Shifting subjectivities: Experiences of agency and well-being in connected organisations

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Abstract

Changes and advancements in communication technologies have been praised for enabling workers to complete their job tasks anywhere and at any time. However, recent studies on connectivity find that people have different preferences for how connected they remain after assigned work hours. Organisational studies have not yet considered what the increasingly connected workplace means for worker control or agency over their personal connectivity, and what kind of implications can arise from agentic and non-agentic experiences for workers. Past studies treat agency as a static duality, however, it can be profoundly influenced by various intrapersonal and interpersonal elements, which are currently being altered in part due to increasing connectivity across all aspects of life.

This research explores how workers in connected organisations experience agency and what this means for their subjective well-being. In particular, this study focuses on how connectivity can influence worker affect or emotions and satisfaction as these workers experience shifts in connective agency. This research implements a qualitative, interpretive approach and recruits participants with semi-mobile jobs in three organisations that provide smartphones to their employees and their managers. Data is collected using semi-structured interviews, diary studies and follow-up member-checking interviews.

The findings show that workers in connected organisations can experience three different subjective experiences of agency. These are termed as ‘abundant’, ‘absent’ and ‘ambiguous’. When workers are feeling in control of their connectivity, are able to work flexibly, and have perceived social support, they experience abundant agency. Absent agency arises when workers experience a lack of control, feel pressured through concertive control, engage in addictive connectivity behaviours, and perceive an inability to prioritise family or non-work relationships. Ambiguous agency experiences occur when workers engage in habitual behaviours, hold contradictory beliefs, experience blurred time boundaries, and when they feel like they are under surveillance. For workers in this study, states of subjective well-being mirror their

agency experiences and these states are identified as ‘enhanced well-being’, ‘eroded well-being’ and ‘equivocal well-being’.

This research contributes new theoretical knowledge on agency in regard to workplace connectivity and its relationship with worker well-being. The study offers an extended conceptualisation of connective agency comprising three novel types of agentic experiences in relation to connectivity. As well as a theoretical contribution, this study identifies implications for organisations that provide smartphones to their employees, showing that mobile technologies can influence affective states, behaviours, and well-being of workers.

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

Technology advances and how people respond to them are changing the way people communicate, work and live. Over the last decade, there has been an exponential increase in research about the use of mobile Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) such as smartphones in the workplace and how it impacts on productivity and organisational performance (Peters & Allouch, 2005); however there is limited research on how these changes influence worker agency and subjective well-being. Past research on ICT has found that it can change individual and organisational expectations and obligations regarding different aspects of work (Duxbury & Smart, 2011; Jaakson & Kallaste, 2010), especially if the employing organisation provides this technology (Bittman, Brown & Wajcman, 2009). This means that personal agency (Bandura, 2001) in terms of how and when one carries out work tasks can be impacted. This can also create various implications for subjective well-being of workers who are influenced by these changes. This chapter firstly confers the personal motivations and academic justifications for exploring connective agency and worker well-being. It then briefly discusses the research background and key concepts related to connectivity, agency, and their implications for workers. The study objective, research question and the structure of the thesis are also outlined.

Study motivations

Why study connective agency?

The idea for this research was first conceived during a casual lunch conversation with a colleague a few years ago. In terms of personal interests, growing up with traditional technology (landline phones and television) and only making the transition to smart information and communication technologies (ICTs) in early adulthood means that I perceive myself as a 'digital migrant'. Digital migrants are individuals who were born before the widespread adoption of ICT and learned to use such technologies over time (Inayatullah, 2004). Being a digital migrant means that my expectations and behaviours in terms of smart technologies are likely to be different compared to

expectations and behaviours of individuals who were introduced to these technological devices in late adulthood, and the 'digital natives' who grew up with smart ICTs and view these technologies as an essential part of life (Inayatullah, 2004). For example, I have observed some of my acquaintances happily keeping their smartphone on and responding to it at all times while other acquaintances refuse to use their smartphone or decide to downgrade back to 'dumbphones' (with only simple capabilities such as calling and texting). I have also observed contradictory expectations where my family members expect me to always be reachable on my smartphone yet complain about me responding to emails during family time.

