needs, stress at both work and home may be generated which could result in poor health (Papalexandris & Kramar, 1997). Therefore, the supervisor's role is critical as it promotes organisational citizenship behaviour and mitigates conflict. Konovsky and Pugh (1994) and Organ and Ryan (1995) suggest that employees are most likely to exhibit organisational citizenship behaviour if they are satisfied with their jobs, or are committed to their organisations, and feel that they are being treated fairly.

Konovsky and Pugh (1994), apply a social exchange model to explain the importance of supervisor fairness to an employee's organisational citizenship behaviour. Under the social exchange framework, there is an informal contract between an employee and his/her organisation. The employee's supervisor generally represents the organisation in

the eye of the employee. When supervisors, who represent the organisation, treat employees fairly, norms of social exchange and reciprocity direct the employees to reciprocate in the form of organisational citizenship behaviour. In other words, organisational citizenship behaviour is a term for one form of employee reciprocation (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994).

According to Bragger et al. (2005), Lambert (2000), Lambert et al. (2006), organisational citizenship behaviour is related to work-family conflict. Bragger et al. (2005) found from their study that organisational citizenship behaviour was related inversely to work-family conflict. As defined by Adams et al., (1996), work-family conflict occurs when demands of participation at work are incompatible with demands of participation in non-work life. Bragger et al. (2005) suggest that organisational citizenship behaviour tends to increase when work-family conflict decreases. Therefore, people with low levels of work-family conflict are likely to be able to participate in both work and non-work domains successfully. When the demands from these two areas can be handled compatibly, people will perform well at work. Organisational citizenship behaviour can be increased as these employees are ready to undertake extra-job activities such as helping others.

Lambert (2000) suggests that organisational citizenship behaviour can be increased by promoting the benefits of work-life programmes. Through her empirical research, she notes that those work-life benefits have close links to organisational citizenship behaviour. She points out that the more useful workers find work-life benefits, the more likely they are to engage in citizenship behaviour at both the organisational level, for instance, willingness to attend non-required meetings and submission of suggestions for improvement; and at the individual level, such as assisting co-workers and supervisors with extra job responsibilities. This may be better explained by the gift exchange model (Konrad & Mangel, 2000). The idea of this model implies that work-life programmes provide benefits to employees. In return employees give gifts to the organisation by exerting their discretionary effort to perform beyond their responsibilities. This can

enhance the psychological contract in which the needs of both employee and employer are met.

Some studies have documented that organisational citizenship behaviour, job satisfaction, work-family conflict, and life satisfaction are all related to one another (Lambert, 2000; Organ & Lingl, 1995). Job satisfaction, as defined by Stone (2005), refers to the extent to which employees have positive attitudes towards their jobs. The common facets of job satisfaction include pay, promotion opportunities, fringe benefits, job conditions, and job security. Employees will experience job satisfaction if they gain a pay rise or are promoted to a higher position. Their organisational citizenship behaviour should increase as a result. This has been confirmed by several researchers. For example, Organ and Lingl (1995) found that more than 15 independent studies have shown a reliable statistical relationship between organisational citizenship behaviour and job satisfaction. Similarly, Schnake (1991) declares that job satisfaction is certainly related to organisational citizenship behaviour.

Furthermore, Lambert (2000) found from her research that higher levels of job satisfaction help to increase organisational citizenship behaviour and reduce work-family conflict. Moreover, low levels of work-family conflict may be associated with higher levels of life satisfaction. This is because when employees experience job satisfaction, they may be very much personally involved in their job and most of their interests are job related. The spill-over of job satisfaction creates positive moods that influence their family life at home. Emotions and behaviours in one domain, either work or family, carry over to the other (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Thus, low levels of work-family conflict and high levels of family satisfaction can be achieved (Judge & Ilies, 2004).

However, several researchers express different viewpoints. For example, Bolino and Turmley (2005) declare that so long as organisational citizenship behaviour can affect organisations in positive ways, it is also possible for the employees who engage in such behaviours to have negative consequences. Organ and Ryan (1995) also suggest that being a good organisational citizen could contribute to stress and overload to the

employee. Additionally, there may be other personal costs such as work–family conflict that are imposed on individuals who engage in high levels of organisational citizenship behaviour. From their empirical study, Bolino and Turmley (2005) assert that high levels of organisational citizenship behaviour, seen as individual initiative, are associated with high levels of employee role overload, job stress, and work-family conflict.

Similarly, Organ (1997) suggests that employees contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the social and psychological context which supports role performance. Thus, they go the extra mile for their companies and contribute to high performance. They volunteer to undertake extra responsibilities, such as going to work in the weekends, coming early to the office and staying late for special projects in addition to one's normal job duties (Bolino & Turmley, 2005). These workaholics will then have work-family conflict as they spend more time at work and thus reduce time spent with their family members. People's attitudes and behaviours towards work may lead to work-life imbalance. In addition, some researchers have documented that work-life imbalance may also be derived from a number of uncontrollable factors such as new technology and organisational culture.

2.1.2.2 Work-life Balance and Blurred Boundaries

As Lewis (2003) notes, temporal and spatial boundaries between work and life have become more and more blurred because working hours have increased in the global twenty-four hour market place, and in the meantime, space and distance are compressed by communication and information technology. According to Blyton and Dastmalchian (2006), international boundaries are rapidly waning in many regions of the world as a result of advances in information technology. Kalleberg and Epstein (2001) also state that cellular phones, computers, and other advances in communication technology have contributed to some work being carried out from anywhere and for twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week (hereafter referred to as 24/7).

According to Crooker, Smith and Tabak (2002), pagers, faxes, cellular phones, laptop computers and e-mail are options which enable communication in all domains of life.

However, buzzing pagers during a family activity or community events infringe people's quality time in their non-work life. Furthermore, Spector et al (2004) claim that new technologies are placing growing demands on many working people. They can be reached on a 24/7 basis and this 24/7 access may distract them from personal matters. Work-family conflict may increase along with the extended work space and time.

Work is no longer for many contained within the walls of the workplace. New technology blurs boundaries creating work-life imbalance, particularly those in the professional or managerial ranks. According to the results in the 2002 National Study of the Changing Workforce in the USA, 62 per cent of participants who are managers and professionals use a computer at home for job-related work, 39 per cent of these participants read and send work-related e-mails at home, 28 per cent of them reveal that they have been contacted many times per week about work matters in their private time. (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky & Prottas, 2002). Middleton and Cukier (2006) also found from their study that the usage of mobile communication technologies, such as cellular phones and mobile email can not only be dangerous, distracting and anti-social, but these new technologies can also blur work-life boundaries. This data indicates a trend for people to work while away from the workplace due to the adoption of new information technology.

At the same time, some writers note that organisational culture may be another variable that exerts a negative influence on WLB (Alas & Vadi, 2004; Frame & Hartog, 2003; Lingard & Francis, 2005). Organisational culture is a complex set of values, beliefs, assumptions, and symbols that describe how an organisation performs its business (Barney, 1986). Thus, it can be seen as a powerful driving force in developing expectations and shaping behaviour (Clark, 2000). According to Robbins, Millett, Cacioppe, and Waters-Marsh (2001), this unwritten culture defines for employees what are acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. Sometimes informal cultures may be viewed as being equally important as formal policies in achieving WLB for employees (Bond, 2004).

For example, as UMR Research (UMR Research, 2003) notes, many organisations encourage the practice of working beyond standard hours. In this overtime culture, an individual is assumed to work long hours to perform appropriately. An employee will feel guilty if he or she leaves the office earlier while others are still at work there (Higgins & Duxbury, 2005). Some industries exhibit these typical cultural characteristics, such as the construction industry (Lingard & Francis, 2005) and British industry (Frame & Hartog, 2003; Woodward, 2007). Furthermore, Lingard and Francis (2005) found that the construction industry not only has a culture of working long hours, but also weekend working. In fact, many industries, which include real estate, travel and hospitality, have a similar situation. People who work in those industries may experience work-life imbalance as spending time on one domain reduces available time for the other, namely, time for non-work life.

Similarly, some other organisational cultures, for instance, “task culture” or “results-oriented culture” may also bring pressure on WLB. This culture focuses on the superiority of the goals of the organisation over employees’ personal goals (Alas & Vadi, 2004). In a task oriented environment, people may be driven to “over-perform” to attract new clients and retain old ones (Pocock, 2005). Employees are pushed to achieve the expected target (Higgins & Duxbury, 2005). Such unwritten rules may lead to employees suffering from work-life imbalance.

According to Roberts (2007), work intensification has considerable impact on WLB. Nowadays, more and more people in the workforce have come under pressure to take on multi-tasks and more responsibilities. They spend lunch hour and tea breaks at their desks to catch-up on reading and paperwork. Therefore, even if they work standard hours, they are likely to feel that their work is making greater demands on them and influencing their overall quality of life.

However, as Eikhof, Warhurst and Haunschild (2007) point out, although their research has shown that some employees manage to separate and balance their work and life, for other people, work and life are intertwined and amalgamated. This is because people do not or cannot distinguish between, and separate, work and life. Eikhof et al. (2007) also

assert that achieving WLB can depend on people's work attitudes. For some small or family business owners, their work attitudes can be very different due to the complex boundaries between the individual, the family and the business. The family is never free of the business and the business is never free of the family within a SME environment (Cameron & Massey, 1999).

Having examined WLB in general terms, the following section will focus on WLB in the SME context.

2.2 SMEs and Work-life Balance

According to Massey (2005), in the 21st century, small firms can be seen as a vital form of economic activity, making a unique contribution to their local and regional communities. Massey also argues that small enterprises are not infant large enterprises and in fact they have a distinct and separate role to play in the economy. Similarly, Farhoomand and Sethi (2005) also declare that small businesses and entrepreneurs play an unquestionably important role in the economic and social life of a region. They have been seen worldwide as crucial contributors to economic development, job creation, and the general health and welfare of economies (Morrison, Breen & Ali, 2003).

2.2.1 Examining SMEs

Across the globe, SMEs have made a considerable contribution to most economic systems (Farhoomand & Sethi, 2005). For example, in the U.S., small firms created more than six million new jobs in the last decade. They have accounted for nearly 90 per cent of the net new jobs and employed nearly half of the American workforce in recent years. Their success is significant for the economy (Deshpande & Golhar, 1994). In the UK, as estimated by the Department of Trade and Industry in 2004, 99.9 per cent of the 4.3 million business enterprises were SMEs. They accounted for more than half (51.3 per cent) of the UK's estimated business turnover (The Department of Trade and Industry, 2005). In Canada, SMEs employed approximately 65 per cent of all employees in the private sector and they accounted for approximately 22 per cent of nation's GDP

in 2004 (Ministry of Economic Development, 2006a). In Australia, it is estimated that there were 1,233,200 private small businesses during 2000-2001. They accounted for 97 per cent of all the private sector businesses (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002a).

The role of SMEs in China is growing. They produce 60 per cent of the gross industrial output, 40 per cent of the profit in the industry, and their products account for 60 per cent of total exports. SMEs are extremely important for providing social stability and incomes in different provinces in China (Fan, 2003). By 1999, there were 10 million registered small businesses in China. These small firms are making an increasingly important contribution to Chinese income and employment (Anderson, Li, Harrison & Robson, 2003). In Hong Kong, SMEs accounted for about 98 per cent of the total establishments and employed about 60 per cent of the total labour force in 2004 (Farhoomand & Sethi, 2005). According to the New Zealand Ministry of Economic Development (2006a), New Zealand is predominantly a country of small businesses, which make up the largest number of enterprises and generally employ the largest portion of the workers. During 2003 and 2004, SMEs accounted for 39 per cent of the national economy's total output. They accounted for 96 per cent of the total businesses and employed thirty percent of the entire workforce in 2005. Given these facts, it is clear that SMEs contribute greatly to the economic development both internationally and nationally.

Since SMEs are so important, it is worthwhile to examine the nature of a small business. Cameron and Massey (1999) describe a small business as a business entity managed independently by the owners. They have a small number of employees and the owners hold most of the shares and provide most of the finance as well as make most of the major decisions. Hamilton and English (1993) suggest that there are three types of small businesses, namely, owner-operator, owner-manager and owner-director businesses. The first one is the most common and the smallest type, in which the owner spends the bulk of his or her time in the operational role. When the business grows to a bigger scale, with over ten employees for example, the owner then moves to a managerial role to delegate tasks and control the business. As the business continues to grow, the number

of staff increases then the owner-director type appears. In this type of business, the owner moves his or her managerial role to a directing role. Hamilton and English (1993) also explain that informal management structures apply mostly in the owner-operator and owner-manager businesses; whilst in the owner-director one, a formal management structure is introduced and the administrative system is mainly based on paperwork to facilitate the development of the business. Based on the above characteristics, a small business is easy to set up and to manage since the owner has a high level of independence.

However, small businesses have a high bankruptcy rate and therefore, maintaining business growth and long-term survival are vital issues (Zhang, 2000). Morrison et al. (2003) identify a number of factors that inhibit small businesses to grow such as unhelpful local government approach to business development, weak power position in the industry and markets, and constrained managerial competencies. Lewis, Massey, Ashby, Coetzer and Harris (2007) conducted a research exploring successful provision of business assistance for SMEs in New Zealand. The results of the research indicate that the Ministry of Economic Development is the least useful source of business assistance assessed by the participants. This is likely to imply that SME owners are not able to get much help from this local government department.

Also, SMEs have less power compared with their larger counterparts within the industry sector and markets, due to limited resources and the scope of the businesses. They do not have much power to bargain with their suppliers and customers. In order to grow and acquire abilities for long-term survival, SMEs have to enhance their managerial competencies (Morrison et al., 2003; Zhang, 2000). Strategy management is one of these competencies. Verreynne (2004) found from her empirical study that the strategy-making process is related to company performance. From the results of interviewing 50 SME owner managers, Coetzer, Cameron, Lewis, Massey and Harris (2007) conclude that “New Zealand SMEs are not managing their human resources as effectively as they might do” (p.17). Therefore, Zhang (2000) suggests that small

business managers have to devote their attention to the learning of fundamental managerial knowledge.

At the same time, some researchers have found that Eastern small businesses and their Western counterparts have different styles in running their business (Siu & Kirby, 1999). Siu and Kirby (1999) draw this conclusion by comparing Chinese small business and American small firms. They found that Chinese small firms are production oriented while American small firms are customer oriented. In addition, they also found that Chinese small businesses have limited marketing expenditure and their owner-managers have limited marketing experience. Moreover, Chinese small firms do little strategic marketing planning. SME managers in different regions may hold different attitudes and have different behaviours in running their business. Besides this, the definition of SMEs varies among countries.

It is interesting to note that there are great discrepancies between the definitions of SMEs formulated by scholars and those of government departments. From the viewpoint of academics, Dex and Scheibl (2001), researchers in UK, classify a SME as an organisation with fewer than 500 employees. Within New Zealand, Cameron and Massey (1999) define a micro business as having fewer than 5 employees, a small business as having 6-49 staff and a medium-sized business as having between 50 and 99 employees. But in Hong Kong, manufacturing enterprises with fewer than 100 employees and non-manufacturing enterprises with fewer than 50 employees belong to the category of SMEs (Farhoomand & Sethi, 2005).

On the other hand, from the perspectives of governments, SMEs are defined differently. According to the Small Business Service UK (2005), there is no universally accepted classification of a small, medium or large business. But it refers to the definition, used for EU statistical purpose, which defines a small enterprise as one with fewer than 50 employees, and a medium enterprise as having at least 50 and fewer than 250 employees. Large enterprises have 250 or more employees (Small Business Service UK, 2005). In the United States, classification for business size depends on the industry. A small business in most industries does not exceed 500 employees (Small Business

Administration, 2006). In Australia, a micro business is one with fewer than 5 employees, a small business is one with 5-19 employees and a medium-sized business has between 20-200 employees (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002). In New Zealand, however, SMEs are defined as enterprises with 19 or fewer employees (Ministry of Economic Development, 2006b).

Despite the fact that definitions of SMEs differ considerably between countries, SMEs are generally found to fall behind their larger counterparts in terms of providing WLB programmes.

2.2.2 Work-life Balance and SMEs

As Harris et al. (2005) suggest, the traditional boundaries of work and life in SMEs are more often than not blurred. Most of the studies of WLB are based in the large organisation context. WLB policies are often correlated with the luxury domain of larger businesses. Also, Arnold and Bevan (2000) see SMEs as falling behind their larger counterparts in implementing WLB initiatives. They cite the studies conducted by the Department for Education and Employment in 1997 and by the Department of Trade and Industry in 1999 as evidence concluded that employees in SMEs are unlikely to enjoy work-life benefits.

There are a number of factors that contribute to this situation. As some researchers (Hyman, Baldry, Scholarios & Bunzel, 2003; Hyman & Summers, 2004; McKay, 2001) argue, the main reason for employers to introduce WLB programmes is to meet their business needs rather than those of the employees. Larger organisations are seen to have more business competitive pressures than their smaller counterparts. Therefore, they are likely to be willing to provide WLB policies. The following possibilities can help to explain this.

According to Dex and Scheibl (2001), large organisations tend to keep abreast of legislation through providing WLB policies since they are usually the easiest strategies for organisations to achieve legislative requirements and relieve union pressure.

Therefore, sometimes institutional pressures can be the motivator for employers to introduce WLB policies. When these organisations are praised for promoting WLB, they are able to build a good image for the public. In this sense, another possibility for large organisations introducing WLB policies is that they generally aim at building a corporate image as a good employer. Thus they can maximise their competitive advantages in terms of recruiting and retaining talented staff (Dex & Scheibl, 2001).

Recruitment is very expensive for most organisations. Therefore, large organisations promote WLB with the purpose of reducing recruitment costs. They often employ a large number of professionals and technical workers. Yasbek (2004) points out that these firms are more likely to provide WLB policies since the professional and technical employees are difficult to recruit and retain. They are valuable and important to the organisations since the recruitment costs can be expensive. Furthermore, professional employees are more likely to be in positions of supervision and scrutiny. High costs in training will also be involved if the organisations fail to retain them.

The above discussion seems to imply that large organisations promote WLB for a variety of reasons including institutional pressure, public relations, desire of becoming the “employer of choice”, and reduction of costs and union pressures. In other words, large organisations introduce WLB when they foresee that the programmes will create a benefit for them and meet their business needs.

On the other hand, small firms are less likely to have WLB initiatives (Dex & Scheibl, 2001; Harris et al., 2005; Department of Labour, 2003). The following may explain this. First, the costs for introducing such programmes seem to be quite high for SME employers. Harris et al. (2005) conducted their empirical research on lifecycles and transitions of SMEs by interviewing fifty medium and small size firm owner-managers located throughout New Zealand. The results of the study indicated that cost is one of the difficulties for small business employers in developing and implementing WLB initiatives. Similarly, the results of the case study research conducted by UMR Research for the Government’s Work-Life Balance project also revealed that WLB initiatives were likely to be expensive and difficult to implement for small business employers

(Department of Labour, 2004). Dex and Scheibl (2001) also claim that SME's resources do not enable them to offer costly initiatives to employees.

Another reason is that SMEs are unlikely to have the ability to implement WLB programmes in line with the efforts of larger organisations that have human resource professionals driving such efforts (Dex & Scheibl, 2001; UMR Research, 2003). The results from the research carried out by UMR Research showed that SMEs have less expertise and knowledge for implementing those programmes (URM Research, 2003). Similarly, Dex and Scheibl (2001) also point out that small organisations are less likely to introduce WLB initiatives because there are no administrative systems in place to support them. Many SMEs have long understood the benefits of informal family-friendly policies. They do not want regulation (Amold & Bevan, 2000).

Furthermore, it is often small business employers' personal choice not to have such formal programmes (Harris et al., 2005). As these owner managers are usually very busy in managing their day-to-day operation, they are unlikely to have time to design or draft such initiatives. Moreover, some of the programmes may not be relevant to them. For example, day-care arrangements are not applicable in such organisations because they have a small number of employees in the workplace, who perhaps might not need childcare provisions.

Research therefore suggests that there are some factors that deter SMEs from implementing WLB initiatives. Unlike larger organisations, SMEs are less likely to care about public relations. Costs spent on WLB programmes can be easily calculated while it is difficult for SMEs to measure the profits gained from such programmes. In addition, there are informal relationships between the owner-managers and employees. Worker productivity is easy to monitor in SMEs as workers have multiple tasks and various roles to play.

The above discussion suggests that the SMEs are more reluctant to implement WLB than large organisations. The reasons are many and varied. Cost is one of the most important factors. The incapability and personal choice of the SMEs also contribute to

their unwillingness to implement the programmes. The government plays an important role in promoting WLB and it has some degree of influence on such programmes by imposing legislative pressure. However, the government is unable to tell employers how to run their business or to inform employees on how to run their lives (Department of Labour, 2006a). To make WLB possible, organisations need to shift their focus from business benefits to employees' personal needs in order to achieve the ultimate WLB.

As many researchers (Lofstrom, 2002; Tseng, 1995; Waldinger et al., 1990; Yoon, 1991) claim, running small businesses is a way for immigrants to climb the ladder of upward mobility in mainstream society. Are these small business owners enjoying WLB? It would be very interesting to investigate the meaning of WLB from the perspective of immigrant entrepreneurs. Before this investigation, it is necessary to take a look at the literature of immigrant entrepreneurship.

2.3 Immigrant Entrepreneurship Literature

2.3.1 Theories of Immigrant Entrepreneurship

Evans (1989) claims that the ownership of small businesses has formed a key strategy in immigrants' adaptation to industrialised societies. Similarly, Lofstrom (2002) and Yoon (1991) assert that immigrant entrepreneurs have achieved upward social and economic mobility through running and managing small businesses. According to Amit and Muller (1995), based on their motivation to engage in entrepreneurial activity, there are two types of entrepreneurs, namely, "Push" and "Pull" entrepreneurs. The former includes those who are pushed to start a business as they are dissatisfied with their current position in the labour market in terms of unemployment or underemployment. The latter are those who are attracted by their new venture idea and initiate venture activity. Amit and Muller (1995) also conclude that "Pull" entrepreneurs are more successful than the "Push" ones.

Chavan and Agrawal (2002) found from their study, examining the changing role of ethnic small business in Australia by studying three generations over a period of time, that the first generation of ethnic entrepreneurs were associated with "Push" motivations

and the second and third generations of entrepreneurs were associated with “Pull” motivations. As scholars (Basu, 2004; Chavan & Agrawal, 2002) have found, immigrants are motivated to engage in entrepreneurial activity either derived from “Push” or “Pull” factors, or from both, as immigrant entrepreneurs can also be classified as either. There are a number of theories that appear to be relevant for immigrant entrepreneurship and the following paragraphs will examine them.

2.3.1.1 Disadvantage and Stepladder Theories

The first theory explains that disadvantages such as language barriers, cultural unfamiliarity, unrecognised prior education, inadequate skills and discrimination force immigrants to settle for lower-skilled or under-employment types of jobs (Henderson, 2003; Mesch & Czamanski, 1997; Tseng, 1995). As Kupferberg (2003) describes, immigrants are assumed to be less integrated into the labour market because they are being discriminated against and structurally excluded. Due to these disadvantages, many immigrants are excluded from mainstream occupations in the primary labour market (Fernandez & Kim, 1998; Greene & Chaganti, 2004). This implies that there is a possibility that immigrants tend to be directed to the secondary labour market, where most of the available jobs have low wages and poor working conditions. As Light (1984) claims, immigrants may derive a special incentive from this unfortunate situation to consider self-employment. In addition, this drive may increase as the disadvantage increases. Thus, disadvantages in the labour market can be a factor that pushes immigrants from underemployment to engage in entrepreneurial activity (Clark & Drinkwater, 2000; Pio, 2005).

On the other hand, the stepladder theory argues that low status employment can be an avenue for immigrants to access business ownership (Raijman & Tienda, 2000). According to Raijman and Tienda (2000), immigrants’ participation in undesirable employment in organisations owned and managed by other co-ethnics (owners of the organisations from same ethnic groups), is a way to acquire the knowledge and experience required to establish a business. Rather than immigrant workers being exploited by co-ethnics, they believe that time spent in low-wage employment can be

seen as a form of on-the-job training. In addition, such employment enables immigrant workers to build their social relationships within the ethnic economy. Thus, their networks can then be widened and the chances to move through a variety of jobs will increase. With such training opportunities in place, they are able to obtain industry-specific business skills and accumulate experience in the adopted country. As a result, the immigrant sector develops and the immigrant can work in ethnic firms through a self-feeding process. After acquiring the necessary skills and becoming acclimatised to the local labour market, immigrants will then establish their own businesses (Bailey & Waldinger, 1991; Henderson, 2003; Waldinger, 1993). In this sense, disadvantages can provide a pathway for immigrants to become entrepreneurs.

Furthermore, from a psychological point of view, the disadvantages experienced in the mainstream labour market could encourage immigrants to become business owners. As described by Kupferberg (2003), immigrants may have the feeling that they are seen as second-class citizens in the newly settled country due to the lack of legal, political or cultural rights, social citizenship rights and the right to access the labour market on an equal basis. Thus, immigrants are put in a situation where structurally imposed tension may lead to diminished self-esteem. This lower self-esteem might cause them to perceive that they are disliked or looked down upon by the host society. This feeling may inspire a counter-movement to repair their damaged self-esteem. Therefore, self-employment can be an alternative for immigrants to raise their sense of self-worth (Kupferberg, 2003), and as a means of resisting discrimination and responding to blocked mobility (Fairlie & Meyer, 1996; Waldinger et al., 1990).

Meanwhile, some researchers have reported that the lack of recognition for foreign experiences which leads to unemployment or underemployment can also be a driving force for immigrants to play entrepreneurial roles (Henderson, 2003; Henderson, Trlin & Watts, 2001; Ho, 2003; Mesch & Czamanski, 1997; Trlin, Henderson & North, 2004). Henderson et al. (2001) found from their study that generally immigrants' professional skills were being under-utilised or even not used at all in the host country. Hence, the lack of recognition of their experiences results in unemployment or underemployment

(Boyer, 1996; Friesen & Ip, 1997). These phenomena are associated with real or perceived loss of self-esteem, social status and power (Ho, 2003). Trlin et al. (2004), Ho, Bedford and Goodwin (1999), and Kupferberg (2003) believe that self-employment is one of the important coping strategies and a desirable alternative. Correspondingly, Hammarstedt (2001) declares that self-employment can be a good way to avoid unemployment and underemployment. These self-employed people who are motivated to engage in entrepreneurial activity are seen as “Push” entrepreneurs.

Indeed, immigrant entrepreneurship can pave the way to upward social mobility (Kloosterman, 2003). Nevertheless, business researchers have documented that the businesses many immigrants engage in are small businesses which are characterised by low entry cost, high levels of competition, limited profit margins, high rate of failure, and labour intensity (Fernandez & Kim, 1998; Phizacklea & Ram, 1995; Waldinger, 1989; Waldinger et al., 1990). The reasons for this situation can be best explained using opportunity structure theory.

2.3.1.2 Opportunity Structure and Risk-taking Theories

According to Waldinger et al. (1990), immigrant entrepreneurs face various challenges in adapting to the host culture and establishing their own businesses. The main problems that ethnic business owners commonly face include: protecting themselves from political attacks; dealing with surviving competition; managing relations with customers and suppliers; obtaining financial and human resources; acquiring needed information and appropriate training and skills. These social and economic handicaps coupled with the disadvantages discussed earlier drive many immigrant entrepreneurs into small businesses.

The opportunity structure theory argues that ethnic entrepreneurs can only move into those niches that are underserved or abandoned by native entrepreneurs. These opportunities are mainly found in the industries where the risks of failure are high. They are characterised by low status, low rewards, heavy labour, high running costs, and limited profit margins (Waldinger, 1989; Kupferberg, 2003). Due to the evolution of the

global economic system, the structure of opportunities is continually changing in modern business society. In addition, political factors might frequently hinder the working of business markets. Immigrant business owners have therefore found themselves facing various market conditions (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990).

Waldinger et al. (1990) point out that demand for services provided is essential for a business to prosper. The primary market for immigrant entrepreneurs can be the members of their own ethnic community in which there are no language barriers. Within the same community, people intimately know each other's needs and preferences. In this sense, ethnic entrepreneurs can develop niche customer bases. Kloosterman (2003) sees this as the pull factor on the demand side that creates the opportunities for immigrants to set up a shop within their own ethnic community. Immigrant businesses then do this to meet newcomers' needs and facilitate them in solving their special problems caused by the strains of settlement and assimilation. Some businesses provide cultural products, such as newspapers, books, magazines, food and clothes. Others offer special services, for instance, law firms and accountants (Waldinger et al., 1990). Ethnic entrepreneurs thus enjoy an advantage over potential competitors outside the community since they can tap into the buying preferences of consumers in these groups (Hammarstedt, 2001).

Massey (2005) claims that enterprise is a risky business as only a proportion of the businesses will survive. Entrepreneurs have to take a number of risks such as financial, emotional and social. This is because they put themselves on the line and thus, their social identities can suffer as well. Barbosa, Kickul and Liao-Troth (2007) claim that risk has always been at the centre of the definition of entrepreneur. Risk perception has been conceived as a determinant of risk behaviour and entrepreneurial decision making. One interprets the environment based on one's perceptions which include analysis, judgment, and intuition. In this sense, whether a situation is deemed of moderate or high risk depends on the perceivers. Different people can draw different conclusions. As Stearns and Hills (1996) note, successful entrepreneurs are good risk managers but not wild-eyed risk takers. They are able to calculate risks and whether the potential rewards are appropriate. Das and Teng (1997) also suggest that a successful entrepreneur is a

professional risk-taker because one of the most distinctive features of entrepreneurial behaviour is risk taking. Indeed, risk-taking behaviour has been associated with entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs have been described as self-employed individuals who adjust themselves to risk (Gilmore et al., 2004).

Entrepreneurs introduce new products or processes and they adjust themselves to risk where the return is uncertain (Palich & Bagby, 1995). Starting a small business is seen to be a particularly risky undertaking (Gilmore, Carson & O'Donnell, 2004). The risk that entrepreneurs face can be both financial and psychological since new actions and activities may put their self-images at risk. Failure may lead to the loss of their capital and of their self-image. Therefore, Das & Teng (1997) assert that the entrepreneurs are inherently risk takers. They often underrate their chances of failure and they need to be aware of the risks involved and make appropriate financial decisions (Pinfold, 2005).

Similarly, immigrants are also risk takers by nature because the process of leaving one's home to take up life in a new new country means accepting great changes (Waldinger et al., 1990). As Delores (1997) contends, immigrants face a number of emotional and cognitive adjustments to the reality of life in the host society. They experience the stresses of adapting to a new country and being upset by the loss of their own culture. Therefore, Waldinger et al. (1990) claim that people who enter the immigration stream tend to be able, better prepared and more inclined toward risk.

There is no doubt that immigrant entrepreneurs must be prepared to take risks. According to Kupferberg (2003), the risk-taking theory emphasises that immigrants are prepared to take on a low status business when they perceive that there is a future in that business. These immigrant entrepreneurs will have strong motives to prove themselves and thus they tend to enter the business differently from a member of the native community. Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) claim that in almost all markets, small businesses continue to attract immigrants and many newcomers have set up small business enterprises. There are two possible explanations for this situation. One could be the low status and low rewards in running such businesses. The other might be that small businesses have a high rate of failure. These two factors may reduce the pool of

native-born entrepreneurs. Immigrant entrepreneurs therefore can step in as vacancies arise (Waldinger, 1989). Since the structure and allocation of opportunities open to potential ethnic owners have high rates of failure and low status, immigrant entrepreneurs must have the ability to take risks in order to survive. In addition, they are able to quickly respond to the results that the business produces. Immigrant entrepreneurs will abandon those businesses that have limited prospects and stick to those businesses that bring good profits, regardless of whether the businesses might be risky. Based on this theory, immigrant entrepreneurs are seen to have great sensitivity to the market and this market-adapted behaviour enables them to seize any opportunities and attempt all types of businesses.

However, immigrant entrepreneurs usually face many difficulties and barriers to enter into larger businesses, most of which are higher status ones. According to Porter (1979), one of the major sources of barriers to entry is capital requirements. Larger businesses require a large amount of capital not only for start-up, but also for day-to-day operations. As Waldinger et al. (1990) note, larger businesses must shoulder heavy overhead and administrative costs. In addition to the financial requirement, human capital is also necessary for larger businesses. They must recruit well-qualified and experienced employees who have stable work histories. For this reason, large businesses are prepared to hunt these people in the primary labour market, to pay high salaries and to offer a wide range of fringe benefits to them (Stanworth & Curran, 1989). Furthermore, unlike ethnic small businesses, the market their larger counterparts target is the host society. This requires immigrant entrepreneurs to have sufficient command of the local language (Morokvasic, 2003). So financial and human capital, coupled with a sufficient understanding of the host country's language typically prevent immigrant entrepreneurs from entry into larger businesses. As a consequence, immigrants are forced to run small or ethnic businesses.

Some immigrants act as middlemen working between the elite and the masses, distributing the products and services between these two (Boyd and Xu, 2003; Yoon, 1991).

2.3.1.3 Middleman Minority and Sojourning Theories

Middleman minority is an important immigrant adaptation strategy (Cobas, 1987), as it suggests that immigrant minority groups occupy an intermediate position in the ethnic stratification system of their host society (Boyd & Xu, 2003; Chah, 2002). Trading with ethnic goods and services in this system creates business opportunities for immigrant entrepreneurs (Kloosterman (2003). Such activity also provides labour market opportunities for newcomers (Bauder, 2003). According to Bonacich (1973), O'Brien and Fugita (1982), the middleman minority has three characteristics. Firstly, this group has a sojourner orientation to the host country. Secondly, they promote ethnic solidarity as a response to host hostility, which means that they will use ethnic collective actions to resist being disadvantaged or discriminated against by the host society. Finally, they are concentrated in the businesses that can be easily converted to cash (Fernandez & Kim, 1998).

Similarly, Zhou (2004) also sees the middleman minority entrepreneurs as sojourners. Sojourners are those immigrants who move into the new countries not for permanent settlement but only for financial purposes. Their interest is to amass as much profit as possible in the shortest period and then sell off the business and reinvest their money elsewhere or send it to their home countries.

Several researchers (Chah, 2002; Boyd & Xu, 2003) found that middleman businesses are seen as those small ones which are highly accessible. Cherry (1990) argues that middleman minority groups invest in small businesses because they do not have enough capital to set up large businesses. He believes that limited available capital is the explanation for Chinese immigrants investing in laundry and grocery businesses.

Consequently, the availability of resources appears to be the key factor influencing immigrants to choose the way in which they form their businesses. As Fernandez and Kim (1998) assert, aspiration and business opportunity alone cannot explain immigrants' access to business ownership. Another important element is their ability to mobilise the resources required for establishing and running a business.

2.3.1.4 Ethnic Resources and Enclave Theories

Ethnic resources are important for immigrant entrepreneurship success (Basu, 2004; Fong & Ooka, 2002). According to Sequeira and Rasheed (2004), these resources are defined as socio-cultural and demographic features of the whole ethnic group, which include informal credit, business knowledge and shared expertise, business training, a ready source of lower cost labour and social support. Lofstrom (2002), and Raijman and Tienda (2000) also provide some similar examples of ethnic resources such as the knowledge and skills to run businesses, ability in transferring experiences and managerial skills, availability of cheap labour, and the social support networks that facilitate a new owner in obtaining necessary start-up capital. They believe that such resources are important for new settlers in establishing their small businesses in the host countries. Similarly, Sequeira and Rasheed (2006) suggest that within the same ethnic group, immigrant entrepreneurs can actively utilize these resources or passively benefit from them in their business activities because such resources help reduce risks and uncertainties that a new immigrant would face when starting a business, and they also facilitate to minimise transaction costs associated with labour and financial market transactions.

Fairlie and Meyer (1996) provide another example of ethnic resources, namely the exploitation of sector-specific human capital. Human capital includes training, experience, judgment, intelligence, and the relationships between managers and workers according to Barney (1991). The levels of human capital that immigrants hold and the ability to transfer such information across ethnic groups can be key elements that contribute to immigrant business success (Fairlie & Meyer, 1996). Therefore, ethnic resources can explain why large immigrant groups are more successful than small ones. This is also related to the ethnic enclave theory.

According to Clark and Drinkwater (2000), ethnic enclave refers to a concentration of people from the same ethnic group within a specific geographical location. Ethnic enclaves provide incentives to become self-employed and they give rise to a protected market in which particular ethnic groups are able to trade with one another through their

preferred language. Similarly, Sequeira and Rasheed (2006) describe an ethnic enclave as an interdependent network of social and business relationships that are graphically concentrated. They see this enclave as a source of social cohesion and economic support which provides the immigrants with opportunities to socialize and associate with their co-ethnic peers. In this network, people from the same community buy or sell ethnic products and services. They also find employment or start their own businesses. Kupferberg (2003) from an economic perspective defines an ethnic enclave as small enterprises operated and owned by members of an ethnic community. Within such an enclave, networks are integral parts which provide the essential information for the establishment of businesses and the economic input requirements.

Therefore, the larger the ethnic group, the more favourable the economic opportunity for its entrepreneurs will be. Ethnic entrepreneurs know more about their customers' tastes and preferences and thus, provide them with the comfort and security of conducting transactions under the environment of their own culture and language. Li and Dong (2007) also argue that ethnic enclave theory implies that both the ethnic entrepreneurs and workers gain superior economic benefits over those in general labour markets since the ethnic owners obtain low-paid and trustworthy workers while enclave employees receive rewards such as secure jobs through ties of ethnicity, friendship or family. As Sequeira and Rasheed (2004) point out, the ethnic enclave plays an important role in providing access to business information, opportunities and support for immigrant entrepreneurs.

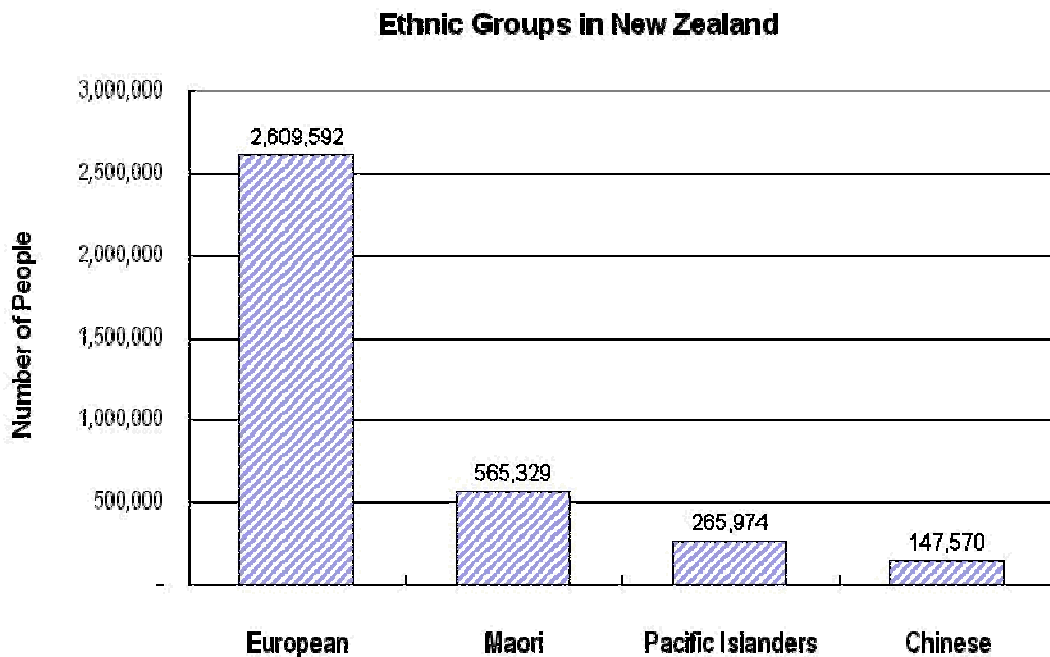
To conclude, there is a range of theories associated with immigrant entrepreneurship. Researchers have developed and analysed these theories based on their empirical studies. Many theories are closely related and some overlap. Some theories draw on cultural factors, while some focus on socio-economic areas and some theories are related to ethnic and racial issues. These theories may explain immigrant entrepreneurship for some groups at certain times. Many of them can fit well with diverse ethnic groups, for instance, the Chinese community.

2.3.2 Chinese Entrepreneurs in New Zealand

New Zealand is seen as a country of immigration (Henderson et al., 2001; Roscoe, 1999). The Chinese have traditionally been the largest non-Polynesian, non-European ethnic community in New Zealand (Ip, 2003; Henderson et al., 2001; Abbott, Wong, Williams, Au & Young, 1999).

According to Statistics New Zealand (2007a), the results of the 2006 census indicate that Chinese immigrants have increased 40.5 per cent from 105,057 in 2001 to 147,570 in 2006. As shown in Figure 2.1, the Chinese community is the largest non-European and non-Polynesian ethnic group in this country. Being a sizeable minority, some Chinese immigrants have established their own businesses in this country.

Figure 2.1



Source: Statistics New Zealand, the 2006 Census

This section is going to explore the history of Chinese immigration and their participation in entrepreneurial activities in New Zealand.

According to Ip (2003), there are two major periods of early Chinese arrivals and recent migrants in New Zealand which are linked in a number of ways. Both pioneer migrants and newcomers have a preference for self-employment in running small to medium-size businesses (Cameron & Massey, 2002; Ip, 2003). The former were found as market gardeners, laundrymen and fruit shop owners while the latter are medical practitioners, dentists, accountants and information technology consultants. The common roles they play are storekeepers and restaurant owners. Their business strategies are similar with a comparatively modest capital outlay and always with the support of family members (Ip, 2003; Ng, 2001). However, the motives for the Chinese to come to New Zealand in the old days were very different from those in recent decades.

The first wave of Chinese migration in New Zealand can be traced back to the mid-1860s with the discovery of gold (Ip, 2003; Ng, 2003; Henderson et al., 2001). At that time, thousands of Chinese came to New Zealand and the majority were gold-miners mainly working in Otago and the West Coast goldfields. “Gold and China” were the twin motives for them to come. “Gold” was capital which they could gain from the possibility of finding gold, the overseas employment available with good wages, and the high exchange rate of the host country’s money. “China” was the commitment that these travellers had to not forget their families in China and to ensure that they would return to their families in ancestral villages and towns later in life or even if they had died, in the return of their body or bones (Ng, 2001, 2003).

Therefore, the early Chinese arrivals were sojourners as they were not interested in settling permanently in New Zealand. As Yoon (1991) describes, sojourners are those people who enter the country for temporary and monetary purposes. They wish to earn the most money in the shortest time and then return to their homeland (Light, 1984). Bonacich (1973) also provides another sojourner feature: they resist learning the local language, culture, and religion. According to Ng (2001, 2003), in order to achieve

“Gold and China”, the Chinese sojourners took a variety of jobs. They not only worked as gold miners, but also participated in employment such as farm labouring, market gardening and road building. As a result, they were able to save up money which would be sent and used in their home country. Part of this saving was sent as a remittance to their homeland and most of it was used to support these sojourners to live in China for about two years. They intended to return to their home country every five years and then come back to work in New Zealand again when their money ran out (Ng, 2001, 2003).

Nevertheless, as Ng (2003a) noted, at that time New Zealand wanted a British population, not a Chinese one. Therefore, Chinese found it hard to enter the country freely as they faced a series of discriminatory laws established by the New Zealand government. In 1881, the immigration regulators set up the first barriers to hold back Chinese immigrants (Beaglehole, 2006a). As part of the 1881 Chinese Immigrants Act, a poll tax of £10 levied on every new Chinese immigrant entering New Zealand was imposed (Murphy, 2006). Then, with a new anti-Chinese movement during the mid 1890s, a comprehensive anti-Asiatic Bill that included increasing the poll-tax to £100 was passed as the Chinese Immigrants Amendment Act 1896 (Murphy, 2006). Moreover, the Old Age Pensions Act 1898 excluded Chinese and other “Asiatics” so they could not benefit from it (Ng, 2001).

Not only did the £100 poll-tax remain, but other restriction policies were also introduced. For instance, in the Chinese Immigrants Amendment Act 1907, the Chinese had to pass an additional English-language reading test. Under the Immigration Restriction Amendment Act 1908, Chinese people were required to place a thumbprint on their certificate of registration before leaving the country to get a re-entry permit. The Chinese were the only ethnic group who had to do so (Beaglehole, 2006b). By the 1920s, there was a “White New Zealand” policy in practice that made it more difficult for the Chinese to immigrate to New Zealand in that period (Beaglehole, 2006a). This policy was established against the immigration of coloured races, especially the Chinese people (Ng, 2003a).

Even under such a hostile environment, Chinese migrants still found their way to

establish their businesses in the host country. According to Ng (2002), the Chinese gold miners were intelligent. They held high moral and cultural values. Thus, they could act confidently and respond to the new environment. They were quickly able to use their water wheels and water pumps for gold-mining. Some easily became New Zealand furniture makers, tailors, boot makers, stone masons, and road and railway builders. Others became tobacco growers, cigarette and cigar manufacturers in Otago. Ritchie (2003) agreed with this viewpoint and he described those Chinese as remarkably adaptable. They constructed shelters, built small huts and established their own camps. Ng (2001, 2003) claimed that with the camps that appeared on the outskirts of the mining towns and in the field, networks of Chinese stores, doctors and other services spread throughout Otago province. Among the various business roles, there were three that they particularly engaged in.

Market gardens, fruit shops and laundries were the Chinese predominant businesses (Ng, 2001). Three immigrant entrepreneurship theories might be employed here to explain why they concentrated on running such small businesses. First is the opportunity structure theory. According to Waldinger (1989) and Kupferberg (2003), the business opportunities available for immigrants are those that are extremely labour intensive and have limited profit margins or have been abandoned by the mainstream society. Market gardens, fruit shops and laundries are such examples. Ng (2003a) cites the latter to explain this further. He describes how most Chinese laundries of the time were dingy premises situated in the secondary streets. The laundry work was very hard and the profits were very slim. The laundry people had to get up at dawn to work to about ten o'clock at night. In order to make a profit of two pence, a laundryman had to take on a lot of work including washing, starching, shining, curling and wrapping. Even though these occupations required hard work and longer hours, the Chinese remained working in such businesses because money could still be made.

These situations can also be explained by the risk-taking theory which argues that immigrant entrepreneurs are prepared to enter a business when they see there is some potential in it (Kupferberg, 2003). Some prospective opportunities existed in market

gardens, fruit shops and laundries. For the laundry business, few homes at that time had washing facilities and sometimes the clothes were too dirty for people to clean by themselves. This grew into a big market demand for the laundries, which had a full variety of clothing to wash and iron provided by many families (Ng, 2003a). For the market gardens, they also had a large market as all the people in the goldfields towns consumed fresh vegetables (Ng, 2003b). As a result, this type of business brought some profits because sales accounted for some 80 per cent of the country's vegetables (Ng, 2003a).

According to Light (1972), the early Chinese were able to exploit ethnic resources and ethnic solidarity to set up and manage their small businesses. They utilized their home agriculture skills to operate their market gardens. Family members could work in the laundries as most of the laundries had only one or two workers (Ng, 2003a). In addition to employing their human capital resources, they had the ability to mobilize business resources from those in their social networks such as family members, relatives, friends, and ethnic contacts (Fernandez & Kim, 1998). In addition, the start-up capital for these small businesses was low. Owners could easily fund their financial resources within their families.