Most of my work at the university also has no clear boundaries between work and non-work, time and space. I can choose when and where to complete work, for the most part. These flexible working arrangements created further interest in how people in workplaces that might also not have clear boundaries attempt to control their connectivity to work and whether they can exercise agency. The social and temporal elements that may constrain or enable personal control and agency, and what that can mean for personal health have continued to fascinate me. Hearing about and observing different norms and behaviours formed the basis of my interest in smart ICT behaviour and expectations. For these reasons I became interested in exploring how various intrapersonal and interpersonal elements can influence the ways people exercise agency over their connectivity and what this means for their day to day life and well-being in hyper-connected workplaces.

Another motivation for this research is to contribute to specific scholarly conversations. My research aims to contribute to the research area of connectivity norms and technological behaviours, including experiences of connectivity agency. This emerging research area is becoming significant because smart mobile ICT devices are becoming ever-present in daily life and have the ability to influence how individuals behave with and relate to each other (Beer, 2012; Mazmanian, 2013; Wehmeyer, 2008). While much research has been done on how people use smart technologies, little research exists on why people engage in certain behaviours, how they perceive their agency over smartphone usage and connectivity levels, and why and how some individuals refuse to use these technologies. There is also a lack of research on how

individuals make disconnection decisions (Russo, Ollier-Malaterre & Morandin 2019). These topics need further exploration because technological advancement and adoption of technologies by workplaces are widespread phenomena which are happening across the world and will continue to do so into the future (Gorski, 2017). The technologies will continue to change the way people work and live and how they communicate with one another (Gorski, 2017). Technology and the 'quest' for work-life balance will continue to be important in organizational life as more organisations become 'connected'. This means that organisational issues of worker productivity, technology acceptance, work intensification and work-life balance will continue to be important topics for managers and academics. Therefore more research is needed to explore how smartphone devices and other communication technologies impact on professional, personal and social lives of workers (Gorski, 2017).

Why study worker well-being?

In terms of worker well-being, my interest in this topic stems from my experiences as a student nurse, something I briefly engaged with before I embarked on my academic journey. When I was studying towards becoming a nurse I observed and experienced the negative impacts of unstable work hours and inability to switch off cognitively (also referred to as psychological detachment) from work, on health and well-being. What was particularly interesting and disconcerting was the unwritten and unspoken expectation for health care workers to prioritise the needs of their patients and organisations above their own well-being. This great injustice (in my eyes) sparked my interest in issues about employee voice and employee health, prompting my career shift to academic research within the field of organisational behaviour.

My master's level research investigated how company-provided smartphones influence the existing psychological contract between managers and employees working in different industries. I found that the way individuals perceive the new social norms to stay continually available play a big role in their expectations for their own and others' interpersonal behaviours and this leads to important implications, especially for middle-line managers, in terms of worker well-being (Obushenkova,

Plester & Haworth, 2018). These findings encouraged me to explore worker well-being in more depth.

Labour economics assume that workers are free to choose their desired working hours (Lepinteur, 2019). However, workers experience constraints in working hours decisions, creating mismatches between desired and actual work hours, and this can be partly attributed to increased adoption of technology in the workplace. The mismatch can lead to overemployment (too much work) or underemployment (too little work). These outcomes are both linked to negative impacts on health, including health of spouses and partners (Lepinteur, 2019). Negative health impacts include mental health issues such as depression and addiction and increased rate of chronic diseases. Health is one of the key factors of personal well-being (Lepinteur, 2019).

As basic human needs and safety and rights are being met in most developed countries, subjective well-being is becoming increasingly more important (Diener, Sapyta & Suh, 1998). Recently, organisations started to show a growing interest in creating and maintaining employee well-being with issues such as burnout becoming a central concern for organisations (Yadav, Johri & Bhattacharjee, 2014). Earlier this year, burnout has also been officially added to the World Health Organisation's list of chronic diseases under 'occupational phenomena' (WHO, 2019). With the recent well-being budget announcement by the New Zealand government (Robertson, 2019), the importance of understanding the underlying factors that influence health and well-being is becoming an important focus for academics, practitioners and societies as a whole.