Nevertheless, the poll-tax was retained until 1944. According to Murphy (2006), it was removed because of two important factors combined. One was the Labour Government being elected in 1935. The other was the fact that China had been bravely fighting the Japanese in the Second World War. From 1951, there was an improvement in attitude towards the Chinese in New Zealand (Ng, 2001). Especially from 1986, the situation for Chinese immigrants has been changed radically (Henderson, 2003; Henderson et al., 2001; Watts & Trlin, 2000). Regarding that poll-tax discriminatory Act, Prime Minister Helen Clark (Clark, 2002) has recently represented the government in making a formal apology to the Chinese people.

Changes in immigration policy in 1986, 1991 and 1995 created a great impact on the numbers and characteristics of Chinese immigrants to New Zealand (Henderson, 2003; Trlin, Henderson & North, 2004; Ho et al., 1999). The immigration policy changes in

1986 removed a traditional source-countries preference and had a desire to enrich the multicultural nature of the New Zealand society (Trlin, Henderson & North, 2004; Henderson, 2003). Then in 1991, a points system for skilled migrants was introduced. This new system was designed to recruit highly qualified talent and entrepreneurial applicants (Henderson, 2003; Henderson et al., 2001; Watts & Trlin, 2000). As a result of these policies, many skilled, well-educated professionals and relatively wealthy successful Chinese business people were attracted to settle in New Zealand (Abbott et al., 1999; Henderson, 2003; Henderson et al., 2001). Nonetheless, due to the changes to the strict English language requirements in 1995, the numbers of the skilled and business investment applicants declined dramatically (Henderson, 2003; Ho et al., 1999; Trlin et al., 2004).

In contrast to earlier times, the motives of these new Chinese migrants who arrived in the last two decades are very different from those of the old ones. Friesen and Ip (1997) found from their study that there are four main reasons for new migrants to choose New Zealand as a destination rather than others. The first reason is the relaxing lifestyle and the clean green environment. Another reason is the political stability of New Zealand. The third reason is that they perceive a better education for their children. Only a few participants (less than ten percent) see business or employment as their main reason to come.

Meanwhile, some other studies have recorded that many skilled and experienced new Chinese migrants face the problems of unemployment and underemployment. Language proficiency is still the main barrier which hinders them in accessing the occupations that are relevant to the ones of their prior immigration (Trlin, Henderson & North, 2004; Victoria University of Wellington, 2004). However, as Ho et al. (1999) point out, such barriers to employment can drive some Chinese immigrants into self-employment. This phenomenon corresponds with the disadvantage theory as analysed previously.

According to the results of the study conducted by Ho et al. (1999), some new migrant entrepreneurial behaviour can be explained by several immigrant entrepreneurship theories, such as the step ladder and ethnic resource theories. Their study involved forty

two participants, twenty-three of whom have businesses in New Zealand. Amongst these participants, ten were Hong Kong entrepreneurs, most of them acquired their relevant work experiences from previous employment either prior to migration or in the host country. Hence, they have good knowledge and experience in the type of industry where they set up their own businesses. The work experiences they gained from on-the-job training can be seen as a step ladder which enables them to “climb up” to their businesses.

From their study, Ho et al. (1999) found that some participants’ businesses depend on their family’s support. Three young businessmen obtained financial resources from their parents and thus they established their own businesses that were related to their interest. Besides funding them with business capital, their parents also provided other support. This included giving active encouragement before setting up a business and business advice when they encountered problems (Ho et al., 1999). This implies that the Chinese entrepreneurs have the ability to exploit resources from the ethnic group, and especially from their own families.

According to the opportunity structure theory, the Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs can only enter the niches which are labour intensive and have limited profit margin. As Bolich (2001) demonstrates in his article, some Chinese takeaway owners have to work long hours and holidays in order to make some capital from the limited profit businesses. England (1989) also claims that some Chinese entrepreneurs have to work ten hours a day and seven days a week.

From the above discussion, it is clear that most Chinese immigrants are prepared to work very hard and for long hours. As business owners, they have to play many roles such as marketing, financial and human resources as the scale of their business is usually small. They may have to work even when they are sick, and they might not have time with their families in the weekends. Given this situation, it is questionable that they could balance their work and life.

Reviewing the literature shows that little research concerning WLB has been done on WLB in the Chinese community, in particular, from the Chinese employers' perspectives. Therefore, a study in this area is necessary to be carried out in order to fill the gap of identifying what WLB means to these business owners of this particular ethnic group and how they manage their work and personal lives. The methodology used in this study will be discussed in the following chapter.

3. Research Design

This chapter introduces and discusses the philosophical and methodological approach used for this study. A critical interpretative perspective approach is used to explore how power imbalance influences the interpretation of the concept of WLB by a specific ethnic group in New Zealand are provided. The research design for this case study is qualitative, and data collection is through a semi-structured interview with 15 Chinese immigrant small business owners in the Auckland region. The position of the participants as the 'Other' is discussed. The sampling method and the reasons for choosing this location are introduced. In addition, the ethical issues surrounding the process are clarified, and finally the limitations of the research are identified.

3.1 A Critical Interpretive Perspective

The interpretive social sciences paradigm perceives that there are multiple realities in the world. The relationship between the researcher and the subject or object in this paradigm is subjective, and qualitative methodology is typically used (Jennings, 2001). This paradigm aims to explain the stability of behaviour from the individual's viewpoint and it studies individual behaviour and the spiritual nature of the world (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Since interpretive approach studies a specific phenomenon in a particular time and place, it assists generalisation within the context or case (Harris, 2002).

Critical theory has a long history and it originated with the Frankfurt School in the late 1920s (Sumner, 2003). According to Jennings (2001), critical theory portrays a world that is complex and governed by power. This means that the real world is not only simply made up of multiple realities, such as European, Chinese and Indian, but it is also structured by power. The term "power" is critical in this theory and it can be traced back to Karl Marx's work of the 1800s. Marx highlights that in any society, the dominant ideas that receive attention and implementation are those of the ruling class (Wolff, 2003). In other words, only the mainstream society has power can rule the

world. According to Foucault (1980), power is situated among a cacophony of social practices and situations. He points out “there are manifold relations of power that permeate, characterize and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse.” In such a complex world, critical theory seeks to give us knowledge of the society as it frames the way we look at the world and involves the cultivation of a critical attitude on all levels. By understanding the society’s structure and dynamics, we are able to determine what our true interests are (Sumner, 2003). Critical theory, as a paradigm, is therefore used as a critical approach to social analysis that would detect existing social problems and promote social transformation (Kellner, 2007).

Based on the above discussion, a critical interpretive perspective approach is the best one for this research for several reasons. Firstly, the researcher wants to critically study how power imbalance influences the lives of people of a specific ethnic group in New Zealand society. This research focuses on how Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs perceive the concept of WLB and how they deal with these issues. From a national level regarding this discourse, the mainstream society is the white people who have power and who therefore, are the ruling class in a New Zealand context. Other ethnic groups, include the Asian people who comprise about 8.3 per cent of the population of New Zealand, while still a minority group. It is therefore surprising that there are no case studies of Asian people to be found in the Government work-life balance Project (Wei, 2007).

From an organisational level, attention and research are mainly drawn on and conducted in large organisations. In contrast, SMEs are rarely visible (Harris, 2005; Yasbek, 2004). Participants in this research are Chinese immigrants who are SME entrepreneurs. They are an invisible group in the WLB discourse. Smith (2002) states that “research is a set of very human activities that reproduce particular social relations of power” (p.88). For this reason, critical methodology is used, aiming to “empower the minority group to effect social change to improve its social circumstances” (Jennings, 2001, p.42).

The second reason for using critical interpretive methodology is to understand the meaning of the “Other”. Johson, Bootorff, Browne, Grewal., Hilton and Clerke (2004) describe ‘Othering’ as a process used to identify those who are thought to be different from the mainstream and it can reproduce positions of domination and subordination. Chinese immigrant SME owners can be considered as the ‘Other’ for two reasons. Firstly, they are a minority ethnic group. Secondly, they are SME owners. The purpose of employing a critical approach in this research is to get below the surface and understand the social setting from the position of the ‘Other’, and then to advocate for Chinese SME owners to be given information on WLB and research attention. Since the researcher is also an ‘Other’ from the same community as the participants, a critical interpretive perspective approach is ideal for this research to promote better participation, understanding and interpretation around WLB and Chinese people.

The final reason for the use of this approach is that in an interpretive perspective approach, the relationship between the researcher and the participants is subjective. A researcher who employs this approach seeks to understand phenomena from an insider’s perspective (Jennings, 2001). In this research, the researcher, from the same minority ethnic group, has a shared understanding with participants’ knowledge since both the researcher and the participants share the same cultural backgrounds and experiences of migration. As an insider, the researcher is able to ask more meaningful questions and understand non-verbal language. This approach allows the researcher to develop an understanding of the roots of the Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs, and to demonstrate empathy with them, as she comes from the same minority community. This also facilitates the researcher to explore in-depth inquiries of participants’ WLB experiences as she is also the ‘Other’ in similar circumstances. Therefore, it is relevant to note the researcher’s experience and her position.

3.1.1 My Story and Place: An Insider Perspective

Like the participants, I am a skilled Chinese immigrant. I came to New Zealand under the points system from Hong Kong in 1999 with my family: my husband and two dependent children. Regardless of my Bachelor Degree and more than ten years of

official work experience in Hong Kong, I was unable to find a job in New Zealand that was relevant to my experiences and qualifications. I made a radical change from an Executive Officer in an organisation in Hong Kong to a cashier in an Asian Supermarket in New Zealand. I received very low wages and worked long hours in a co-ethnic company. I found that life was not easy in a new country largely because of language barriers.

One year later, I was promoted to a shop manager and took the whole responsibility for managing the shop. I was trained to be a licensee who could sell alcohol in the shop and I obtained a Certificate in Basic Food Safety so that I could manage butchery and fishery departments in the shop. Through attending those training courses, I realised that English is very important. I decided to go to school to improve my English skills. I enrolled as a full-time student at AUT University and worked as a part-time manager in the shop.

During the period of studying and working at the same time, I experienced work-life imbalance. As a student, I needed to attend my classes and exams as well as finish assignments - both individual ones and team ones. I had no problems with my individual assignments but I found it hard to cope with team work. I remembered I had a tough time when I did the 'Applied management' paper. Team assignments weighed heavily in the course marks. There was one member of our team who neither did anything nor attended any meetings and I had to do his parts. Not only did he show no gratitude but he also complained frequently about my drafts filling up his mailbox. He upset all the other members and made me so stressed that semester.

As an employee, I had to manage the shop and take on various extra duties. For example, I was responsible for placing orders for grocery, frozen food, and butchery and fishery products. Some products were delivered once a week, so if anything was missing, I would need to wait another week and the revenue could be reduced as a result of not having enough products to be sold. If this happened, I would feel guilty and my boss would be unhappy. Thus, there was a lot of pressure on me. In addition, I was responsible for arranging weekly special advertisements in a Chinese newspaper. I remember once, while proofreading the first draft, I found that the editor had put the

wrong price for a special item. Therefore, I corrected it and faxed it back to the Newspaper. I was so busy that I forgot to ask them to ensure they had received the correct one. Unfortunately, the wrong advertisement was published and they explained that they did not receive anything from me and assumed that I tacitly approved of the original advertisement. Thus, conflict between the newspaper and me occurred. I had to sell that item at the published price to escape from the suspicion of ‘misleading’ or ‘false advertising’. From that lesson, I learnt to do things cautiously and it led me to experience a lot of pressure. Besides work and study, I had to deal with familial obligations, such as taking my children to their schools and arranging banking transactions as well as doing the food shopping. The huge role demands as a student, an employee and a mother drove me mad!

With such experiences, I can totally understand how the participants struggle in the labour market in the new country, how difficult it is for them to run their own small business and the possible challenges they face in relation to the issues of WLB. Having an insider perspective helps me to sympathise with participants’ experiences and enables me to conduct the interviews in an empathic and an understanding way. Through this study, as a learner and researcher, I understand the ‘Other’, not only those being interviewed, but also the ‘Other’ in different minority groups. The critical interpretive perspective enabled me to hear the voice of diverse minority groups, and see the world in different colours. Through displaying the comments of those being studied, I hope to elicit the actions needed to correct power imbalances. The critical interpretive perspective is a desirable method to critically interpret the research results through the use of the case study methodology.

3.2 The Case Study Method

A case study has been claimed as one of the most popular research strategies used in sociology and many other areas of social inquiry (Gilgun, 1994; Mitchell, 2000; Taylor, 2005; Yin, 2003a). Stake (1995, p. xi) defines the case study as “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances”. Yin (2003a) describes the case study as a comprehensive

research strategy which covers the logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis. As a research strategy, the case study allows investigators to capture the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life experiences such as people's life cycles. It draws in multiple perspectives and it is rooted in a specific context which is seen as critical to understanding the studied phenomena (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Therefore, it is extensively used in many situations to contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organisational, social, political, and related phenomena.

The case study is an ideal methodology to study naturally occurring cases when an in-depth investigation is required (Tellis, 1997; Yin, 2003a). In the case study, quantification of data is not a priority. Indeed, qualitative data may be treated as superior (Hammersley & Gomm, 2000). Therefore, the case study is one of the methods applied to social science research preferably when a social phenomenon involves a real-life context and the researcher is trying to locate the answers to the "why" and the "how" questions about the social phenomenon.

This research focuses on the WLB issue (a contemporary social phenomenon) within the case of Small Business Owners in the Chinese community in New Zealand (a real-life context). Under the background of the implementation of the work-life balance project by the New Zealand government since 2003, the researcher aims to find out how this project has influenced the SME owners in the Chinese community.

Compared to other research methods, the case study has distinctive advantages for this research. Firstly, this research falls in the area of the science of social life. The close relationship between case studies and attempts to solve practical social problems provides a reliable guarantee for the result of this research.

In addition, Yin (2003b) suggests that when the phenomenon under study is not readily distinguishable from its context, the case study is the method of choice. The aim of this research is to understand the significant characteristics of WLB, not for the benefit of the researcher, but for the whole Chinese community. WLB, as a complex concept, has

been hotly debated in New Zealand for a while. However, few reports have been composed with the stress on one of the minority communities, such as the Chinese community. The researcher therefore is interested in the investigation of what result has ever been achieved in the Chinese community. In other words, this research deliberately wants to cover the specific contextual situations. This particular aim is the condition warranting the use of case studies.

Moreover, 'how' and 'why' questions are more likely to lead to the choice of case studies as the ideal strategy. One of the reasons for carrying out this research is that no literature can be found to report on the current situation of the SME owners in the Chinese community after the implementation of the work-life balance project. As a member of the Chinese community, the researcher desires to explore real stories behind the scene and to determine why no feedback has been received from the Chinese community, and find out how and whether the project affects the Chinese community. Since there are no surveys or archival records that can be relied upon, the best method of this research is the case study.

Furthermore, in a case study, researchers investigate real life cases which naturally occur / happen in social situations. The built-in element of the case study amounts to the choice of the research method of this research, since the main concern of this research is to find out the results of the implementation of the work-life balance project in the real world. The priority of the project is to help people locate a balanced position between their work and after-work life by fully understanding the importance of WLB. Has the object been achieved in the Chinese community? The answers cannot be found anywhere else other than in the participants' everyday lives.

According to Perren and Ram (2004), the case study method in small businesses and entrepreneurial research is becoming popular. In this research, the case study approach, along with the unique contexts of entrepreneurial environments in the SME areas, enable very good information to be gained on how the participants' lives and businesses intersect of the resulting impact on WLB experienced. It is good to use the case study approach to understand how the unique within case aspects of people's own personal

and business life realities.

Finally, the case study usually involves unstructured data collection and qualitative analysis of those data (Hammersley & Gomm, 2000). There are altogether fifteen participants recruited for this study. In consideration of the different life experiences and backgrounds of those participants, the researcher designed some open-ended questions which were used in the face-to-face interviews, with the purpose of generating as much data as possible. The description and qualitative analysis method are applied to this research enabling within case analysis and cross case analysis.

Yin (2003b) has identified several of types of case studies including exploratory, explanatory and descriptive studies and each can either be single-case or multiple-case studies. Stake (2005) provides three other types of case studies, namely, intrinsic, instrumental and collective case studies. Explanatory case studies can be used for doing causal investigations as these studies illustrate data bearing on cause-effect, relationships-explaining and how events happened. As Yin (2003a, p.21) discusses:

The stipulated activities begin with the identification of a problem by some individual or organization in need of a solution, not by the research investigator. Even if the problem has been poorly or incorrectly articulated, it is communicated to the research investigator, whose task is to conduct the research needed to identify, test and assess alternative solutions to the problem.

According to the above ‘problem-solving theory’, the researcher conducts this research when the government is in need of solutions for WLB issues. Since the concept of WLB has been poorly expressed to the Chinese community in New Zealand, the researcher, after careful secondary research of the issue, sought to identify the contemporary social problems in the Chinese community context and then to assess alternative solutions to these problems. Therefore, this study can be described as an explanatory case study.

According to Yin (1993b) and Tellis (1997), there are common procedures that have been tailored to carry out case studies. The following four stages shown in Table 3.1 are frequently used when applying the case study into the research, including designing the

case study protocol, determining the required skills, developing the research procedure and conducting the case study.

Table 3.1 Procedures of the Case Study

Stages	Descriptions
Designing the case study protocol	The case study protocol is a major component of the case study research. It is to be created prior to the data collection phase. The protocol contains procedures and general rules that should be followed throughout the study.
Determining the required skills	These skills include the ability to ask good questions and to interpret the responses, to be a good listener, to be adaptive and flexible in various situations, to have a firm grasp of issues being studied, and to be unbiased.
Developing the research procedure	This involves drafting a research procedure and time plate, to reading extensively on the topic being studied, developing the questions and becoming familiar with them, keeping in mind all those questions during data collection, formatting and composing the report.
Conducting the case study.	This stage includes preparing for data collection, distributing questionnaire, conducting interviews, analysing collected data, and developing conclusions, future perspectives, and limitations based on the case study method.

Sources: Tellis (1997), Yin (1993b and 1994).

According to Lewis (2003), case study is strongly linked with qualitative research and it sometimes can be used as a synonym for qualitative research. Perren and Ram (2004) also suggest that qualitative methods are becoming popular in the small business and entrepreneurship research community. Since this research aims to find out how Chinese

small business owners perceive the concept of WLB, a qualitative methodological approach was adopted and semi-structured interviews were designed for the data collection. According to Holliday (2002), qualitative research investigates the quality of social life because it addresses the backgrounds, interests and broader social perceptions of the subjects. Similarly, Bauer, Aarts, and Allum (2000) suggest that qualitative research deals with interpreting social realities. Its real purpose is to explore the range of opinions (Gaskell, 2000). Therefore, the qualitative case research approach allows the researchers to access people directly to examine what they actually do in real life (Silverman, 2006). This approach also enables researchers to get closer to an individual's perspective as they are able to become engaged in the details and specifics of the data (Kayrooz & Trevitt, 2005). Since qualitative research focuses on specific situations or people, it aims to answer the "why" and the "how" questions rather than just "how many" questions. For this reason, a qualitative case approach is an appropriate one for this study since this research seeks to examine the key factors that affect the ability of Chinese immigrant small business owners to achieve WLB in New Zealand, and the ways in which they deal with WLB issues.

According to Patton (2002), interviews are one of the important qualitative data collection methods that provide direct quotations from participants about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge. In other words, interviews allow the researcher to investigate people's perceptions, attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, in order to answer the following research questions, qualitative interviewing is the best suited technique. Through one-to-one conversation, verbal data provided by participants allow access to unlimited amounts of information and knowledge that answer to the research questions:

- ✧ What does WLB mean to Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs in New Zealand?
- ✧ What attitudes do they hold towards WLB issues?
- ✧ What are the main factors that can lead them to experience perceived work-life imbalance?

- ✧ How do they deal with work-life imbalance and what sources of support may they have used to restore a perception of balance?

The detailed procedure applied in this research will be developed in the following sections.

In order to gain richer and more meaningful information to answer the four main research questions, this research employed an in-depth interview method which involved one-to-one interactions. Meanings and understandings can be developed through these interactions. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), qualitative researchers rely largely on in-depth interviews. Legard, Keegan and Ward (2003) suggest that in-depth interview is an intense experience for both the interviewer and the participant. It is flexible, interactive, generative and provides a context in which meaning and language are explored in depth.

Interviews are special forms of conversation by which empirical data can be generated. (Holstein & Gubrium, 1998). The Interview is one of the main methods used in interpretive perspective research (Jennings, 2001). Interviews are conducted with the aim of getting a better understanding of the meaning behind the words used to describe an experience (Trigwell, 1998). As Patton (2002) suggests, the key strength of using interviews to gather information is that it allows the researcher to find out people's inner feelings and thoughts which researchers are unable to observe directly. In other words, interviews allow the researcher to get inside and examine participants' inner perspectives. Moreover, interviews allow the researcher to establish rapport with the participants and motivate them to participate. During the interview, doubts can be clarified, more in-depth information can be probed and questions can be adapted if necessary (Taylor, 2005). During an interview, the participant will give the desired information if the interviewer asks the questions properly (Holstein & Gubrium, 1998).

In this research, a semi-structured interview schedule was used with major questions designed in advance. However, as May (2002) argues, a successful interview study depends on the prior construction of a theoretically informed and user-friendly

interview schedule. This involves the development and pre-testing of a theoretically informed and effective interview guide. Thus, it was not sufficient to just carefully construct interview questions; it was also necessary to carry out a pre-testing to determine whether there were any problems with the questions prior to interviewing. Pilot testing was conducted to ensure that the questions posed were understood by the participants and that they had no difficulties in answering them. During the pilot interviewing, each question was checked to make sure that it was free of wrong or misleading words, phrases and sentence structures. Minor modifications were made to the interview schedule after finishing the pilot testing. The finalised interview schedule is attached as Appendix 4. When this preliminary testing procedure was completed, the participants were recruited.

3.3 Participants

In order to maintain confidentiality, pseudo names were used in this report. The participants (See Table 3.1) were 15 Chinese immigrant small business owners in the Auckland region. Some of them were introduced to the researcher by the Chinese New Settlers Services Trust. Others were recruited using the researcher's network of contacts within the Chinese community and snowball sampling. The sample size of 15 participants was relatively satisfactory because of the timeframe and the scope of the research. There were seven females and eight males. Choosing similar numbers of each gender sample aims to find out how differently male and female business people perceive the concept of WLB, and to reduce bias. All of the participants were born overseas with Chinese ethnicity but they have resident status in New Zealand. The majority are from Mainland China, with three from Taiwan and two from Hong Kong. Though all the participants are Chinese, they come from different geographical areas so they may hold different attitudes towards the issues of WLB. They cover all age ranges because it is presumed that people from a diverse age range may employ various strategies to deal with WLB problems based on their experience and knowledge in different life stages. All participants except one have tertiary education since it is expected that people with high educational backgrounds may comprehensively understand the discourse of WLB.

Table 3.2 Participants' Information

Name	Gender	Origin	Age Range (Years)	Education	Types of Current Business Owned
Vera	Female	Mainland China	31-40	Diploma	Beauty salon
Sally	Female	Hong Kong	41-50	University	Immigration consultancy
Cathy	Female	Taiwan	51-60	University	Property management
Kay	Female	Mainland China	20-30	University	Financial consultancy
Liz	Female	Mainland China	31-40	Masters	Mortgage broker
Helen	Female	Mainland China	31-40	Diploma	Commercial cleaning
Yvonne	Female	Mainland China	41-50	University	Language school
John	Male	Mainland China	51-60	University	Takeaway
Jim	Male	Hong Kong	41-50	Masters	Real estate
Tony	Male	Mainland China	41-50	University	Chinese restaurant
Jason	Male	Mainland China	41-50	University	Liquor retail shop
Paul	Male	Taiwan	51-60	University	Printing services
Dick	Male	Taiwan	41-50	University	Food manufacturing
Sean	Male	Mainland China	51-60	Masters	Gift shop
Bill	Male	Mainland China	20-30	Secondary	Asian supermarket

As Table 3.2 shows, a wide range of Chinese immigrant enterprises were captured in this study, including a beauty salon, an immigration consultancy company, a mortgage broking service company, a food manufacturing company and an Asian supermarket. Furthermore, this recruitment strategy is likely to allow the researcher to gather different perspectives from diverse business owners as they may face different challenges.

Auckland was selected as the location for this study since it is the most ethnically diverse region in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2007a). It is a popular place for

Chinese immigrants to settle, hence many Chinese business enterprises are clustered in this city. According to Statistics New Zealand (2007b), the results of 2006 Census revealed that there are 147,570 Chinese people living in New Zealand and around 67 per cent of them (or 98,391 people) are concentrated in Auckland. The 2006 Census results also indicate that there are 15,483 Chinese people who are self-employed or run their own businesses in the country. About 66 per cent (or 10,179) of them are clustered in Auckland (Statistics New Zealand, 2007c). Therefore, Auckland was chosen as the suitable place for carrying out this study as it is easier to locate research samples.

3.4 Data Collection

Having completed the modification of the interview questions and obtained full ethical approval from Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee, semi-structured interviews were conducted. These interviews were carried out on the basis of “face-to-face” with the presence of the researcher and participant at the houses or workplaces of the participants.

3.4.1 Interview Process

The procedure of the interviews involved a number of steps. Firstly, a set of documents was posted to each of the potential participants. This included an information sheet (Appendix 2), a consent form and a free return post envelope. Then participants were contacted by the researcher approximately seven days after receiving the document to determine their interest, and those who agreed to participate in this research were asked to send the signed consent form to the researcher as soon as possible. Upon receiving their consent form, the researcher contacted each participant again by telephone. Through a friendly conversation, sincere thanks were given to the participants and good rapport was established between the researcher and the participants. In addition, appointments for a time that suited the participants and a preferred interview place were arranged.

Nine participants chose weekdays and six preferred weekend days to be interviewed. Only one person wanted to be interviewed in the morning, eight wanted to be

interviewed in the afternoons and six chose the evenings. Nine interviews were carried out in participants' workplaces while six were conducted in their houses. Interviews that were carried out in the workplace were interrupted sometimes as participants needed to talk on the phone or collect money from their customers. However, participants who were interviewed in their houses could concentrate during the interviews.

The researcher is a skilled interviewer who gained fieldwork experiences both overseas and in New Zealand. She is working for The University of Auckland Research Unit as a part-time interviewer. She also played a role as a fieldwork supervisor for several market research organisations in Hong Kong such as Survey Research Hong Kong and Hong Kong Polling for many years. She had done a lot of telephone and face-to-face interviews before conducting her own research. Therefore, she has the ability to carry out this process successfully as she knows how to relax her participants and probe for more in-depth information.

At the beginning of the interviews, a few participants felt a little nervous when they saw the researcher bringing the sheets in. However, they became more relaxed when the researcher talked to them in their own language. Therefore, all interviews were undertaken in a language comfortable to participants. Nine of them were conducted in Mandarin and six in Cantonese as the researcher can speak both. No interviews were conducted in English because participants selected their first language. Talking in Mandarin or Cantonese enabled participants to relax and allowed the researcher to think about culturally appropriate ways of asking the question to capture articulate and developed responses easily.

Each interview started with some introductory comments about the research. A word of thanks to the participant for accepting the invitation to be involved in the research was given, and some ice-breaking questions were asked to ensure that the participants felt comfortable and were willing to share their opinions and experiences. Then, some fairly straightforward and interesting questions were asked. Most interviews followed the semi-structured schedule and therefore questions were asked ranging from easy to difficult. For example, questions regarding demographic variables such as education,

age, marital status and number of dependent children were asked firstly. Some feeling and opinion questions such as, what does the term WLB mean to you and can you give me some examples of the challenges you may have faced in achieving WLB, were raised later.

During the interview, the researcher was very cognisant of the fact that she came for the purpose of gathering information, not for the exchanging of views. Therefore, she played a role as an active listener rather than a speaker. Her manner was friendly and courteous to maintain good rapport with the participants. She used body language such as eye contact and nodding, to encourage the participant to talk freely and fully. She also frequently made some sounds like “mm” and “yeah” to give participants a pause to expand on their answers, and to display understanding and interest. She did not assert her opinions or made any critical comments. However, some participants did ask the interviewer about her opinion on WLB which she shared after the interview was conducted.

At the end of the interview, the interviewer thanked participants and asked whether they had any further questions to raise. After finishing the interviews, a letter was sent by email to the participants to thank them for being involved in the research. The duration of each interview varied from approximately half an hour to one hour as this depended on the amount of information that each participant was ready to provide. With the consent of the participants, all interviews were digitally recorded along with extensive note taking. All the interview transcripts were compiled from the digital data. They were then translated from Mandarin or Cantonese into English by the researcher. Since the researcher has bilingual language skills, she is able to preserve the meanings rather than just translating.

It was quite surprising to learn that two participants said that they did not really know what WLB meant when they received the information sheet. They did some research on the internet and then found it out themselves. Four participants asked the researcher at the beginning of the interview about what was meant by WLB. Nine participants were happy to talk openly about what they thought WLB was.

3.5 Data Analysis

As this research employed the case study methodology, the case study analysis method was adopted within the critical interpretive perspective. Many ways of data analysis in a case study have been suggested by different authors. For example, Yin (2003a) claims that data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating and combining the evidence to address the initial propositions of a study. He has advocated some forms of data analysis including pattern-matching, explanation-building and time-series analysis. Stake (1995) has also suggested several possible analytic techniques such as categorical aggregation or direct interpretation, searching for correspondence and patterns, and developing naturalistic generalizations. Miles and Huberman (1984) have provided some other techniques: using arrays to display the data, creating displays, tabulating the events and ordering the information.

The data analysis for this research follows the techniques provided by Creswell (2007). Although participants in this research are all Chinese entrepreneurs, they are very specific in their own individual business and they have different finance experience. Within case and cross case analysis enables to identify these differences and individuality of each case. Six phases involved in this analytic process are shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Phases of Data Analysis

Phase	Activity
Data managing	Create and organize files for data
Reading, memoing	Read through text, make margin notes, form initial codes
Describing	Describe the case and its context
Classifying	Use categorical aggregations to establish themes or patterns
Interpreting	Use direct interpretation
Representing, visualizing	Present in-depth picture of the case (or cases) using narrative, tables, and figures

Source: Creswell (2007, pp.156-157)

In the data managing phase, the researcher created 15 files for all participants using Microsoft Access. Then she entered the transcribed data of each interview into relevant fields of each file. These fields include demographic and business information containing both words and numbers e.g. names of the participants and numbers of work hours. They also consist of texts such as their perceptions about the concept of WLB.

During the reading and memoing stage, the researcher first read each file carefully in order to become familiar with, and gain a conceptualised picture of the information. Then she re-read it and colour coded the data by adopting an open coding technique which is described as “the process of breaking down the data into distinct units of meaning” (Goulding, 2002, p.76). This is done by word by word, line by line analysis questioning, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing the data.

The focus in the describing phase was on the critical instances, which are some events that produce emotional responses in people due to their individual circumstances (Gray, 2004). The researcher described why these occurred. For example, Paul remote

controlled his business as he was attending his father's funeral in Taiwan. Tony left his restaurant to be looked after by his employee while he was accompanying his son on his school's trip. Cathy chose to run property related businesses since she is fond of making friends with new people and she likes buying properties. Yvonne worked above 70 hours because her job and her business were her passion.

After describing all the cases, the researcher started to classify the data by using categorical aggregations to establish similar patterns or themes. Using the above instances as examples, in the cases of Paul and Tony, the theme of "familial obligation" or "cultural values" emerged. The theme of "Personal passion" might be suitable for Cathy's and Yvonne's instances. Having classified all the cases, the researcher employed a spreadsheet in which there were 15 rows for the participants, and each theme was put as the heading on top of each column. Then she collated all instances relevant under each theme. This enabled the researcher to combine the similar themes to establish the main theme.

In the interpreting stage, the researcher used direct interpretation, looking at a single case instead of multiple cases, and drawing meaning from it. The following is an example: Sean said, "... My shop is currently losing money. As you can see, there are no customers in the shop. Not only for this moment, but for the whole afternoon...". From the participant's direct interpretation, possible conclusions such as "Low population may be the cause for difficulties in running small businesses" could be drawn. In this sense, direct interpretation can be seen as a process of separating the data and putting them back together in more meaningful ways (Creswell, 2007).

In the final phase of the analysis, the researcher employed many word tables to clearly display diverse data from multiple cases. These tables allowed the researcher to look for similarities and differences among the cases. They were also used in the written report to show the information to its audiences.

Along with the data analysis, the researcher employed a number of tools to facilitate this process. Microsoft Office played an important part as Word Processing, Spreadsheets

and Databases were employed in the data analysis. In addition, memos, tables, diagrams were also used to analyse the information.

3.6 Ethical Issues

With ethics advice given by my supervisor, Dr Candice Harris, there were minimal ethical issues surrounding this critical interpretive perspective research. The research design, namely, the ‘insider’ perspective allowed the research to sympathize and respect participants and sought to minimise the possibility of their uncomfortable feelings. In compliance with the guidelines issued by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee, participants’ confidentiality and privacy were respected throughout the research process. Several strategies were developed to assure confidentiality and privacy.

Firstly, all the participants were given an Information Sheet to provide them with full disclosure about the research. This ensured that they understood that their privacy was well protected. In other words, they were given fictitious names in the report and the details of their business would not be disclosed or identified in any way. The Information sheet also provided them with information about the things they could do if they had any concerns and people they could contact for further information about the research.

Secondly, a Consent Form was required to be signed by each participant. This was to ensure that they had had the opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered. It was also ensured that they had been informed that their participation in this research was entirely voluntary and that they were entitled to refuse to answer any questions and could withdraw themselves or any information that they had provided for this study at any time prior to completion of data collection, without giving a reason or being disadvantaged in any way.

Thirdly, the research transcripts were translated from Chinese into English by the researcher herself so that confidentiality could be guaranteed as no other translators

were involved. In addition, only the researcher would have access to the data and consent forms and therefore, participants' privacy could be protected since no third parties could obtain any information.

Finally, AUT Health, Counselling and Wellbeing Office was able to offer free and confidential counselling support for this study. Participants could contact the Office if or when they needed any support. In addition, three sessions of counselling provided by their professional counsellors were arranged for dealing with any issues arising from participating in this research project. However, according to my knowledge, no participants took their services.

3.7 Limitations of the Research

There were some limitations with this research. Firstly, snowball sampling can have its shortcomings. The small number of cases recruited by snowballing means that the data is not generalisable to a whole population. Some participants knew the researcher directly or indirectly, so they may not have given true answers about painful experiences during the interviews. Chinese people are comfortable in sharing their happiness but not their sad experiences with people they know. Therefore, biases might be generated because of the limitation of sampling, and the cultural differences might mean that the results might not be generalisable.

In addition, qualitative research might be subjective because "the researcher as recorder and editor has a heavy hand in their production" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p135). An in-depth interview might introduce the researcher's biases in terms of question design and answer coding. Overall, the researcher's insider perspective was found to be a strength of the study rather than a limitation.

Furthermore, due to the scale and timeframe of the research, the sample size was limited to fifteen participants.

Finally, some mistakes or misunderstandings might have been produced when translating the research questions into another language as this research mainly used

Chinese during the interviews. According to Patton (2002), the data from interviews are words that can take on a very different meaning in other cultures. Some words and ideas cannot be translated directly. Therefore, as this research involved both English and Chinese languages, more complexity was caused when interpreting the finding.

4 Demographic and Business Information Analysis

It is important to examine Chinese SME owners' demographic and business information as it demonstrates how these people understand the concept of WLB and how they deal with WLB issues. For example, through exploring their demographic information, we learn about their familial obligations, such as looking after dependent children and parents. Similarly, by investigating the nature of their businesses, we can see that they are required to for long hours and during the weekends. Therefore, this chapter has close link with their interpretation of WLB as role conflict occurs when demands from family and business domains become incompatible.

An analysis of the qualitative and basic descriptive quantitative data gathered during the semi-structured interviews with fifteen Chinese small business owners regarding their business information will be presented in this chapter. Demographic information about participants' gender, country of origin, age, education, marital status and familial obligations will be examined first. This will be followed by historical business related information about their occupation in their home country prior to immigrating, job in New Zealand prior to self-employment and the motives for them to become self-employed or to set up their own businesses in New Zealand. Finally, participants' current business information including the nature and size of the businesses, ownership details, their roles in the business and weekly work hours will also be discussed.

4.1 Demographic Information

As shown by the demographic information displayed in Table 4.1, the majority of the fifteen small business owners came from China, with only a few from Taiwan and Hong Kong. The distribution of gender is almost equal and several age ranges were covered. These results are likely to suggest that the opportunities of running small businesses in New Zealand are open to all people regardless of their origin, gender and age. This may explain why New Zealand is one of the world's most entrepreneurial nations, with a high proportion of women and adults engaging in entrepreneurial activity (Massey, 2005).

In terms of their educational background, nearly all participants have had a tertiary education except one who only graduated from secondary school. Those with tertiary background include three who hold a Masters degree: Masters Degree in Pharmacy Practice, Master of Arts (Applied Language Studies) and Master of Business Studies (Banking). Nine participants have Bachelor degrees and two have Diploma qualifications. These findings reveal that the majority of the participants have high educational backgrounds. This also reflects the Chinese culture which values education above all. As shown in Table 4.1, all participants except two have been living in New Zealand for 17 years or less, which implies that many of them immigrated to New Zealand after the introduction of the New Zealand Immigration Points System in 1991. Therefore, the majority are skilled, well-educated immigrants since the points system was designed to recruit talented and entrepreneurial applicants with high qualifications (Henderson, 2003; Henderson et al., 2001; Watts & Trlin, 2000). New immigrants are generally well-educated professionals or business people with internationally transferable skills. They are generally high achievers in New Zealand today (Ip, 2007).

Table 4.1 Participants' Demographic Information

Name	Gender	Country of Origin	Age Range (Years)	Qualification	Years in NZ (as at 2007)
Vera	Female	China	31-40	Diploma	11
Sally	Female	H.K.	41-50	University	17
Cathy	Female	Taiwan	51-60	University	15
Kay	Female	China	20-30	University	6
Liz	Female	China	31-40	Masters	5
Helen	Female	China	31-40	Diploma	6
Yvonne	Female	China	41-50	University	11
John	Male	China	51-60	University	8
Jim	Male	H.K.	41-50	Masters	20
Tony	Male	China	41-50	University	23
Jason	Male	China	41-50	University	10
Paul	Male	Taiwan	51-60	University	13
Dick	Male	Taiwan	41-50	University	12
Sean	Male	China	51-60	Masters	11
Bill	Male	China	20-30	Secondary	5

As Table 4.2 illustrates, all participants but two are married, and one person is divorced. This fact is likely to indicate that many of them have to play two roles, namely, the role of business owner and a spouse or a solo mother. In terms of their familial obligations, seven participants need to look after either their dependent children or elderly parents in New Zealand. Two have to care for both young children and aged parents. Only six of them are able to devote themselves to their business fully as they do not have any obligations to take care of any family members.

Table 4.2 Participants' Marital Status and Familial Obligations

Name	Marital Status	Dependent Children	Dependent Parents
Vera	Divorced	1	2
Sally	Married	2	0
Cathy	Married	0	0
Kay	Single	0	0
Liz	Married	0	0
Helen	Single	0	0
Yvonne	Married	0	1
John	Married	0	2
Jim	Married	2	0
Tony	Married	4	2
Jason	Married	1	0
Paul	Married	0	0
Dick	Married	1	0
Sean	Married	0	0
Bill	Married	1	0

4.2 Participants' Employment History

This section analyses participants' occupational backgrounds, including their roles, both in their home country and in New Zealand. Following this is a discussion on their aspirations of self-employment prior to immigration. Finally, participants' motives to become self-employed or to set up their own businesses will also be examined.

Table 4.3 displays the participants' historical occupations. This includes their previous positions in their home country prior to immigrating and their jobs in New Zealand prior to self-employment. It also illustrates whether they had aspirations of self-employment prior to immigrating to New Zealand.

As shown in Table 4.3, participants had a wide range of occupations in their home

country prior to immigrating to New Zealand. Two participants, Vera and Jason, already had their own businesses in China. The former ran a beauty salon while the latter owned a factory. They are among the relatively wealthy business owners who were attracted to New Zealand during the past two decades (Abbott et al., 1999).

Many other participants had desired jobs either in certain professional areas or at a managerial level. For example, John and Sean held teaching roles for the Chinese government. John taught Chinese traditional medical subjects in a medical college (Equivalent to a New Zealand diploma level). Sean taught English in a university. Kay and Liz worked in the financial industry. Kay was employed by an international financial organisation while Liz worked for a large national bank owned by the Chinese government. Sally worked as a secretary in a medium size firm in Hong Kong whereas Yvonne was a human resource manager in a large organisation. Cathy used to be a pharmacist in a hospital in Taiwan. Tony worked as an agricultural mechanical engineer for the Agricultural Department of Chinese Government. Paul worked in a medium size shipping company while Dick took a senior position in a small trading firm in Taiwan. These findings reveal that all participants held key positions in their home country and the results corresponded with previous studies that many new arrivals were successful highly qualified professionals (Abbott et al., 1999; Henderson. 2003; Henderson et al., 2001).

However, after immigrating to New Zealand, two of them became unemployed and seven considered themselves underemployed - having to take unfavourable roles. Only three were able to stay in the same type of industry or hold similar positions. Moreover, the participants who got new jobs usually moved down from a relatively high status position in their home country to a lower one in New Zealand. According to the disadvantage theory, immigrants are disadvantaged in the labour market as a result of poor English skills, unrecognised educational credentials and discrimination (Light, 1984). Ayman and Berry (1996), and Tseng (1995) also point out that because of language barriers, cultural differences, unrecognized qualifications and lack of local work experience, new immigrants are more frequently unemployed and under-employed

compared to their native-born counterparts. Therefore, it is not surprising to learn that many of the participants could not find a desired job and had to make radical changes in their roles in New Zealand.

For example, Vera, who owned a beauty salon in her home country, became an employee in someone else's beauty salon. Jason, the factory owner, worked as a taxi driver. These facts showed that Vera and Jason changed their roles from being employers to employees largely because of their poor English competencies. In Jason's case, he was obviously disadvantaged in the labour market and he was forced to engage in a low skilled job. This can be seen as an example of under-employment. Furthermore, John experienced unemployment as there were no Chinese traditional medical schools in New Zealand for him to teach in. Kay, who was a financial consultant, had to do volunteer work in a non-profit organisation as she could not find a paid job that utilised her skills. Cathy, who used to be a pharmacist, could not find a job related to her qualifications and experience due to non-recognition of her overseas professional qualifications. She was unemployed and became a housewife staying at home. Tony, the agricultural mechanical engineer worked in a market garden and then in a takeaway. Dick, the trading person, became a worker in food production. The human resource manager, Yvonne, shifted her duties to look after accounts. Liz still worked in the same industry but her position was in a lower rank than that of her previous one as she became a mortgage broker for someone else, from being a bank manager. These findings indicate that most participants made radical changes and two faced unemployment. Many shifted their jobs in the primary labour market to secondary occupations or from a white collar position to a blue collar one. As a result of their unfavourably changed positions, participants' financial status and their income would probably decrease as well. These findings reveal that immigrants were usually economically underprivileged and disadvantaged in the labour market of the host country.

Table 4.3 also reveals a few exceptions. For example, the English teacher, Sean was able to play a teaching role at a language school first and then at a university. But he did not

teach English as he used to in his home country. Instead, he taught Mandarin in New Zealand. Sally, the secretary, was able to keep her occupation and Paul who used to be in the shipping industry played the same role after immigration. As shown in Table 4.3, three students found jobs in New Zealand. Bill got a job in an Asian supermarket whereas Jim and Helen became a pharmacist and an office administrator respectively.

According to Friesen and Ip (1997), the main reasons for some immigrants to come to New Zealand are business opportunity and employment. In the case of present research, only seven out of the fifteen participants said that they had this goal when they were in their home country. More than half of them claimed that they had never thought of becoming self-employed or setting up their own businesses. Nevertheless, as Light (1984) argues, labour markets' disadvantage becomes a special incentive that may cause immigrants to consider self-employment, the greater the disadvantage the greater the incentive can be. Therefore, for some participants, such as Cathy and Dick, who had never thought of self-employment prior to immigrating, unemployment and underemployment became some kind of motivation that fuelled their aspiration to set up their own businesses. As Table 3.1 demonstrates, all participants had their small businesses at the time of being interviewed.

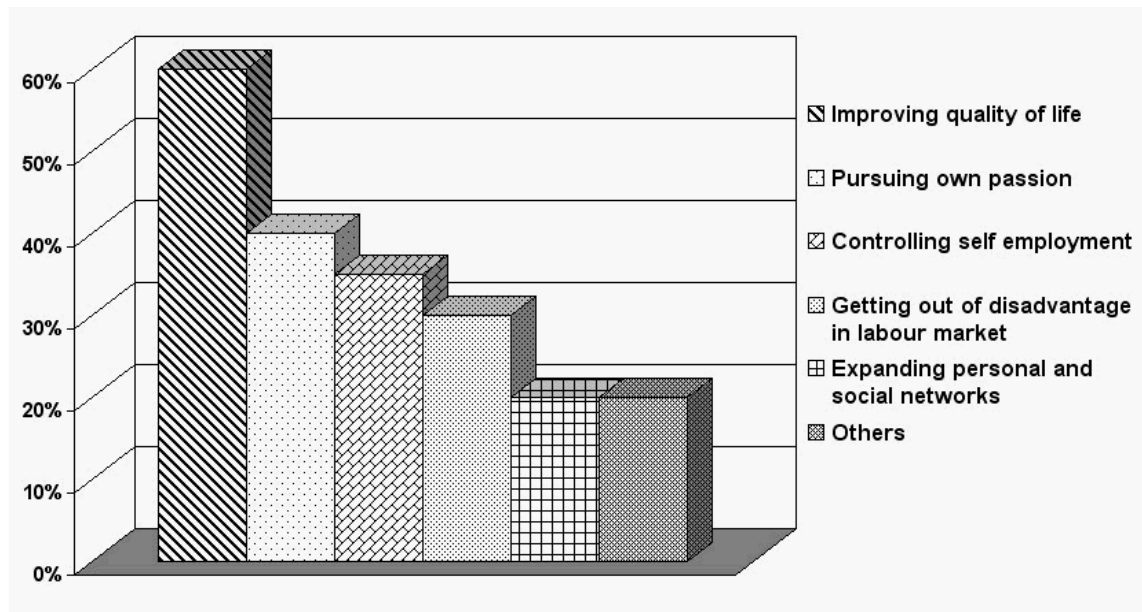
Table 4.3 Occupations and Aspirations of Self-employment

Name	Job Prior to Immigrating	Job Held in New Zealand Prior to Self-employment	Aspiration of Self-employment Prior to Immigration
Vera	Beauty Salon owner	Beauty Salon worker	Yes
Jason	Factory owner	Taxi driver	Yes
John	Teacher	Unemployed	No
Sean	Teacher	Teacher	No
Kay	Financial consultant	Volunteer worker	No
Liz	Bank manager	Mortgage broker	No
Sally	Secretary	Secretary	Yes
Yvonne	HR manager	Accountant	No
Cathy	Pharmacist	Housewife	No
Tony	Agriculture mechanical engineer	Takeaway	Yes
Paul	Shipping	Shipping	Yes
Dick	Trading	Food manufacturing worker	No
Bill	Student	Shop senior staff	No
Jim	Student	Pharmacist	Yes
Helen	Student	Office administrator	Yes

4.2.1 Motives for Self-employment

Participants' responses to the question regarding the motives for them to become self-employed or to set up their own businesses are illustrated in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1. Motives for Self-employment



Participants cited five main motives for being self-employed. As Figure 4.1 reveals, more than half of them viewed self-employment as a good way to improve quality of life and to raise financial status. This group of motives included to “*reach a higher living standard*”, “*earn more money*”, “*increase financial status*”, “*support my family*”, “*have a stable and better life for my family*”, “*raise income and a stable job and life*”, and “*reach a higher position*”. The second motive was in pursuit of one’s own passion. About forty percent of the participants said that their personal passion is to be business owners or those types of businesses are their personal passion. About thirty-five percent of them cited their motive as wanting to “*control their own employment rather than to be controlled by others*”. Around thirty percent of the participants chose to be self-employed since they could not find a suitable/desired job or a job related to their qualifications and experience. Almost twenty percent of the participants aimed to expand personal or social networks by being self-employed. Some other motives included finding something to do to kill time, having flexible hours, learning more things, challenging themselves to achieve higher expectations and attempting to gain some experience or basic techniques in running businesses.

These results indicate that the motives for the participants to become self-employed are

varied. Among the most popular ones were providing the best economic conditions for their families, life improvements, raising their financial and social status. These findings show that new Chinese immigrants are similar to their earlier counterparts. Both considered their family needs as the top priority and their common goal was to generate financial gain. The main motive of the first wave Chinese immigrants to New Zealand was to find gold so that they could send their savings as remittance to their family in their home country (Ng, 2001, 2003). Some new settlers also send money back to China but the majority have their family here in New Zealand. Establishing their own businesses may result in raising their financial levels to facilitate their family members. According to Ng (2001, 2003), family orientation is part of the Chinese culture. Parents have the obligation to look after their children. Chow (2004) also claims that the Chinese wish to earn more money so that they will be able to provide a better education and financial support for their children. These business people usually expect their next generation to carry on their businesses. In addition, some participants feel that to be one's own boss represents a higher social status.

The second and third most popular motives for becoming self-employed named by the participants were the pursuit of their own passion and the desire for control of their own employment rather than to be controlled by others. These findings are likely to explain that those participants are no longer only seeking food, water and shelter, which are situated at the bottom of the “needs of hierarchy theory”, suggested by Abraham Maslow (Robbins, Millett, Cacioppe & Waters-Marsh, 2001). They are moving from a lower-order need level to a higher-order one since they do not struggle for physiological and safety needs. They aim to fulfil their social, esteem and self-actualisation needs. For example, Cathy said,

After coming to New Zealand, I could not find a job related to my qualifications or my previous experiences. Some friends of mine introduced me to work in a factory. I refused as I didn't like that working environment. I would rather be a house wife staying at home than doing what I don't like. I believed that I could find a job that I was interested in soon. As I had plenty of time, I read the

property newspaper and visited “open homes” regularly. I bought several houses that I liked and later I sold them to some friends who newly arrived in New Zealand from Taiwan. Then I became a property agent. I liked this job as I enjoy talking to different people. After working in the real estate industry for several years, I had a strong desire to build my own houses. With the help of a good friend of mine, who is an experienced builder, I successfully built my first house. When I saw that beautiful house which I had put great effort in, from the first step - buying the land to the final step - finish, the feeling was so nice. Then I built another one...

Cathy's story indicates that many new immigrants are likely to have higher skills, better qualifications and more capital compared to previous immigrants (Ho et al., 1999). Their financial background allows them to control their own employment. Their qualifications, skills and experiences form their entrepreneurial behaviours. They seek business opportunities everywhere.

Motives that stem from getting out of under-employment and unemployment were also cited by some of the participants. According to Waldinger et al. (1990) and Light (1984), immigrants have the inferior status in the general labour market due to their poor English competency and inadequate or inappropriate skills. Jason became a taxi driver because of his language difficulties. John became unemployed due to his inappropriate skills. Cathy became a house wife since her qualifications were unrecognised. As Ho et al. (1999) found from their study, self-employment has become a desired alternative for many Chinese immigrants who are unable to find employment that can make use of their qualifications and experience. A few participants claimed that expanding personal or social network was their main reason for being self-employed. This is because some participants believe that building a wide personal or social network in the newly settled country is very important, in particular, for those younger immigrants.

4.3 Current Business Information Analysis

4.3.1 Types of Businesses

As shown in Table 4.4, the participants span a variety of industries. Three of them operate in the retail sector and two in the hospitality service industry. Two work in the financial service sector whilst two engage in the real estate industry. One works in manufacturing and one plays a role in immigration consultancy.

Table 4.4 Previous Experience and Current Businesses

Name	Job Prior to Self-employment in New Zealand	Type of Business Owned in New Zealand
Bill	Shop senior staff	Asian supermarket
Jason	Taxi driver	Liquor retail shop
Sean	Teacher	Gift shop
Tony	Takeaway	Chinese restaurant
John	Unemployed	Takeaway
Kay	Volunteer worker	Financial consultancy
Liz	Mortgage broker	Mortgage broker
Cathy	Housewife	Property management
Jim	Pharmacist	Real estate
Sally	Secretary	Immigration consultancy
Vera	Beauty salon worker	Beauty salon
Paul	Shipping	Printing services
Dick	Food manufacturing worker	Food manufacturing
Yvonne	Accountant	Language school
Helen	Office administrator	Commercial cleaning

Many types of these businesses can be seen as ‘middleman’ businesses. According to Bonacich (1973) who developed the middleman minority theory, middleman businesses require small start-up capital and they have high liquidity. Middleman occupations

include agents, rent collectors, money lenders and brokers. Playing the middleman roles mean that they negotiate products between supplier/producer and consumer, owner and renter. Hence, financial consultancies, mortgage brokers, liquor retail stores and gift shops may be seen as middleman businesses since they obtain goods or services from mainstream suppliers (banks or financial entities, liquor wholesalers, souvenir producers) and sell them to their customers. The findings show that several businesses that the participants own have middleman characteristics. Many of the other businesses have the characteristics of high rate of failure, limited profit margins and they are labour intensive (Bates, 1994; Waldinger, 1989).

These types of the businesses indicate that the structure and allocation of opportunities open to Chinese immigrants are often risk-intense businesses that require them to challenge failure and to work hard. These findings confirm the opportunity structure theory proposed by Waldinger (1989). This theory suggests that immigrant entrepreneurs can only move into those niches that are underserved or abandoned by native entrepreneurs. These opportunities are generally found in the industries where the risks of failure are high. They are characterised by low status and intensive labour, with high running costs and limited profit margins (Waldinger, 1989). For example, running a liquor retail shop and a food manufacturing business are complex due to Liquor Acts and Food Safety regulations. Businesses such as commercial cleaning, takeaways, Chinese restaurants, and Asian supermarkets require hard work and long hours. Evening and weekend work are also involved. People who work in the real estate industry or as financial consultants and mortgage brokers are on “standby” so often available to see their clients seven days a week to provide service to their customers.

As listed in Table 4.4, some participants’ businesses are similar or related to their previous roles in New Zealand. For example, Bill, who was an Asian supermarket employee in New Zealand, became a partner of this supermarket. Vera, who worked as an employee in a beauty salon, started off her own beauty shop. Liz kept the same role as a mortgage broker in the financial industry but she worked for others previously and now she works for herself. Tony became a Chinese restaurant owner from working in a

takeaway for someone else. Dick, who used to work in a food manufactory, started his own food manufacturing business. These findings support the stepladder theory (Raijman & Tienda, 2000) which posits that immigrants' participation in undesirable employment in organisations owned and managed by other co-ethnics, is a way to acquire the knowledge and experience required to establish a business.

Immigrants are assumed to work for their co-ethnic employers because they are usually excluded from mainstream or other ethnic occupations due to their language difficulties. Time spent in low-wage employment can be seen as a form of on-the-job training rather than exploitation by co-ethnics (Raijman & Tienda, 2000). Several participants in this study claimed that they had worked long hours and were low paid when they were working for others. Nevertheless, such employment provided them with on-the-job training. It was not only a way to acquire the knowledge and experience required for establishing their own businesses, but it also widened their personal and societal networks. Subsequently, this employment enabled them to master business skills as well as providing easy access to industry specific information. Many participants revealed that experiences gained from previous employment had helped them in running their own businesses.

However, six participants' businesses are unrelated to their previous roles held in New Zealand. For example, Jim now operates in the real estate industry from previously being a pharmacist. Helen has a commercial cleaning business but she also works as an office administrator at the same time. John and Cathy, who used to be unemployed, became owners of a takeaway and a property management company respectively. Sean, who was a teacher, has his own gift shop. Paul, who worked in the shipping company, now owns a printing service business. Although they are in businesses that differ from their previous employment, some still believe that they gained valuable experience from their previous roles, such as improving communication skills and building personal and customer networks: experience that facilitated them into their own businesses.

4.3.2 Size and Ownership of Businesses

Table 4.5 displays the size and ownership structure of the participants' businesses. In terms of their size, the largest has fifteen fulltime employees and the second largest has twelve workers including two part time staff. The third and fourth have eleven and eight employees respectively. The remaining businesses only have five or fewer staff. According to the Ministry of Economic Development (2006b), enterprises with 19 or fewer employees are defined as SMEs in New Zealand. The findings reveal that none of the businesses in Table 4.5 have more than 19 employees. Therefore, all are micro-small businesses with the larger categorisation of SMEs. Cameron and Massey (1999) define a micro business as having 5 or fewer employees, a small business with 6-49 staff and a medium-sized business as having between 50-99 employees. As Coetzer, Cameron, Lewis, Massey and Harris (2007) point out, there is no generally accepted SME definition and it is complex to define an SME. They also state that New Zealand SMEs are not managing their human resources effectively in terms of recruiting, training and performance appraisal. Coetzer et al. (2007) found from their study that SME owner managers tend to have a preference towards low cost practices because of SMEs' limited resources. This was found to be the case in several Chinese small and micro businesses in this research. Some participants said that they used word-of-mouth to hire people and applied techniques such as placing signs on a shop wall to avoid advertising costs. They provide informal training; hence new employees usually learn by doing. With such small or micro businesses, these owner managers try to do everything themselves to minimise their costs.

Table 4.5 Current Business Information

Name	Types of business	Number of employees	Ownership Structure	Role in business
Bill	Asian super-market	10 Fulltime 2 part time	Partnership	Partner
Jason	Liquor retail shop	1 Full time, 1 part time	Family owned	Owner manager
Sean	Gift shop	1 Part time	Family owned	Owner manager
Tony	Chinese restaurant	5 Fulltime, 2 Part time	Partnership	Director
John	Takeaway	1 Full time, 1 part time	Family owned	Owner manager
Kay	Financial consultancy	2 Full time	Partnership	Partner
Liz	Mortgage Broker	No employees	Family owned	Owner manager
Cathy	Property management	No employees	Family owned	Owner manager
Jim	Real estate	3 Full Time	Partnership	Partner
Sally	Immigration consultancy	15 Full time	Partnership	Partner
Vera	Beauty salon	3 Full time, 4 Part time	Partnership	Partner
Paul	Printing services	1 Full time 2 Part time	Family owned	Owner Manager
Dick	Food producing	4 Full time	Family owned	Owner manager
Yvonne	Language school	10 Part time	Partnership	Principal
Helen	Commercial cleaning	2 Part-time	Family owned	Owner manager

As can be seen in Table 4.5, more than half the businesses are family-owned businesses. Since many participants are owner managers, most of them have an important role to play in their businesses. This is because all small businesses want to grow and prosper as soon as possible and SMEs have the characteristics of closer interpersonal relationships and a shorter decision-making chain requiring the operator to stay involved in everything that is related to their business (Zhang, 2000). Therefore, owner managers are required to play multi-roles, such as in marketing, human resources and finance. For example, they have to understand the market conditions to gain a

competitive advantage (Porter, 1985). Hence they need to analyse their market position as well as handle problems which have stemmed from suppliers and customers. Moreover, they should develop and generate the firm's human capital by carrying out learning and training activities. In addition, they have to control their financial performance to maintain the long-term survival of the company because of the high bankruptcy rate in the small business sector (Zhang, 2000). It is unsurprising that many owner managers may face work-life balance challenges because work intensification is making sizeable demands on them and having considerable impact on their overall quality of life (Roberts, 2007). It is clear that a study of WLB in the SME context is important.

4.3.3 Challenges in Setting up Businesses

Participants suggest that there are many challenges that immigrants can face in running their own businesses in New Zealand. Language barriers and cultural differences were seen as the key problems cited by almost all participants. In response to the question regarding their own experiences, Jason, the owner of a liquor retail shop said,

I found that language barriers and cultural differences are the main difficulties for us to run our own business. I felt very stressed at the beginning as I had communication problems and financial problems. My business is selling wine. But I had little knowledge about wine products. You see, the whole store is filled with different types of wine and most of them are very expensive. I should decide to purchase the popular ones and the high margin ones. I had to consider how big the order I should place and how large a volume I was going to stock. I should be very clear about how much capital I could use in purchasing wine and for how long they could be sold.

John also had a similar experience. He described,

We're doing a Takeaway business. Our products include pizza and cheesecake etc. We didn't have any knowledge about the Western food in the start-up stage. We

didn't know what tastes and styles the Kiwis like. We didn't know how to develop our new products and customer network as we had language problems and we were not familiar with the Western eating culture at that time.

These two examples show that communication in running businesses is critical. Language barriers can usually lead to misunderstandings and even total communication breakdowns. This can have great impact on their businesses. In addition, cultural differences such as lifestyles and tastes are also significant factors for immigrant small business owners to understand. For example, they have to learn what kind of food their customers like and what drinks are popular so that they can supply the right products to meet their customers' preferences.

As participants are running different types of businesses, they have encountered different problems which are often unique to their particular type of enterprise. For example, Dick discovered that hygiene and food safety policies were the major troubles for him at the start-up stage since his business involved manufacturing food products. Kay claimed that she had to cope with the changing legislation surrounding the financial industry in which she operated her business. Sean noted that low population was a problem because it resulted in fewer customers. For example, Sean said that sometimes he would not see a single customer coming into his shop for half a day but this would never be the case in China which has a high population density. Vera suggested that decorating a beauty salon to meet Kiwi customer needs and promoting her products has been challenging. Paul said that some mechanical techniques that he knew little about were required to run his printing machines. Helen found the critical issue she faced at the beginning was to overcome her psychological problems as cleaning was not only a low status job but it also long involved evening hours, bad odours and heavy labour. Sally, who runs an immigration consultant company, found that doing company accounts was very difficult. She said,

At the start-up stage, our business was very small and we had only two part-time staff. In order to reduce costs, I needed to do our accounts myself. I met lots of problems. My English was not good enough to understand the local legislations and

some taxation terms. I found it hard to understand GST and PAYE as I had never encountered such issues when I was in Hong Kong. Different countries have different systems. As an immigrant, we have to learn many new things.

There are many other problems that immigrant small business owners usually face. As named by some participants, they include unfamiliarity with local legislation, immigration policies and the employment relations, unfamiliarity with the local economic conditions, different styles in running businesses, problems in accessing information about the local market, lack of business capital and high tax. These negative factors hinder immigrants in setting up and running their own businesses successfully.

Not surprisingly, many owner-managers of SMEs face problems in running their businesses and they need to find sources of assistance. From their study of interviewing 50 SME owner-managers, Lewis, Massey, Ashby, Coetzer and Harris (2007) found that most often SME owner-managers interact with the support infrastructure to meet short-term needs, i.e. for operational purposes but not for strategic goals to meet long-term needs. Some of the owner-managers seek business assistance frequently but some do so infrequently and only in response to a problem. All the participants in this research revealed that they had found and employed some support sources to overcome problems. For example, some of them went to university to improve their language skills. Some concentrated also on broadening their knowledge to learn more about local policies and culture to help them to better understand the economic conditions and lifestyles in the New Zealand context. Some found that family members such as parents, partners and friends were very helpful with financial support and in providing valuable business information and experience.

As can be seen, getting assistance and support is significant. Participants employed different sources to overcome their obstacles in order to achieve their self-employed objectives illustrated in Figure 4.1. Many participants are motivated to run one more business or work longer hours to generate more profits. Their other businesses and weekly work hours are presented in Table 4.6.

4.3.4 Other Businesses

Table 4.6 shows that one third of the participants have two businesses in New Zealand. Bill is a partner of an Asian supermarket, as well as an owner of a commercial cleaning business. Jason has a jewellery shop in China and owns a liquor retail shop in New Zealand. Tony runs a Chinese restaurant and, at the same time manages a furniture retail and wholesale business. Vera operates her beauty salon as well as her residential cleaning business. Yvonne owns a language school and a retail store. These findings reveal that some participants might be sojourners, who are strongly motivated to come to a new country for financial purposes (Light, 1984). Sojourners intend to amass as much money as possible in the shortest period with the long-term goal of returning to their home country (Fairlie & Meyer, 1996; Light, 1984). Some participants who want to accumulate as much money as they can in the shortest timeframe are involved in other businesses while also running the one they already have (Henderson, 2003).

However, many participants are in the position to own only one business as the profits gained from their businesses were low and some even claimed that their businesses did not make any money at all. Sean explained,

I have run this shop for about one year. However, my shop is currently losing money. As you can see, there are no customers in the shop. Not only for this moment, but for the whole afternoon, I have not serviced any customers. Therefore, when I need to meet friends or engage in other things, I just close the shop as it does not make money anyway.

Being small business owners, they have to put great effort into their businesses but the financial gain may not be as expected. In addition, many participants claimed that most of their time was spent on business operations, in particular for those who had two businesses. These facts can be explained by Ho et al.'s (1999) research results that running a small business took up a lot of time and the financial return was small (Fernandez & Kim, 1998).

Table 4.6 Other Businesses and Work Hours

Name	Types of Primary Business	Other Business Owned	Hours Worked per Week
Bill	Asian super-market	Commercial cleaning	70 hours
Jason	Liquor retail shop	Jewellery shop in China	85 hours
Sean	Gift shop	None	40 hours
Tony	Chinese restaurant	Furniture retail and holesale	Above 60 hours
John	Takeaway	None	60 hours
Kay	Financial consultancy	None	38 hours
Liz	Mortgage Broker	None	40 hours
Cathy	Property management	None	40 hours
Jim	Real estate	None	50 hours
Sally	Immigration consultancy	None	40 hours
Vera	Beauty salon	Residential cleaning	40 hours
Paul	Printing services	None	40 hours
Dick	Food manufacturing	None	50 hours
Yvonne	Language school	None	Above 70 hours
Helen	Commercial cleaning	None	60 hours

4.3.5 Work Hours

According to Cameron and Massey (1999), family businesses have the ability to control work hours which are frequently long. Because of the small financial margins, many participants had increased their work hours in order to achieve their financial goals: to provide a good economic environment for their families and better education for their children or to return to their home country. As demonstrated in Table 4.6, only seven participants worked less than 50 hours a week. More than half of the participants worked 50 hours or more weekly. Six of them engaged in work for 60 hours or even longer. Two participants worked for 70 hours and one even worked 85 hours a week.

There are a number of reasons for them to work such long hours. Firstly, most of them are running retail or personal service businesses. The nature of their businesses requires them to work long hours as well as do weekend work so that they can provide services to their customers. Tony, who is running a Chinese restaurant described:

We have to work until late at night and open during the weekends as our important customers (referring to people who place a large order, i.e. many dishes) come during those periods. We can't rely on just providing lunches because there are no profits by only doing that. Weekends are also very important to us especially for my furniture retail shop as it is very quiet during weekdays.

Small business owners have no choice but to work long hours and during weekends because their businesses require them to do so. They have to work in this way in order to increase their business turnover. Another reason for some participants to expand business hours is high competition and a low profit margin. As Jason, the liquor retail shop owner said:

Running a business now is more difficult. For instance, around these two years, another three liquor retail shops have been established on our street. In order to retain our customers, we have to mark down our profit margin to compete with other shops. Moreover, we must extend our business hours. They close at 7 pm but we are open until midnight. They do not work on weekends while we are open not only on the weekends but also on most holidays. We do not run this business for fun but for money. I hope I can earn more money so that I can buy a house around here and then my son can go to the best school later.

He believed that by doubling the business hours, profit could be doubled as well. He calculated the following,

If I made \$5000 profit for 40 trading hours, then I should make \$10,000 for working 80 hours. Also, I pay the same rent even if I double my trading time and thus my costs can be reduced and profit can be maximised. Furthermore, my

customers know that we open all the time so they come to our shop to get what they want. Consequently, they are happy to come to my shop regularly rather than other shops as we can always meet their needs.

Therefore, from some business people's perspectives, long work hours can be a good strategy to succeed in a business. As Jason pointed out, long work hours could sometimes be a way to attract new customers or retain customers' loyalty. They could also be used to cope with competitors in the same industry. Long work hours could probably help increase business revenue and profit as well. That is why some small and micro business owners are ready to work long hours.

Finally, some participants work long hours because they are engaged in two businesses or own one business but work for someone else in the meantime, such as Helen and Yvonne. They work 60 and above 70 hours respectively. However, it is quite surprising to note that many of them were satisfied with their work hours even though they work for over 50 hours a week. For example, Jim, who worked 50 hours, Tony, who worked more than 60 hours, and Yvonne, who worked 70 hours a week, said that they were happy with their work hours. This may be due to the Chinese being hard working people (Ng, 2001 & 2003).

When they need to spend a great deal of time on their work such as above 50 hours a week, it would be hard to imagine how they balance their work and personal lives. The following section will focus on the investigation of their responses to the issues of WLB in order to answer those research questions.

5 Work-life Balance Issues

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of participants' response to WLB issues, focusing on their perception of the concept of WLB, their attitudes about WLB issues, the main factors creating a sense of work-life imbalance and sources of support used to restore a perceived balance. The following sections will discuss each of the four main themes arising from interviews with participants - personal motivations, familial obligations, finance, and health, which work as enablers of or barriers to achieving desired WLB.

When questioned about their opinions of the concept of WLB, participants gave various responses providing deep insights into how they perceive the concept. Two participants, who had said they had not encountered the term of "work-life balance" until they received the information sheet, provided WLB imbalance stories. Eight participants said that they balanced their work and life very well and the rest claimed that they did not enjoy a good balance. However, it was found that overall participants generally did not have a balance due to the complex idea of "work-life balance" and the complex interplay of the above four main themes.

The Chinese interpretation of WLB is very different from predominant are discussed in the literature which focuses on Western perceptions. As Chaganti and Greene (2002) point out, entrepreneurs in the Chinese culture believe that individuals "work to live" while in the western culture, one is expected to "live to work". Different cultures form diverse attitudes towards valuing WLB, which also influence their economic behaviours. Therefore, WLB relies on their different stages of business, financial status, and the unique demands imposed upon ethnic entrepreneurs.

5.1 Personal Motivations

Personal motivation can have considerable impact on their perceived WLB. As defined by Robbins et al. (2001, p.772), motivation is "the processes that account for an

individual's intensity, direction and persistence of effort towards attaining a goal". This implies that when people have a set goal, they continuously exert their efforts towards achieving that goal. They must expend their time and energy on it, and thus, may face stress if they have other commitments (Lewis, 2003). Motivations can change based on individuals' situations. For some new Chinese arrivals, their motivations may be to improve communicative language skills for the purpose of resettlement. Good English skills can help them to fit into a new society more easily (Boyer, 1996). For some other immigrants who are working in the secondary labour market or who are unable to find a job, their motivation can be getting out of under-employment or unemployment. For some other people, their motivation is the pursuit of work they are passionate about. These motivations may contribute to their work-life imbalance.

As mentioned in Chapter Four, Helen owns her cleaning business now. Her motivation is to improve her English skills. She describes:

Being a new immigrant, I understand that English skills are very important for me to settle in New Zealand. My English skills were very limited when I arrived in this country. I had difficulties in communication with bank tellers. I found it hard to understand television programmes. More importantly, I could not find any jobs in the mainstream society and was only able to work as a shop assistant in an Asian supermarket.

Language difficulties hinder immigrants' employment chances in New Zealand (Boyer, 1996). Therefore, Helen is strongly motivated to improve her English skills. She believes that good English skills can help her to settle in New Zealand smoothly. She also thinks that language competence can assist her in achieving her goals such as finding a good job with a higher salary and developing her own small business soon.

However, the motivation for improving her English skills makes it hard for Helen to achieve a balance as she needs to go to university to study in the evenings and works for a "co-ethnic" in daytime. In addition, as she owns a small commercial cleaning business, she has to work in the evenings and weekends. Clark (2000) suggests that

people are border crossers between the domains of work and life. They can shape the nature of work and life to some degree to create a desired balance. Helen is a “border-crosser”. Everyday she crosses the domains of her paid work, her own business, and study. Work and study occupy almost all of her time and she is unable to separate one from the other. It seems that work is her life and her life is filled up with work, paper work and labour work. Such work consumes her energy both mentally and physically. Multi-roles as an employee, a business owner and a student drive Helen to confront role conflict (Tetrick & Buffardi, 2006). Therefore, motivation for improving her English skills places pressure on Helen inhibiting her ability to enjoy a balance.

Helen considers that she does not have a balance because she defined WLB as “work in the daytime from Monday to Friday, without evening and weekend work or study”. However, she said that she needed to study at this current stage so that she might achieve a sense of balance at a later stage to have a bright future when she could achieve a sense of balance.

Many participants faced underemployment in the early years following immigration (Boyer, 1996; Ho et al., 1998). Tony, who now owns a Chinese restaurant, worked for others in a takeaway business before setting up his own business. He recalled that work experience and said:

Working in a takeaway, I was quite stressed as I was very uncomfortable with the working conditions. I worked in the kitchen to give a hand to the chef. The temperature was very high during the summer. The work required me to stand beside the stoves all the time. My feet could only have a rest when I lay down in bed at night. I also disliked the work hours. I found it hard to cope with that situation. It was too different from my job in China. When I worked as an agriculture mechanical engineer for the Government's Agriculture Department, our office was very clean with air conditioning. I had a nice desk and a comfortable chair and there was no physical labour involved. We were completely free outside of 9am-5pm.

It is easy to see that Tony was underemployed having changed from being a professional prior to immigration, to becoming a physical labourer. He moved from a higher social and economic status to a lower one. The choice of being self-employed becomes a special incentive that pushes immigrants out from their unfavourable situations (Clark & Drinkwater, 2000). Therefore, Tony was motivated to get out of such a disadvantaged position in the labour market and to be his own boss. He decided himself to continue that job which he disliked but was prepared to work hard at, in order to accumulate the start up capital required for becoming self-employed.

Vera, who owns a beauty salon, had a similar motivation to Tony's. She explained why she set up her own business:

I used to be a beauty salon boss in China. When I came to New Zealand, I had to work for someone else. I worked long hours but the pay was unacceptable. To be honest, I was unhappy working for others. But I was not familiar with the local policies here and how to run a business in New Zealand at that time. I had to learn these through being employed by someone else. Once I thought I knew how to run my own business and I had built up my customer network, I immediately set up my own business.

Tony and Vera had similar motivations. They were motivated to be their own bosses and they were not willing to be employed by others. However, being new immigrants, they were not familiar with the policies and procedures for running businesses. In addition, they lacked specific skills to run their own businesses. Even Vera, who had owned a similar business before, still needed to learn some techniques specific to the New Zealand context. For example, the material used for facials in New Zealand can be different from that used in China as sun light here is stronger than in China. Immigrants acquire such knowledge by means of working for someone else, i.e. learning by doing (Lewis, Massey & Harris, 2007).

Therefore, in the workplace, Tony and Vera are not just simply working to complete daily tasks. They often exert extra effort and work longer than standard hours to show

their commitment (Barham et al., 1998; Blunsdon et al., 2006) in order to acquire the necessary knowledge. This can be explained by the exchange model (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994), that in order to gain something, they should give something. Their engagement in organisational citizenship behaviour can contribute to their perceived work-life imbalance (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Bolino & Turmley, 2005). Furthermore, their overload at work creates a negative mindset that impacts on their home life, and their time and energy spent on family activities are also reduced (Lewis, 2003). Consequently, not only do they personally face imbalance, but their family may also suffer from such imbalance, as emotions and feelings can result in a spill-over (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Hence, personal motivation for getting out of underemployment can create work-life imbalance.

However, some participants suggest that to achieve WLB they have to work because work is their passion. Cathy who owns a property management business said,

There is no balance at all without work. You have to work to achieve balance. This is because work is a time-worthy lifestyle which can make people more active and wholesome. For me, work is the goal in life. I feel very happy and balanced when I return home after I finish my daily work as I can see that I have made progress from day to day. When I stayed at home as a housewife after my immigration, I felt stressed even though I had plenty of time, and I don't think I enjoyed balance at that time.

Cathy views work as her career goal and she devotes herself to it. She found that her goal was achieved step by step as she made progress at work from day to day. She enjoys feeling fulfilled, which provides her with a sense of balance. She perceives that without work there would be no balance at all. Another participant, Yvonne, who owns a language school and works as a full-time employee for a trading firm, suggests that work and life cannot be separated. She views her business as her life and the workplace as her home. Thus, she is satisfied with her life when she is happy with her work because work and life are integrated (Blunsdon et al., 2006). She said,

Work-life balance does not depend on the time factor. It relates to your choice. It is also easier to achieve WLB if you are self-employed. You won't feel tired because it is your own business. For me, I work more than 70 hours per week but I enjoy doing so. You won't feel that you work long hours since your business is your life and the workplace is your home. When self-employed, you integrate your work and life together. You won't separate them, thus you have a desired balance.

Yvonne sees herself as a workaholic. She likes to work and she even enjoys working for more than 70 hours per week. She perceives that it can be easier for self-employed people to achieve WLB when they work for themselves. People do not feel tired when their businesses are their passion.

The above findings correspond with the idea of Isles (2004), who notes that for some people work can probably make a crucial contribution to their lives as work can provide overall life satisfaction. For Cathy and Yvonne, work is interesting and enjoyable thus they believe that they can achieve better WLB through work. Work is a pivotal interest and the extent to which they prefer to be heavily involved in it is their personal choice. Nevertheless, work can also encroach upon their time and space, crowding out their personal life (Bond, 2004). Even though Yvonne enjoys working more than 70 hours a week, it is questioned how much time she can allocate to her leisure activities and other commitments, as time spent on work reduces time available for life. Work also takes up a great deal of energy (Lewis, 2003). Yvonne may not have enough energy for taking care of her mother after working for 70 hours a week. In addition, she may see the workplace as her home. It is impossible for her husband and her mother to see it in the same way. Therefore, for Cathy and Yvonne, their motivation as the pursuit of work they are passionate about may also cause burnt-out which can affect health and family relations.

On the other hand, some participants suggest that they sometimes face work-life imbalance because of familial obligations, which are hard to balance with business demands.

5.2 Familial Obligations

5.2.1 Cultural Values

According to several participants, WLB means that they are able to work and also be strongly involved in their family activities. For example, they should have time to play games with their children or have dinner with the whole family if their work-life is balanced. Chinese people love to spend time with their families since this is their traditional lifestyle. Dick, who owns a food manufacturing business, said,

Work-life balance for me is to be able to finish work early everyday and come home to spend time with my family. I'll think that I have achieved WLB when I have time to prepare dinner and eat it with my wife and son together as it is important to have dinner with the whole family in our culture. In addition, I must be free on Sundays as I need to go to church.

According to Dick, the desired balance for him is achieved by having dinner with his whole family everyday, an activity that is valued by the Chinese. He finds it important because he values his Chinese lifestyle very much. This indicates that people's role expectations have been influenced by their cultural background (MacDonald, Phipps, & Lethbridge, 2005) and cultural differences also have an effect on their family decisions (Polach, 2003). In a culture of collectivism, people see themselves as part of a larger social network, e.g. workgroups or extended families, rather than focusing on their own individual goals and preferences (Spector et al, 2004). Hence, Dick achieves his balance by making a commitment to his family.

Ng (2003c) claims that the key characteristic of Chinese culture is family orientation. The Chinese focus of interest is on the family and their children. Because of such cultural values, Chinese parents are expected to do their best to provide their children with the best start in life. In turn, the children are expected to work hard and later to take care of their old parents (Ng, 2003c). To achieve this, the Chinese believe that there must be a close tie between parents and their children as well as a harmonious

environment at home. Thus, parents should spend more time with their children to maintain a friendly relationship among family members. Through communication and other activities, close links between parents and children can be forged. Cultural values form people's perception and shape their behaviours in society (Spector et al., 2004; Yang, 1996). That is why some participants view spending significant time with their families and participating in family activities as an important part of WLB.

The participants' age appears to have influence on their perceptions about WLB. Dick, Tony, Paul, John and Jason, who perceive WLB to be related to cultural values, belong to the more mature age group. It might be the case that people pay more attention to their traditional lifestyles and families when they are at an older age. It is well known that when immigrants are getting older, above 50 years old for example, they are more likely to think of their home countries and their traditional lifestyle. Therefore, it is not surprising that some participants considered that maintaining their cultural habits, such as having dinner with their families, could allow them to achieve WLB. Nonetheless, the family orientation culture, which requires people to play a good parental or filial child role, can also impose pressure on the achievement of WLB.

5.2.2 The Parental Role

Chinese believe that "good parents" will work very hard in order to provide the best for their children, as well as spend significant time with family to maintain a very close relationship between them and their children. Such a relationship should be built when their children are very young (Ng, 2001; 2003c).

John and his wife run a takeaway shop and they are very happy to be their own boss in New Zealand. However, due to evening hours and weekend work, they feel stressed as they think they are not "good parents". John said:

My wife and I are always in our takeaway shop, working from the afternoon until midnight everyday except Mondays. We can't have dinner at home together with my son in the evenings. We cannot spend weekends with him either as these are the

busiest times of the week so we must stay at the shop. Unlike others, we seldom have the chance to do leisure activities or travel around with the whole family. I have no freedom at all and no balance if we want to keep the shop functioning well.

John is troubled that he could not have dinner with his only son in the evening nor can he travel outside of Auckland or engage in other leisure activities with him during the weekends. He feels stressed as he believes he is not being a good father. This is because Chinese culture is family-orientated and good parents focus on advancing their children (Ng, 2001; 2003c). Chinese parents let their children go into the world as late as they can, because they like to look after their children to their best ability (Ng, 2003c). John feels regret that he was unable to look after his son for a bit longer, allowing him to make his own life a little later. As his son is now older, John considers that it is too late to build a good relationship with him.

Actually, John feels that he is in a dilemma. He and his wife work long hours with the aim of earning more money so that they can provide their only child with the best start in life, by being able to provide enough financial support to his son studying in Australia. Chinese parents must try to provide the best education for their children according to the Chinese culture (Ng, 2001; 2003c). The main reason for John working very hard is that he has to save up money for his son to study overseas. This is also important in Chinese culture as it represents that the parents have 'face'. 'Face' refers to the kind of prestige: a reputation achieved through success (Hung, 2004). Parents are seen to achieve a kind of success when they are able to support their children to study overseas. However, this puts more pressure on John. Running small businesses already requires immigrant owners to take risks and to spend a lot of time (Gilmore, Carson & O'Donnell, 2004). With more expectations, John and his wife have to work extremely hard. So when they come home, they may be already exhausted and they cannot look after each family member very well. Thus, work-family conflict arises which increases their stress (Wilson, Polzer-Debruyne, Chen & Fernandes, 2007).

Another participant, Jason has similar experience as to that of John. Jason and his wife

run a liquor retail shop that requires long work hours and weekend work. He works more than 80 hours per week and he has the longest hours amongst the 15 participants. He realises that he has no personal life, explaining:

Every morning I have to purchase different wines to fill up the store. The trading hours of our shop are from 11am to 11pm. I usually have no time for myself until midnight and I have no free weekends as we are also open during those days. My son is only 10 years old. My wife takes him to school and then comes to the shop to help me. She needs to pick him up after school and stays with him in the evenings by law. We rarely have dinner together and we seldom have a family day since I work during weekends and holidays as well.

As in John's case, Jason has only one child, whom he does not spend much time with as he has to work from morning until midnight. The family rarely has dinners together and they seldom have a family day. Jason said his son seems to live in a solo parent home because he leaves home early to purchase wine to fill up the store and arrives home very late everyday. Jason is apologetic for separating himself from his son but he has no choice. He has to work in this way as he wants to earn enough money to buy a house in the Auckland Grammar School Zone so that his son will be able to go to the best school later on. According to Ng (2003c), hard work and a commitment to education are also Chinese characteristics. For Jason, he does not mind how hard he works if he can provide a better financial situation for his family, in particular the best education for his son. This drives him to work for more than 80 hours a week. Jason faces role conflict since the time he devotes to work interferes with his family responsibilities (Wilson et al., 2007). He does not enjoy WLB, as long working hours have left him with almost no personal life and leisure time (Bond, 2004).

Some participants made efforts to manage role overload to spend personal time with family. Tony runs a Chinese restaurant and he works for more than 60 hours per week. However, he still feels he has a good balance overall. Everyday, he allocates two hours to his children and one hour for sports such as swimming. He dedicates the rest of the time to work. He has run his own businesses for 21 years so he has sometimes faced

imbalance due to some critical incidents as he could not do everything all at once. He explained:

I remember that once my son's school required me to go with him to visit a "bird island" in a school trip. This was very important to him and to me as well. He would be very disappointed if he went alone. I would also regret it if I did not attend this activity. You know, in our culture, all parents should look after their children and try to give the best things to them. We also expect them to care for us when we are old. Therefore, I prepared everything such as ordering meat and vegetables for the restaurant and asked a senior staff member to take charge of the restaurant for me so that I could accompany my son.

Tony also said that he was quite stressed during the journey as he had left his business to his staff to look after. Running a Chinese restaurant business and dealing with customers sometimes can be difficult. Furthermore, food legislation and hygiene requirements are complicated for an employee to cope with. The reputation of the restaurant could be damaged if any problems arose from either of the above situations. To tackle the perceived work-life imbalance issues, sometimes small business owners may have to take risks (Waldinger et al., 1990). When role conflict happened to Tony, he chose to leave his work to his employee and he accompanied his son to be a “good father”. He decided to take this risk since he preferred to please his son rather than his customers.

Sally is luckier than her counterparts in dealing with such critical incidents. Once, when she needed to attend her son's performance at school, she had an important meeting with the company accountant on the same day. She chose to go to her son's performance and left her husband to handle the meeting. Sally's case was different from those previous ones. She said that work was her first priority, and then life. In her terminology, “work” included her involvement both in the office as well as in the home. Therefore, the “life” she mentioned referred to leisure activities not including looking after her son. She views familial obligations as work. When conflict occurs between her roles as a mother and as a business partner, she definitely prioritises family

responsibility rather than business issues. She is able to choose either handling business issues or familial obligation because her role in the company is as a partner, not as an owner manager. She has other partners to deal with business issues for her, unlike other owner managers, who have to play all the roles and take all the responsibilities of their businesses (Harris et al., 2005).

Participants found that not only did being good parents bring pressure to WLB, but also being a filial child might lead to work-life imbalance sometimes.

5.2.3 The Filial Child Role

In Chinese culture, filial piety is considered the first virtue which means to take care of one's parents, showing love, respect and support. Hence, filial children, particularly, for the sons, have the obligations of complete obedience to their parents, attendance to parental needs, and respect for their parents (Yeh & Bedford, 2004).

Some participants claimed that they faced WLB challenges that derived from the filial child role. Filial children were expected, traditionally, to live close to their parents until their parents passed away. They had to care for their sick parents and be in front of them while they were dying. They had to provide financial support to their parents when needed. Most of these obligations of filial children still remain unchanged nowadays in Chinese culture. They are expected at least to visit their parents several times a year if they do not live with them. From this perspective, Jack thought he was not a filial son, saying:

We live far away from our parents. We have to go back to China to see them and have New Year Eve dinner together. However, due to our business, I cannot take the whole family to visit them as we have to leave one person here to look after the shop. My wife and I have to take turns taking our son to China. My parents feel sad to see my family come back to visit them separately. I also felt sorry for being unable to have New Year Eve dinner with them together. WLB seems to be a luxury for us. We can have balance only if we sell the shop...

Jason felt stressed as he could neither be a good father to look after his son well nor could he be a dutiful son to bring his whole family to stay with his parents for some time yearly. Jason faces work-life imbalance because he plays multiple roles and works long hours (Jacobs & Gerson, 2001). Familial obligations and cultural values (Ng, 2001, 2003c) put more pressure on him. That is why he said that he might sell his shop one day to gain a better balance.

According to Chinese culture, children should be in front of their parents while they are dying, and should attend their funeral or others will look down upon the families for the reasons that the parents have not educated their children well and the children do not respect their parents. Because of this moral perception, when he knew his father was very sick, Paul struggled for some time. He decided to go back to Taiwan to stay with his father at the last moment of his life and attend his funeral. He explained,

When my father passed away a few years ago, I felt very stressed as I had to go back to Taiwan to tie up the loose ends and attend his funeral. But I could not put aside my business for weeks. I struggled with this and thought about it over and over again. Finally, I decided to leave my business for my employees to look after. However, I kept worrying about how my business was going and I had to remote control it by using toll calls and faxes when I was in Taiwan.

Paul could not concentrate fully on family demands during this critical time in Taiwan because entrepreneurs tend to be aware of their business at all times. In addition, new technology might also have contributed largely to Paul's imbalance. Without the usage of cell phone or fax, he was still thinking of his business although he was not physically there in the business. Paul's case supports the ideas of Kalleberg and Epstein (2001), and Crooker et al. (2002) that communication technology allows people to work from anywhere and at anytime. Personal life is thus infringed.

In the case when John's mother had been very sick for nine months in Christchurch, he and his wife had a very hard time. As John described,

About two years ago, my mother was very sick in the Christchurch hospital. You know, in our culture, we have to be dutiful to our parents. My wife, as her daughter-in-law and I as her son, should fulfil our obligation to look after her. Therefore, we closed the shop and went to Christchurch to take care of her. Unfortunately, when we came back, we found that we had lost many customers because they thought that we were closing down.

For this reason, we couldn't close our shop the next time we went to Christchurch to take care of my mother. We took turns looking after her and the shop for nine months. That period was a hard time for us but we had no choice. We had to take the responsibility of caring for an elderly family member and at the same time operate our shop.

John and his wife tried their best to keep their shop running and look after their mother at the same time. On one hand, giving up the business would result in losing financial support. On the other, they would have regretted it for the rest their lives if they had not done their duty by looking after their mother. In Chinese culture, it is the children's responsibility to take care of their parents, especially when they are sick (Ng, 2003c). This couple felt very stressed as they had to take turns going to Christchurch to care for their mother while keeping the shop running, as both tasks were so important to them. John stated that he had nothing to regret when his mother passed away nine months later since he had been a dutiful son who cared for his mother until the last minute of her life. The attitudes they hold to deal with this issue coincide with their Chinese cultural background.

While running a business in New Zealand is not easy, Chinese small business owners not only have to handle business issues, but also their family responsibilities compounded with moral obligations. All these matters might bring pressure for them to achieve a sense of balance. In addition to these factors, some participants claimed that they also faced work-life imbalance due to their poor financial circumstances.

5.3 Finance

Some participants felt that WLB is linked to finance. According to the spill-over theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Lambert, 1990), experiences in one domain can affect experiences in the other, which means that work issues can spill-over into personal time, and similarly, personal problems can spill-over into work, in particular for those who have financial problems. Several participants saw that if they had enough money to support themselves and their families, they could work without pressure thus feeling 'balanced'. They could devote themselves fully when at work. Job satisfaction can create a positive effect on personal life. In contrast, when they have financial problems, they have to worry about work related issues in their private time as well as needing to consider their family problems at work, hence WLB cannot be achieved.

Tony said that WLB is the combination of work and life so WLB can be achieved when they have successful businesses. Jim, who owns a commercial property business, expresses a similar viewpoint:

When people have a successful business, they can work for regular hours. They can then have spare time to spend on family and personal activities. This is what I do as I think my business is a successful one. I work 50 hours a week but I think they are good hours. I manage to focus solely on work when at work and engage with my family when spending time with them. I set commitments, prioritise and spend the weekends with my family. I also think time spent with neighbours is important. Therefore, sometimes Mark's family, my neighbour, and our family go to play soccer together.

From Jim's viewpoint, people are likely to have a balance when they achieve business success as they can enjoy financial gains. Such success includes increasing their social and financial status (Loscocco & Leicht, 1993), leading to satisfaction in providing better economic conditions for their family. With a good financial position, they can hire more people thus they can reduce their own work hours (Davey, Hopkins, Ling, Low & McNicholas, 2003). As Jim mentioned, he has four full-time staff and he seldom works

in the weekends. In addition, business success means the owner can earn more money. With more money, people can do what they like (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001), for example, they can work short hours and they can send their children to study overseas or buy houses for them.

Financial factors can be an important variable for WLB, as Duxbury and Higgins (2001) point out, money can help people cope with work-life conflict. However, as Loscocco and Leicht (1993) note, owner commitment and earnings are linked. Among small business owners, the link between business and personal success is very strong. Most SME owners are prepared to work hard to achieve business success. This is because they are in the position to decide the level of effort they put into their business and the amount of financial benefit they gain from the business (Loscocco & Leicht, 1993). Therefore, some SME owners may choose to allow work to dominate over non-work activities. For example, they do not have personal time to be involved in non-work activities as they spend time and effort in or on their businesses. For example, even though they may not in the physical business premises, they may still be thinking of what strategies they can use to increase their business turnover when they are having dinner with their family. As UMR Research (2003) asserts, pressure to reach a certain revenue target could be a factor that contributes to the work-life imbalance of self employed and small business owners. The results of their research reveal that it is unlikely that business people are able to switch off from work as thoughts of work often intrude on their personal time.

The participants, who stay in a lower economic level, have a strong desire to earn more money to move up to a higher level. They may be forced to let work take over their personal time. They work longer hours and some participate in two or more jobs with the purpose of generating enough financial benefits to ensure that their income covers their immediate costs (UMR Research, 2003). It is not surprising to see that some small business owners who participated in this research, worked for someone else during daytime and for themselves in the evening. Therefore, regardless of whether they are employees or employers, when they are under financial pressure, they choose to increase their work hours or take more jobs.

Helen is single so she does not have familial obligations in New Zealand. Nevertheless, due to financial problems, she has also experienced imbalance. She said,

I work as an administrator in an office during the day and the office work seems to be endless. Moreover, I have to do a commercial cleaning job in the evenings. Although the cleaning job is tough, I have to stand it as this is my own business. In addition, I am studying at a university. The study is also piling up. Therefore, I work for more than 60 hours per week plus attend six hours of lectures. Some more time for assignments and exam revision is needed. It seems that WLB has nothing to do with me. I think I have work-study-life imbalance. I am burnt out!

Helen does not receive any financial support from family members or relatives. She chose to run a small commercial cleaning business which does not require large start-up capital. However, this type of business requires intense labour and the financial return is very low (Fernandez & Kim, 1998). According to Helen, her cleaning business is in fact a hard job rather than a business because it consumes lots of her energy and yet she gets little gain/financial return. Nevertheless, she continues with it as she needs money to settle in New Zealand. So she is a cleaner, who is “time poor, cash poor” (Fleetwood, 2007).

In order to accumulate assets, Helen also has another job in the daytime with the hope that she may have enough capital to start up a better and more personally desired business in the future. As mentioned earlier, although she has a diploma qualification, language is still a problem, so she attends university to improve her English skills in order to find a good job with a higher salary. She stated that she did not know what work was and what life was as her life is fully occupied by physical work and paper work. She declared that WLB had nothing to do with her.

Liz, another participant, has a similar story. Liz is a mortgage broker and she works as a ‘middleman’ between people who need to borrow money and monetary entities that provide financial sources. Though her business has been going for two years, still she is not able to employ other people as the financial return from this type of business is low.

As owner managers have multiple roles to play (Siu & Kirby, 1999), she has to deal with all the business related issues such as arranging advertisements, developing customer networks and maintaining relationships with financial organisations. She needs to be on stand by 24 hours a day and seven days a week to provide good service to her customers. She cannot gain a balance as she experiences role overload (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001).

The above cases seem to suggest that people are unable to enjoy WLB when they have little money. In addition, they are excluded from the research agenda. As Fleetwood (2007) asserts, concern about “time poor, cash rich” professionals has been raised in WLB discourse, but what about those who are both time and cash poor. Therefore, the rhetoric of WLB is problematic for the small business operators (Harris et al., 2005), particularly in the start up state or operating with large financial obligations. “When overtime work is required, this appears to offset the otherwise greater happiness and mental healthiness produced by its additional income” (Golden & Wiens-tuers, 2006). Work and non-work conflict, one form of work-life imbalance, is a result of high workload pressure and long working hours. This conflict links closely to fatigue, stress and burnout (Allen, Loudoun & Peetz, 2007). Health issues are actually the consequences of work-life imbalance.

5.4 Health

As suggested by Duxbury and Higgins (2001), people who experience role overload are more likely to suffer from stress and burnout. Several studies show strong correlations between stress and poor work-life balance as stress contributes to health problems (MacDonald, Phipps & Lethbridge, 2005). As discussed previously, Helen stated that she had work-life-study imbalance. This is not surprising as she has many roles to play at the same time, as an office administrator, a cleaner and a student. She is so busy she definitely experiences imbalance. Fleetwood (2007) points out that those “cash rich and time poor” professionals, who are able to, can enhance their WLB by hiring a cleaner. But the cleaner is very often both “cash and time poor”. For the cleaner in this study, Helen is indeed cash poor and time poor. She has to take many jobs to accumulate

wealth so that she can run a better business in the future. However, she does not appear to realise that the more jobs she takes, the poorer her health may be.

Bin is a partner of the largest Asian supermarket in New Zealand. He needs to look after the shop during trading hours from 9am to 6:30pm six days a week, and runs his own commercial cleaning business in the evenings. As he lives far away in the north of Auckland, he has to leave home very early and arrives home very late because of the cleaning job. Extra hours of labour generally are associated with increased work stress, fatigue and work-family interference. Such factors can lead to health problems (Golden and Wiens-Tuers, 2006). Bin spoke about once when he was sick, explaining:

I found I was very uncomfortable after cleaning five offices that night. I did not eat anything and went to bed as I had a high fever. My wife woke me up when I was having many terrible dreams early in the morning. I was really reluctant to work but I had no choice as the groceries I ordered would be delivered that day. I needed to check the incoming products matched with the attached invoice. I took some Chinese medicine and then went to work. I was too busy, I needed to open and close the shop. I also needed to do my evening work. I can die, but I cannot be sick.

Bin's case shows the common way for Chinese people to deal with their health problems. This health issue is related to their financial situation, their work ethic and their unique positions. Very few Chinese have an annual health check at the doctor, as they perceive that the medical fees are very expensive compared with those in China. Even when they are sick, they still continue to work and do not go to see a doctor. They are hard working people (Chaganti & Greene, 2002). Bin pays no attention to his health as he needs to meet the various demands resulting from his diverse jobs. He tries to maintain his positions by devoting himself to them.

Yvonne works more than 70 hours per week but she said that she can still cope with it. The main challenge for her is that she has no time to do housework such as cooking for the family. She said:

I work for too long so I have no time to look after myself and my family properly. I can't do anything except work. I would like to go shopping for food in the supermarket and then make meals for my family at home. However, I just don't have any spare time at all. I have no time to do housework particularly cooking. My husband and I come home very late. We have not had a home-made meal for a very long time. I cook only a few times a year maybe. We have to dine out almost every day. Luckily, my son has grown up and he doesn't need me to look after him. I enjoy being busy and this is my choice. Now I am getting old and it may be time for me to think of health issues

Different people hold different attitudes toward their work. Yvonne sees herself as a workaholic because she enjoys working. She works as an accountant for a trading firm and she runs a language school at the same time. Yvonne said in the interview that she had no problems working more than 70 hours weekly and she felt that she was well balanced. But in fact, according to Lewis (2003), multiple tasks crowd out people's life and leisure and consume their time and energy. So, Yvonne also confessed that she had no personal time so she had not had a home-made meal for a very long time. This implies that her eating habits may have changed. Irregular meals could lead to problems in the digestive system. Moreover, night work can cause a mismatch between the light/dark, sleep/wake cycles (Smith & Wedderburn, 1998). Hence people's wellbeing may deteriorate as a consequence of work-life imbalance, which forms some unhealthy life habits.

From their experience, it is easy to see that night work, long hours and taking many jobs can contribute to stress and burnout. Health problems can be caused as a result. It is necessary for people to find ways to fix such imbalance. The following paragraphs will discuss what strategies the participants have employed to reduce work-life conflict and what they suggest to do to achieve a sense of balance.

Lewis et al. (2007) have conducted a study on business assistance for SMEs with 51 New Zealand owner- managers. Many sources their participants used were also used by the participants in this research, such as accountants, banks, lawyers, family, friends,

web sites and newspapers. Sources such as websites and newspapers were used before they set up their businesses as they needed to get a conceptual picture of the economic environment and business opportunities. Accountants, banks and lawyers were used mainly in their business start-up stage and at other stages when they encountered problems. As Jim said, they needed advice from those professionals to avoid business failure at the start-up stage. Sources from their own community, such as support from family and friends, have always been used by participants. This will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

According to Basu (2004), Dana (2006), Sequeira and Rasheed (2006), immigrant entrepreneurs can benefit from ethnic resources and enclaves. Ethnic resources include informal credit, business knowledge, shared expertise, low labour and social support. An ethnic enclave refers to an interdependent network of social and business relationships. So, some participants claim that they have gained support from their own community, such as from suppliers, employees, partners, family members and friends. These people could provide help in the psychological and physical aspects, giving suggestions and advice as well as providing financial help, for example. Due to family orientation, the Chinese are ready to help each other within their families. This is because many of the Chinese are living in extended families or have a close relationship with their relatives (Ng, 2003c). It is interesting to note that there may be several generations living together in a Chinese family. As many participants claimed, they lived with their parents as well as their children. Therefore, when they need some help, their family members can help immediately. For example, Vera and Tony lived with their parents who usually helped them to care for their children, in particular, when their children were young.

Traditionally, Chinese wives were not allowed to work outside the home. They stayed at home to look after all the family members and did the house work (Ng, 2003c). Some families still keep such a pattern. Dick stated that his wife helped him to solve all family problems such as looking after his son. Jim also said that his wife did all the housework and took care of their two sons. Therefore, these two men could focus on their work as they did not need to worry about familial obligations.

In fact, Dick and Jim have several employees and they have bigger businesses and hence enjoy larger financial returns. Their employees, not their wives, work for them, which can help reduce work-life imbalance experienced by the family as a whole. Because when people cannot gain support from their family members, they can outsource help if they have enough financial sources. For example, Cathy used to be a builder when her children were young. She needed to visit the construction sites regularly and sometimes had to fix unexpected problems. She hired tutors and babysitters to help with her children's homework and look after them as money was not a problem for her. Therefore, she had no work-life conflict. Her experience is likely to show that people can "buy" a balance when they are "cash rich and time poor" (Fleetwood, 2007).

A few participants recommended that studying in a university before self-employment could be a good strategy. Through studying, people could improve time management skills and they would learn how to work effectively and efficiently (Wright & Race, 2004).

Some participants said that the government can assist people to achieve WLB. Bill said that he needs to leave home at six in the morning though the shop is open at nine. He will be late if he leaves his house at seven so he believes that traffic congestion problems contributed a lot to work-life imbalance as people waste too much time on the way to work and back home (Dobbins, 2000). If the government could find some ways to solve those problems e.g. building more roads or providing some other traffic facilities that could enable people to save travel time, people's stress would then be reduced.

Apart from these main sources, participants suggested some other strategies that might help reduce work-life conflict. For example, they should:

- Run businesses they are familiar with
- Own or work for businesses they are interested in
- Employ more people to reduce work hours
- Not treat money as the most important thing

- Lower their expectations in gaining financial return from businesses
- Work regular hours and have reasonable time with their families
- Prioritise things to be done a few days beforehand
- Not involve themselves in too many activities
- Not work during weekends or at night

To sum up, the findings reveal that Chinese small business owners perceive the concept of WLB differently due to their unique cultural values. Four themes: personal motivations, familial obligations, finance, and health, have been identified as enablers that assist them to achieve a sense of balance, or as barriers that prevent them from enjoying a balance. These themes are not isolated, but related to one another. For example, when people are poor (finance), they are motivated to take more jobs thus, causing fatigue and sickness (health). Also, when people are rich, they are able to do the work that they are passionate about. When they value Chinese culture seriously, their motivations are to fulfil familial obligations. Some sources of support to reduce work-life conflict are provided and suggestions to assist in achieving WLB are also recommended.

6 Conclusion

The purpose of this research is to explore Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs' responses to issues of WLB and their participation in entrepreneurial activities in New Zealand. Interviews with fifteen Chinese small business owners examined how they deal with their business and personal lives and investigated the push and pull factors of Chinese immigrant entrepreneurship. The main findings contribute to the WLB literature that personal motivation in different life stages, familial obligations in Chinese culture, and financial obligations at different stages of the business life-cycle can impact on entrepreneurs achieving WLB. Moreover, the research contributes to the literature of SME in New Zealand, findings that owner managers often play multiple roles and work long hours in order to achieve business success driven by personal motivations shaped by immigration experiences. Finally, the research contributes to immigrant entrepreneurship literature which can be employed to examine Chinese entrepreneurial behaviour in New Zealand. More importantly, there has been no specific research on WLB issues for Chinese entrepreneurs, particular in an SME context. Thus, this research has woven immigrant entrepreneurship literature into WLB literature in an SME environment.

Disadvantage theory, stepladder theory, opportunity structure theory, risk taking theory, ethnic resource and enclave theories discussed in Chapter Two can be employed to explain Chinese immigrant entrepreneurship in the New Zealand context investigated in this study. In their home country, all participants, except three who were students, played important roles either in certain professional fields or at managerial levels, and two operated their own businesses. However, after immigrating to New Zealand, two participants became unemployed and seven had to take undesired jobs. Only three were able to obtain similar positions to those held in their home country. In terms of disadvantage theory, these facts provide evidence that many Chinese immigrants are disadvantaged in the labour market owing to cultural unfamiliarity, poor English competencies, and unrecognized qualifications and experience.

In order to overcome or sidestep these perceived disadvantages in the labour market and to move out of underemployment or unemployment, all participants succeeded in establishing or purchasing their own small businesses. Seven of them gained relevant skills and experiences through working for co-ethnics in similar industries. According to stepladder theory, this can be seen as on-the-job training through which they climb up their own business ladder. In the business operation, particularly during the preparation and start-up stages, participants were able to exploit ethnic resources such as assistance from family and friends. The Chinese ethnic enclave also provided them with business and employment opportunities. However, the business opportunities open to them were those risky and labour intense small businesses such as food manufacturing, commercial cleaning, takeaways, Chinese restaurants and Asian supermarkets. Running such businesses required them to challenge failure, work very hard and work long hours. In addition, most of their businesses are family ones, in which these owner managers are required to take multiple roles such as marketing, human resource and financial roles and where the work and family boundaries less clear.

Against the complexity of cultural factors, Chinese entrepreneurs face added difficulties. In a family oriented culture, Chinese people focus on family needs rather than on their own individual satisfaction. Most of these immigrant entrepreneurs are driven to work hard in order to reach a high socioeconomic level so that they are able to provide the best for their family and children. In particular, Chinese parents are expected to provide the best education for their children and they do not want their children to be in debt. Pressures such as buying a house in the Auckland Grammar School Zone and paying for their children's tertiary education motivate them to work long hours in order to generate more profits. They allow work to dominate over their non-work time in order to achieve business success for the benefit of the family.

As the findings from this research show, five report that they enjoy WLB and two feel that they mainly have a balance. These participants are relatively mature aged with successful businesses thus are in a good financial position. When people are aging, they consider paying attention to their health and enjoying life rather than working too hard.

For some who own relatively larger businesses, they have employees to help them so that they can have more flexible time. For those without financial pressure, they can choose the work and business that they passionate about. They are happy with what they are doing and hence they enjoy a balance.

In contrast, eight participants claim that they lack WLB. This is because they cannot devote time and energy as they would like to non-work activities since most of their time has been allocated to their businesses due to their small business size and the nature of operation, for example, retailing and personal servicing. They feel exhausted after work because of their work intensification. In addition, even if when they participate in family activities, they cannot concentrate themselves as their mind travels back to their business environment.

One found it necessary to control his business from overseas by using cell phones and fax machines while he was out of New Zealand to handle family issues. Four of the participants run two or more small businesses. Two work for someone else in the daytime and manage their own businesses in the evenings and weekends. Six of them work more than 60 hours per week. Thus, work has crowded out their life and leisure time. Unsurprisingly, these Chinese entrepreneurs find it hard to achieve WLB because most of their personal time is allocated to their businesses.

WLB seems to be a foreign topic for the Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs. This ethnic group is likely to have been overlooked in terms of promotion of WLB informally by government and other interested group such as the New Zealand Council of Trade Union. The results of this study show that two of the participants had never come across the concept of “work-life balance” and that they had never thought of balancing work and life at the time they received the information sheet. However, they did provide some ideas when being interviewed. Four people asked me first about what I thought of WLB as they might be afraid to give wrong answers due to Chinese culture valuing the saving of face. After knowing that I would not share my opinions with them during the interview, they provided their ideas. The rest were quite confident to talk about their views about WLB. Therefore, each participant has his or her own perception of WLB

according to his/her own personal motivations and perceived familial obligations as well as their financial situation.

From the findings of the study, less than half participants felt they enjoy WLB. For some of these people, they would never worry about business competition since they have a good financial status and “working for fun” is the object of their self employment. This also relates to their life and business stages. For some other participants, their own businesses are their passion and strong desire and work is considered to be the most important part of their life. They are willing to devote most of their time and effort to their business and they believe balance can be achieved through work. The unbalanced time allocation seems to be unacceptable for others, but they achieve a kind of balance when work helps to fulfil their personal expectations as WLB is equated with self-esteem and success in their eyes.

However, the majority suggest that WLB is a luxury which they find difficult to afford because whenever their filial obligations are involved, they have a lot of pressure. Coming from a collectivistic cultural background, most of the participants have been confronting the same problem at different stages during their self employment in New Zealand. When filial obligation arises, work-life imbalance occurs and what gets sacrificed is their own personal time because this almost becomes another role or duty they have to perform. Therefore, the filial obligation is often like another job even though it is family and normally gets classified as the ‘life’ being part of WLB. Their ‘life’ is not all relaxing or leisure time instead it is time to be a dutiful child or a responsible father. That is why when their children were young, when their parents were sick, when family reunion time came, it was tough for them to make the decision between work and life. The present research challenges the applicability of the WLB discourse among these immigrant entrepreneurs who perceive the concept of WLB differently based on their cultural values and work attitudes.

The findings of this research project show that most of the participants are not enjoying a sense of balance viewed from a New Zealand perspective. However, Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs are used to entertaining themselves in their busy work. By

doing so, hopefully they will create a bright future for their children as well as for the whole family, even though they have already put their own health at risk such as critical incidents of sickness and overall generally high levels of fatigue. For them and for most Chinese people, life without work means no life at all. From this cultural perspective, we can easily understand why one entrepreneur still feels balanced when she works more than 70 hours per week. This perspective of WLB is different from the New Zealand cultural one in which people like to spend more time enjoying their life outside of the workplace.

In order to communicate the concept and the importance of WLB to the Chinese community, the government could put more effort to create awareness to promote this discourse. Some strategies will be discussed in the following section.

6.1 Recommended Strategies

A number of effective strategies are suggested to make WLB discourse popular with Chinese people. These include making available a Chinese version of the existing government programme webpage, issuing brochures in Chinese, advertising on Chinese media such as radio and television channels, spreading information through Chinese functions, The Chinese New Year, The Lantern Festival and The Moon Festival for example. Moreover, some Chinese case studies should be featured on web-pages such as the Department of Labour's Work-Life Balance Research Section.

6.1.1 Case Studies

In Wei's (2007) research, we can see that since the New Zealand government launched its Work-life Balance Project in August 2003, no feedback or responses have been collected from the Chinese Community to reveal how the project can help them to better manage their WLB. In addition, there are no Chinese cases can be found in the Interim Report of the Thirty Families Project: The Impact of Work Hours on New Zealand Workers and Their Families Commissioned by New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, 2002). It is, therefore, not surprising to learn

that two of the participants had never come across the concept of “work-life balance” before interviewed. The Western WLB discourse is privileged in government research.

Helen Down’s case (Department of Labour, 2008), provided by the government Work-life Balance Project, is an example of the New Zealand perspective built on a Western culture (Appendix 1). Down established her Synthesis Marketing business based on part-time, flexible hours with no more than 20 work hours a week. These desired hours enable her to have enough time for social life and quality family life. It can be presumed that her business is a good one with high profit margins, unlike those of the Chinese immigrants, who often run abandoned businesses or start-ups, which are both characterised by low or no profit in the early stages. For people who are running a takeaway or an Asian supermarket, with only 20 trading hours, there is a high chance their businesses could be in deficit as the business revenue would not cover their expenses. In addition, it is supposed that, unlike the Chinese people, Down, from a western culture, would never consider buying houses for, or providing long term financial support to her children well into their adult years.

The case studies given by the New Zealand government (Appendix 1) tend to be stories of success - those who have WLB. Hence, it is difficult for some people, such as participants in this research, to relate to. This research contributes four sample cases on issues of WLB in the Chinese enterprises. These four cases are very different to the Department of Labour cases. These cases presented in the next section introduce themes of immigration, immigrant entrepreneurship, barriers and underemployment in mainstream industries, providing deep insights into immigrant entrepreneurs’ WLB experiences.

Although WLB is important and the New Zealand government has allocated political and financial resources to it over the two decades, the present research indicates that it has not actually reached wider society. The government seems to have ignored the changing community when it comes to WLB discourse. Its application in real life is being challenged. For example, the idea of WLB is not promoted to the Chinese community. The importance of health is not recognised consciously by these immigrant

entrepreneurs. Against employees and employers in the large organisation context, Chinese entrepreneurs are the 'Other' in two ways, as operate in the SME sector, and also as a minority ethnic group. This research challenges the discourse of WLB, particularly in the New Zealand context in which there are multiple societies, facing by a complex array of factors challenging their lives.

To improve the current situation and to give the invisible a voice, we need case studies of people who are from a minority group, and or operate in SMEs to be seen on the government websites. In addition, more effort has to be put into the education and promotion of WLB in order to communicate the concept and the importance of this discourse to the Chinese community.

Four sample case studies that reflect Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs' WLB experience in New Zealand are presented as follows. These cases are likely to be more relevant for Chinese community as they feature Chinese people. They are built from real life experiences of participants interviewed. These are not simply success stories of 'balance' but they contain events experienced at different personal and business life stages. Ethnic migrant entrepreneurs will be able to empathise with the situations described in the cases related to 'push' and 'pull' theories. They provide insight into challenges for WLB in the SME sector to personal and business constraints. But the events are real and highlight the complexity of WLB for such groups. The names, gender and the business types have been changed in order to protect participants' privacy and to meet the ethics requirements of this research.

In Search of Health

Believing in his own capability, Wang wanted to be his own boss rather than work for someone else. He firstly purchased a coffee shop business which was located in the Central City. He thought that a busy location could lead to high business revenue. However, it turned out that the financial turnover was unable to cover the expenses and finally he had to close the shop. Nevertheless, he did not give up but wanted another try. Soon afterwards, he rented a place close to Mt Eden Village to establish an internet café. Unfortunately, this business was unsuccessful also. His money and time had gone but he had achieved nothing even though he had worked very hard and worked around the clock. His failure made him desperate and he felt exhausted both mentally and physically. Wang was getting old and he lost the confidence to challenge failure. In addition, he was told that he had heart disease after having been given a body check by his GP.

Now Wang is aware of the importance of his health and tries to pay attention to good WLB since he suffers from heart disease. He supposed that this disease was caused by the pressure from his previous unsuccessful business experiences and his hard work.

In order to gain a stable life and improve his health condition, Wang worked as a shop assistant in an Asian supermarket after he recovered a little. His duties involved stocking shelves, and helping in the butchery and fishery departments when some workers had asked for leave. Wang also filled in for the cashiers at the check out counters when they went for lunch and cleaned the shop before it closed every evening. In an Eastern work culture, there are no job descriptions at all so employees are required to take multiple roles. Wang realised that being an employee also required hard work. To show his organisational citizenship behaviour, he did not ask for leave even if he was sick and tired.

Step by step, Wang became popular amongst his co-workers and his customers. Two years later, when the shop manager, one of the partners of the organisation, was required to look after another shop in East Auckland simultaneously, Wang was assigned to place weekly orders and was responsible for checking that the incoming products matched the attached invoices. He was in charge of the shop while his manager was away. In 2006, Wang was invited to invest funds in the supermarket and he became a partner of the organisation.

Nevertheless, Wang felt that he faced work-life imbalance and health problems at his different career stages. Physiological hurt from previous unsuccessful businesses coupled with heavy physical labour requirements and long work hours have placed huge pressures on him. Being the owner-manager, Wang has had to take on more responsibilities. Besides managing the shop's daily operation, he arrives at the shop very early every day and is the last to leave. He has to consider how to promote his business and to find out the factors that lead to low financial revenue. Hence, he thinks of the shop's issues all the time even when he is with his family. This demanding role drives him to put his health at risk.

Cultural Values

Chen has a university qualification in finance. She immigrated to New Zealand ten years ago under the points system. Being an owner manager of a liquor retail shop, the mother of a ten year old son, and the only child of her parents, Chen holds a complex attitude towards WLB issues. Although she lives in New Zealand, a Western society, in which people tend to focus on their individual needs more than on familial obligations, Chinese family-oriented culture still has a significant influence on Chen, who takes filial obligations seriously. This ideology exerts huge pressure on her perceived WLB.

Chen has faced a lot of challenges in order to fulfil her expectations. She would work 24 hours a day and seven days a week to tackle her business counterparts so that she could carry out her filial obligations. With enough money, she could buy a house in the Auckland Grammar School Zone so that her son could go to the best school later, and she could provide long term support for his tertiary education. Chen spends most of her time in the business and she seldom makes dinner herself at home though she understands that having dinner with the whole family is very important in Chinese culture.

Pressures from being a good mother and a filial child have caused Chen to suffer from work-life imbalance. She recalled that once her mother was very sick in hospital. She was unable to stay longer with her and look after her because of the central role she plays in the shop. She and her husband had to take turns to look after her mother and the shop as they could not close the shop. They experienced a very tough period at that time. In order to keep the shop functioning, Chen cannot travel with her husband and son to China to visit her mother-in-law. She or her husband has to take their son in turn to visit China once a year. Although Chen is uncomfortable with this, she has no choice.

She also remembered that once her son had surgery in Starship Hospital and she could only stay there during the operation. She returned to the shop immediately after the operation and asked her brother to take care of her son. Chen felt upset at not taking a filial role. She sees herself as neither a dutiful daughter nor a responsible mother. This self blame has also placed pressure on her WLB.

Flexibility and Financial Success

Holding a Masters Degree in Pharmacy, Liu came to New Zealand from Hong Kong fifteen years ago. He used to be a pharmacist in a private hospital before coming to New Zealand and he is married and has two dependent children.

According to Liu, one can achieve WLB when he or she has no financial problems and can do what he or she likes.

Liu does not have any financial pressures as he brought to New Zealand quite a big sum of money from Hong Kong. However, he wants to do something interesting instead of staying at home as he is an outgoing person and enjoys making friends. He has always aspired to become his own boss and he believes that there are many advantages in being self-employed. For example, he can enjoy freedom as he can allocate his time to work or to family and he is able to do what he intends to do without being bound to follow someone else's commands. In addition, he has the opportunities to meet many different people and deal with new things to enrich his knowledge and widen his experience. Furthermore, he can enjoy his financial gain as the surplus value from his business will not be exploited by others.

Liu became self-employed as a mortgage broker. This position allowed him to work flexibly and negotiate between money lenders and borrowers. Later, he got to know some customers who are builders. The more he talked to those builders and visited their building sites, the more interest he developed in building houses. He aspired to become a builder as he had enough money to buy a piece of land to build a house. With the help of a friend who is an experienced builder, he achieved his goal and succeeded in building several houses later on. Though the procedures of getting the building plans approved by the City Council were very complicated, as involving many issues such as dealing with storm and waste water through linking manholes, he enjoyed handling those challenges. Whenever he sees a house built with his own efforts, he becomes very excited and inspired.

Currently, Liu is running a commercial property management business. As he has four full-time staff working for him, he is not restricted to a set schedule and he can decide how many hours he wants to work. He can accompany his family during the weekends and take them to Hong Kong for two months every Christmas holiday. He is enjoying financial gains from running his own businesses and he has an ideal WLB in his eyes.

Significance of Changing Careers and Learning

Prior to her immigration, Ho was a Chinese traditional medical teacher in a government owned Chinese Medical School. When she arrived in Auckland, she found it hard to get any jobs related to her skills and experience. There are only a few Chinese Medical Clinics in Auckland as Chinese Medicine is not popular in this Western society. People who own these clinics are mainly self-employed without employees. As immigrants do, Ho faced difficulties such as language barriers, cultural differences, and unfamiliarity with local policies and legislations. She became unemployed at the beginning of her immigration. She believed that her unemployment was largely due to her poor English. Therefore, she decided to improve her language skills first and then find employment.

Ho went to university to study English and expanded her personal network by making friends with her classmates and lecturers. She got many new ideas and increased her knowledge through the study. After conducting some research and talking to her family and friends, she decided to become self-employed instead of applying for a job. She purchased a western style takeaway business located in West Auckland. In the start-up stage, she encountered many obstacles such as: recognising various ingredients, learning the different procedures in producing pizzas and cheesecakes, being familiar with European tastes and western styles. To solve these problems, she spent half a year attending courses while running her business at the same time. During that period, she did not have time to travel outside of Auckland with her family. She experienced work-life imbalance as her time was spent on either attending courses or staying in the shop.

However, this short-term pain brought Ho long term gain. Through that training, she learnt to use the appropriate quantities of each ingredient, the proper temperature at which to cook the different products and how much time to spend on baking processes. She also provided some trial samples for her customers and regularly got feedback from them to enhance her knowledge of European tastes and Western styles. Gradually, she managed to overcome her problems and her shop became famous. Their cheesecakes are very popular and attract customers from far away. Enjoying such a business success, Ho feels that she has achieved a sense of balance.

The case studies described on pages 120 - 123 are stories of Chinese SME owners in New Zealand. These cases are more related to Chinese community than those in the Appendix 1 of large organisations, Westerners, and people who mostly do not have their own businesses. Quite the opposite, Chinese business people are characterised by hard work, challenging failures and taking multiple roles. Many of them work more than sixty hours per week and face business failures from time to time. There are no work boundaries in the Chinese workplace, as Wang (case p.120) demonstrates in his multiple roles, for example, he acts as a cleaner, a cashier, a butchery helper and a fishery worker. These challenges occur frequently in the migrant's different life and business stages and WLB seems only a pleasant rhetoric to them. Settling in a new country, people often face disadvantage in the labour market such as discrimination in recruitment. The transition between careers brings unexpected difficulties. Running small unfamiliar businesses requires them to spend time in learning specific techniques, such as how to make pizza. The desire to generate more financial gains means working long hours and performing diverse tasks. The immigrants' time and energy are almost used up in their businesses particularly for those in a low financial position.

Besides playing such a tough role in the workplace, Chinese immigrants have an important job in the home due to their filial obligations. The main focuses for Chinese people are on familial obligations rather than individual needs. They see providing the best education for their children and supporting their tertiary finance as parents' obligations even though their children are adults. Moreover, they view taking care of their sick parents as their compulsory duty. Hence, they have to sacrifice their personal time to make those commitments. Few Chinese are able to pay attention to their health. Ideal WLB is perceived by them as being too expensive.

These cases highlight the complexity of WLB for Chinese immigrants. Ethnic migrant entrepreneurs will be able to empathise with the situations in the sample case studies as they are insiders who may have similar experiences and they may face such personal and business constraints in their different life and business stages. Such cases need to be seen to communicate the importance of WLB discourse to diverse ethnic groups as they

have profiled health issues, cultural obligations and the transition between careers. These are real-life events that happened to real-live immigrants.

6.1.2 Creating Awareness of Work-life Balance

Some of the Chinese immigrant business owners interviewed, have never encountered the concept of WLB. It would not be surprising for a considerable proportion of Chinese people to be unfamiliar with this term. It is recommended that the New Zealand Government should develop some effective strategies to make this concept popular with Chinese people in order to communicate its importance. Also, the Chinese community needs to cooperate with the Government towards this common end.

A number of ways are suggested to put the strategies into practice. Firstly, the government could spread the concept of WLB to Chinese people by making available a Chinese version of the existing programme webpage. This would be an effective method of attracting the attention of the Chinese community to these concepts and issues. Moreover, the government could issue brochures in Chinese and distribute them to Chinese social communities such as The Chinese Community Centre and The Chinese New Settlers Services Trust and other accessible public places, for example, libraries. In addition, the government could set up Chinese hotlines so that the concept could be easily communicated to Chinese people.

Furthermore, the government could make use of the Chinese media to communicate the concept and its importance to Chinese immigrants. In New Zealand, Chinese people have their own radio channels as well as television channels. Most Chinese choose to watch television programmes in their own language and listen to the radio in Chinese because they are able to find out what has been happening in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong by doing so. Additionally, there are Chinese newspapers published in New Zealand also. The concept of WLB could easily be delivered to Chinese people through these means.

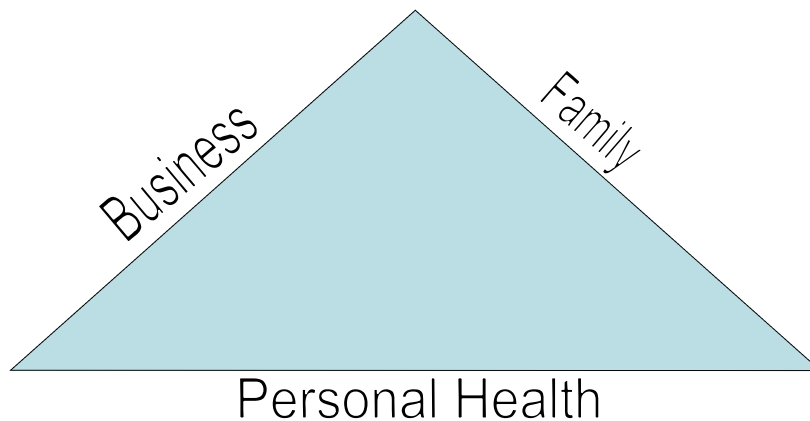
Moreover, the government could maintain contact with some Chinese social community leaders who could talk to their people. They could help the government to give out

information through many channels, in particular, at Chinese functions. Chinese people are fond of getting together because of their collective culture. They run many functions during the year, for example, The Chinese New Year, The Lantern Festival and The Moon Festival. Many Chinese people attend these functions and therefore these times would provide good opportunities to present speeches and give out brochures and leaflets concerning WLB to make people aware of the benefits of WLB for the individual's health and the company's performance.

In the meantime, Chinese people need to learn how to achieve a better balance. They could learn from the mainstream society to adopt a more relaxing lifestyle. During the Christmas and New Year holidays, they could take their family outside of Auckland to enjoy New Zealand's rich natural resources and beautiful scenery. The government could also encourage people to take advantage of this scenery for relaxation. For example, the government could organise some social activities for new immigrants, or sponsor the Chinese social communities so that they could arrange functions to improve people's quality of life in order to achieve a better balance.

It is also important for the Chinese community to help themselves in terms of WLB. They could communicate with the government by expressing their specific needs as the government is not able to ascertain all of a culture's needs. The Chinese people should realize that they are missing out on life if they do not spend enough time with their family and relax. Economic gains can not compensate for the psychological loss of family. Imbalance can harm people's health physically.

Figure 6.1 Relationships between Personal Health, Business and Family



As can be seen from the above diagram, personal health, business, and family have close links with each other. Personal health is the base that is connected with both business and family to support such a balance. Therefore, health is the key and without health, there is no business and family. In the Chinese culture, people are driven to work very hard as they expect to be successful to gain financial return for their family and children. They are good economic providers but they often do not take good enough care of their health, which long term may present problems. They are not aware of the risks of not having balance between themselves, their family and their business. For example, they may not realise what would happen to the business if they had to take time off due to a significant health issue. Once their health fails, there will not be a balance. Family and business will fail as well because there is no support.

This research suggests that to achieve WLB, Chinese people need to learn the New Zealand lifestyle by changing their old ways of life. They need the knowledge of WLB and they should understand the consequence of imbalance. It is particularly important for those who are primarily running the business to realise that health plays such a critical role to support business and family. Without health, the business may not be operated and the family may lose their financial sources. Therefore, WLB is essential, including leisure time and time to take care of oneself and one's family.

6.2 Future Research Directions

During the interviews, participants shared their satisfaction as well as their difficulties

in terms of WLB. Thus, some further research questions were elicited which could be investigated in the future studies. For example, to what extent does business success provide the self satisfaction that would allow Chinese small business owners to achieve WLB? To what extent do participants rate the importance of WLB? How do cultural expectations impact on their business and personal lives?

For future research, it is suggested that a combined qualitative and quantitative study is necessary. Qualitative research has the strength to gain insights into participants' daily life to obtain richer and more meaningful data. Quantitative methodology can get a wider coverage, a larger amount of data and generalizability. Therefore, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods would be more suitable to investigate how Chinese small business people deal with WLB issues as a multi-method approach is able to provide both deep and wide data. It would be useful to test findings in this thesis with a larger sample.

Moreover, a wider coverage of the regions and larger scale research would be beneficial. This research was limited to the opinions and experiences of a relatively small sample size of 15 Chinese immigrant small business owners who are all from the Auckland region. A larger sample size and coverage within various regions in New Zealand might provide more significant results and paint a more comprehensive picture of how Chinese immigrants deal with WLB issues all over New Zealand.

In addition, perspectives from other family members and business partners or employees may be an important area to investigate. Research with other ethnic groups, such as Koreans and Indians, and research into WLB at different business life stages and personal life stages, may provide more multi-cultural, diverse business and personal life implications.

To finish the thesis, Chinese entrepreneurs have made a busy new life in New Zealand – not only several challenges to cross borders between former and new countries and cultures, but also the daily challenges of working and living between many environments such as work, home, family and leisure.

7 References

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8 Appendices

Appendix 1: Department of Labour Case Studies

Case Study - Helen Down



Combining business with a semi-rural lifestyle

When Helen Down stepped out of the corporate tower she made a deliberate decision to establish a business that would give her the work-life balance she craved.

"After 15 years of corporate management and international business travel I wanted the opportunity to establish a business that allowed me to fully utilise my professional skills, while also providing me with the flexibility to be fully involved in family, my sporting interests and community life," she says.

Synthesis Marketing was established on Helen's 20-acre semi-rural lifestyle block in Upper Hutt, and specialises in providing small and medium sized businesses with professional marketing advice and services. Synthesis helps businesses achieve long term sustainable growth by applying practical and effective marketing philosophies and processes. She's created a company based on part-time, flexible hours, where none of her employees work more than 20 hours per week. Despite this the company has experienced 100% year on year growth since its inception in 2001.

Helen believes that working part time has huge professional advantages for companies and individuals. "You build in work efficiencies everywhere," she says. "You prioritise your work better, are more focused, and your concentration is more acute. You concentrate on the things you are expert at and naturally do the things that are most beneficial and profitable for the business and your customers. Every day you make sure you are concentrating your efforts where you are going to make the biggest impact."

The flexible hours work extremely well for staff and customers also. If staff are unable to come in because of last minute childcare difficulties, or they need time during the day to pursue a professional or personal interest, then the company is flexible enough to accommodate this. Though they work semi-regular hours staff always have the option to work from home or to come in at evenings or weekends when necessary.

Customers, all of whom run their own small or medium sized businesses, have reacted positively to the opportunity to organise coaching sessions or marketing training outside of 'normal business hours.'

"Because we're flexible and adaptable we can be available when and where they need us," says Helen. "We tend to attract business people who are also efficiency focused and balancing all sorts of demands on their time and resources. Our flexible approach is a real attraction for them."

Case Study - Stephan Spencer



Work- life balance - taking the office to the beach

Stephan Spencer goes out of his way to provide flexibility for his staff - he even moved his company from downtown, grid-locked Auckland to Browns Bay, just a block from the beach.

And at the Browns Bay business, there's an open-plan office, breakfast bar and magazine stand, arcade games to help de-stress, a patio area, table and chairs and a barbeque.

He's created a cruisy, laid-back environment that helps a high- powered, high- pressure business succeed.

For Stephan, it's a deliberate philosophy that values lifestyle over a "dilbert" type existence, with people "slogging their guts out."

Stephan moved from Wisconsin five years ago and believes New Zealanders take for granted what they've got. He is amazed how many people he meets who live in Auckland and haven't even visited Waiheke Island or Rangitoto.

His company, Netconcepts Ltd, is a web design business with the majority of clients in the United States. That in itself presents challenges of dealing with time differences, with business operating about 20 hours a day.

Most of the staff are 'creatives', working on cutting edge projects that stretch them mentally. Stephan says it's important they can take five minutes out to clear their heads or go for a walk on the beach at lunch time. He enjoys high retention rates among his staff and when he moved to Browns Bays, many of the staff also shifted. "My primary goal for staff is to protect their CVs and improve their skill sets", he says.

Netconcepts has some exciting opportunities on the horizon, and in response, Stephan plans to take the company to the next level. "We can only make that move and take on that work if we maintain key staff. If we lost them we would lose something special to our business", he says.

Case Study - Nick Redshaw



Who says you can't manage a workforce spread across Asia-Pacific and multi-million dollar business from your home in Nelson? Not IBM's Nick Redshaw.

When IBM's Nick Redshaw visited New Zealand from his native England six years ago, he liked what he saw but didn't want to make the shift and end up working in another city. He had worked for IBM for 13 years and to keep him on board, he and the company worked out the perfect solution.

As head of the Asia-Pacific region for the Tivoli software business (Tivoli is one of IBM's five software brands), Nick now handles a significant, multi-million US dollar budget with a staff of several hundred throughout the Asia-Pacific region. And he doesn't do it from Auckland or Wellington, but from his sunny home office in Nelson where he lives with his two daughters Lucy (14) and Beth (12).

Nick spends 50 percent of his time travelling across the countries in Asia-Pacific, balancing this with the remainder of his time working remotely from his home office. IBM's flexible working arrangements allow him to spend time with his family, take advantage of the Nelson lifestyle, as well as achieving his business commitments.

Nick says, "I am very fortunate to be in a position to combine my business career from Nelson and live in fantastic environment for both lifestyle and my family. There are always balances to be made but with IBM I have the flexibility to do this."

Case Study - Chris Wilkinson



The majority of businesses in New Zealand are small to medium sized operations. Here's how one company is addressing the work-life balance issue.

Chris Wilkinson owns Photo Plus Holdings, and Pronto Hire Group, service-based businesses operating in the Wellington region. The owners and managers have been committed to achieving an improved work-life balance for the past five years. Across their three city shops and a rental store, they employ 25 full-time staff and about the same number of part-timers.

Chris says: "As the companies have grown, we have managed to evolve a flexible and workable solution to our staffing needs. This ensures cover to maintain our customer service commitments, yet allows individual team members to make choices about the hours and days they work.

"At the corporate office, most of the team are mothers. So that they can work around school and childcare schedules we structure our day accordingly. As they finish earlier, customer contact then passes to voice and email that is attended to the next business day. We use technology so they can also work from home when needs arise.

"In our stores we also have mothers that have returned to work with us. In these cases we schedule our shifts so they can pick up their children from kindergarten, and we have part-timers available should they need to stay home for any reason.

"We make greater use of 'key time' staff so that shifts can be split allowing those studying to attend lectures, and full timers to maintain their choice of hours. A pool of part timers allows for easy swapping of shifts, and back up for busier times".

Chris says he started to think about work-life issues when staff that had been with the company a long time started to have families and take on other responsibilities. "I know what it's like to have a family and need time for other things and I started to look at companies overseas and big companies here to see what they do for their staff. Our work-life initiatives have developed over the last five years and it's just all been good for the company."

While some businesses shy away from introducing work-life initiatives, perceiving additional business costs, Chris says: "It's a mindset thing. We keep people longer and productivity is great. If people know there is flexibility and they are happy and less stressed, that attitude flows through to productivity."

Case Study - Nicki Lancaster



There's no waste in creating a positive work-life environment in your organisation

Creating a positive working environment is not about being a soft touch but about being reasonable, attentive and accommodating to worker needs, says Nicki Lancaster, finance and administration manager at the Christchurch-based Recovered Materials Foundation.

She says: "If a person knows they are valued they will work a lot better than if they think they just turn up and get paid and that's it."

The Recovered Materials Foundation is a waste recycling business and factory, employing around ninety people. A charitable trust that works in partnership with the Christchurch City Council, the foundation aims for cost effective, practical ways to build a work-life balance culture. "We are working towards a triple bottom line: social, economic and environmental - that is our brief and looking after staff is a priority", says Nicki.

Access is an important tool to help workers balance their work and home lives. Children of employees can ring the factory if they need to. "We are conscious that people do have family and our organisational culture is built around this awareness." The CEO is also a family man and that sets the tone according to Nicki.

She says that providing flexi-time policies for manual workers in a factory situation isn't easy. And that's why the little gestures count even more. When someone has a baby, the company always tries to send flowers. There are ten-pin bowling nights and a picnic in January. Workers are able to take leave to watch their kid's sports day if it can be arranged.

For an organisation working a seven-day roster the picnic idea wasn't easy to put into practice but Nicki says they worked it out - they have two picnics!

Case Study - Chelli Rimer



US-born Chelli talks about how work-life balance helps her live the good life in New Zealand.

"Back in the States you live to work, here in NZ you work to live", enthuses American-born Chelli Rimer, account manager with a Wellington design company.

Positive work-life practices were a huge draw-card when Chelli made the decision to leave her job in Chicago five years ago and set up a life in New Zealand after a short holiday here. "There is something subtly wonderful about the respect people have for other parts of people's lives here; if you get sick it's OK to get better - the message is that it's OK to take care of yourself", says Chelli.

Having grown up in the US and worked in big cities like Chicago, Chelli really values the community feel of workplaces in New Zealand. "Maybe it's because of the size of the country, I'm not sure...but there is a mixture of personal and work life that recognises life in its wider sense - morning tea, kitchens in offices, drinks on Fridays, friendly offices".

Chelli's Wellington workplace is a classic New Zealand small business, with only 13 employees. Communication between staff means that Chelli can take advantage of flexi-time policies and have time to coach softball and join community classes.

"Moving to New Zealand I am able to fulfill my life, to have lifestyle choice", Chelli points out. "People here take things for granted sometimes - holidays, the ocean. Here you definitely have time to have a life."

Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced:

24th January 2007

Project Title

Border Crossing: Work-life balance issues with Chinese entrepreneurs in New Zealand

An Invitation

I am a Masters of Business student at AUT University. My research project is based on work-life balance issues with Chinese entrepreneurs in New Zealand. You are invited to participate in this research. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to collect data for my Masters Thesis and the implications of this study will be expected to contribute to the work-life balance literature within a specific group, i.e. Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs.

In addition, this research aims to examine the key factors that impact on Chinese migrant entrepreneurs achieving a sense of work-life balance in New Zealand and the ways in which they deal with work-life imbalance issues. Data collected from the interviews will be analysed to answer the following research questions:

- What does work-life balance mean to Chinese migrant entrepreneurs in New Zealand?
- What attitudes do they hold towards work-life balance issues?
- What are the main factors that can lead them to experience perceived work-life imbalance?
- How do they deal with work-life imbalance and what sources of support may have they used to restore a perception of balance?

You will be asked a series of questions about how you perceive work-life balance and how you balance your work life and personal life. Some information about your age and education will be also collected.

How was I chosen for this invitation?

You are in the researcher's network of contacts within the Chinese community and in the age group between 25-65. You have your own small-medium enterprises in the Auckland region and you are one of the Chinese migrants who are the first generation of New Zealanders. The information you provide will contribute to the analysis of issues that Chinese immigrants have concerned.

What will happen in this research?

This project involves a face-to-face interview and you are expected to answer open-ended questions for about one hour.

Where is the location of the interview?

Anywhere within Auckland that suits you, such as your home or workplace.

How will my privacy be protected?

Information provided by you will be coded in a way that you cannot be identified personally in the report. This means that you will be given a fictitious name so that you will not be identified. The details of your business involved, such as the size, location, and name will also not be disclosed or identified in any way.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

No financial costs will be involved of participating in this research. However, you will be expected to spend about one hour in a face-to-face interview.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will be contacted by the researcher approximately seven days after receiving this letter to determine your interest.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

You need to complete a Consent Form which will be obtained from AUT Ethics Committee.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

You will be given a summary of the report.

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, Dr. Candice Harris, 9219999 ext 5102

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTECH, Madeline Banda, *madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz* , 921 9999 ext 8044.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:

Camellia Chan, *camcha74@aut.ac.nz*. 021-1073827

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr. Candice Harris, 9219999 ext 5102

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 12th February, 2007.

AUTECH Reference number 07/05.



Consent Form

For use when interviews are involved.

Project Title: Border Crossing: Work-life balance issues with Chinese entrepreneurs in New Zealand.

Project Supervisor: Dr. Candice Harris

Researcher: Camellia Chan

I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 24th January 2007.

I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews.

I understand that the interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed.

I have had the opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

I understand that I am entitled to refuse to answer any of the questions posed by the researcher.

I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.

If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.

I understand that I will be given a summary of the report.

Participant's Signature:.....

Participant's Name:.....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 12th February, 2007.

AUTEC Reference number 07/05

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

Appendix 4: Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule – Guide Questions

1. What year did you immigrate to NZ?
2. Where do you come from?
3. What is your age range?
4. What is your highest formal education qualification?
5. What is your marital status?
6. How many children do you have?
7. How many of them do you need to look after?
8. Do you have any elderly family members to take care of?
9. What work did you do prior to moving to NZ?
10. Did you aspire to be self-employed before coming to NZ?
11. What type of job did you participate in before becoming self-employed?
12. At what age did you first become self-employed?
13. What year was this business established?
14. How long have you been involved with this business?
15. What are the motives for you to run this business?
16. Did you obtain any experiences to run this business from previous employment?
17. What are the main difficulties of immigrant self-employment?
18. What were the major barriers that you faced at the start-up stage?
19. Where did you receive business advice or support from?
20. Do you own any other businesses (if yes, probe and record the details):

21. What is your position/role in this business?
22. Can you please explain the ownership details (e.g. owner/manager, family-owned, wider shareholders etc)?
23. What stage would you describe this business as being in (start-up, growth, maturity/stability or decline)?
24. How many staff do you have (in terms of full-time, part-time, unpaid family workers?)
25. What does the term work-life balance mean to you?
26. How many hours a week on average do you spend working on this business?
27. Are you happy with the hours you work?
28. Can you please talk about how you manage the time you spend between family, work and other commitments.
29. Are you comfortable with the balance you have between work and your wider life commitments?
30. Can you give me some examples of the challenges you may have faced in achieving work-life balance?
31. How do you deal with your problems?
32. What advice would you give to other entrepreneurs with regard to work-life balance?
33. What else do you think the government can do regarding work-life balance?