Research background and question

The ways in which individuals work have been changed dramatically, particularly by the advances in mobile ICTs such as smartphones (Peters & Allouch, 2005; Wajcman & Rose, 2011). Conventionally, work activities were completed between the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday within the work space. These traditional ways of working are on the decline because the recent rise in mobile ICTs means that individuals are able to complete their work tasks as well as be accessible to work

anywhere and anytime (Matusik & Mickel, 2011; Peters & Allouch, 2005). The smartphone especially is believed to be the most influential ICT on the way people work and live due to its wide range of functions including: texting, emailing, calling, video calling and accessing the internet (Peters & Allouch, 2005). Despite these major changes to the nature of work, research looking at worker connectivity, agency and their implications is still in a nascent stage.

Past research shows that when organisations provide ICT devices to their employees it usually leads to changes in the expectations and usage of these devices (Bittman et al., 2009; Richardson & Benbunan-Fich, 2011). This includes increased expectations to work outside of work hours and spaces, and increased expectations to be continually connected to work (Richardson & Benbunan-Fich, 2011). These expectations and behaviours are especially relevant for office-based workers and teleworkers (Ruppel, Gong & Tworoger, 2013). Focusing on individuals with organisationally-provided smartphones also allows exploration of expectations, behaviours and interpersonal experiences of those workers who refuse to use these devices and non-use can be perceived as resistance to social or organisational norms. People and organisations can have different expectations and norms about connectivity and engage in various technological behaviours (Fender, 2010; Gimpel, Sudzina, & Petrovcikova, 2014; Gorski, 2017; Mazmanian, 2013; Orlikowski, 2007; Wehmeyer, 2008). These expectations and behaviours can influence how individuals perceive their own and others' control over connectivity and connective agency in work and non-work domains.

Technology and connectivity offer a wide range of benefits such as flexible working and increased sense of worker autonomy (Mazmanian, 2013). However, they also create issues, especially when people want to have control and agency over their own connectivity and work-life balance. At the same time, technology also enables organisations to reach their employees and gives them even greater control over their employees, reducing or removing their agency. This can create a variety of implications for worker health and well-being.

Having a positive well-being is important (Diener et al., 1998). Health and well-being have long been thought of as simply the absence of disease or problems (Diener et al., 1998), however researchers are now including other factors that are also important for well-being and it is not simply the absence of negative states (heavily focused on by psychologists) and so positive states such as 'human flourishing' must be considered (Diener et al., 1998). Subjective well-being, or a person's evaluation of life including satisfaction and positive affect, is important for overall well-being and health. Subjective well-being includes cognitive states of satisfaction with various domains of life (such as work and marriage) and ongoing affective states and the presence of positive emotions and absence of negative ones are important (Diener et al., 1998). Diener and colleagues (1998) argue that positive subjective well-being results from feelings of mastery and agency to complete goals, having a certain temperament, engaging in interesting pursuits, and having positive social networks.

Due to the rising usage of technologies and their intrusion and influence on people's life and work, many researchers are investigating to what extent these technologies control work practices and behaviours (Leonardi, 2011). This sparked the debate whether people have full agency or whether they are controlled by technology. Some argue that human agency - the ability to form and carry out one's goal (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998) - prevails and people always have the power to stop using technology and control how this technology impacts their behaviour and work (Leonardi, 2011). Others take the technology side, or material agency, where nonhuman entities act on their own and perform agency through functions that are not under human control (Leonardi, 2011). These debates suggest that both human and material agency are important. This research explores the experiences of agency through the eyes of workers and therefore focuses on the human agency side of the debate as the focus is on subjective experiences of worker agency and their subjective well-being.

In terms of my thesis title, what do I mean by shifting subjectivities? Subjectivity refers to a central philosophical concept and includes individual consciousness, agency, personal perspectives, realities and truths partially shaped by nature, culture and experiences (Solomon, 2005). Subjectivity has also been defined as something that involves perceptions, experiences, expectations and understanding of external

phenomenon, all of which are created through social interactions as individuals are never removed or isolated from external influences (Allen, 2002). Subjectivity can also be viewed as a precondition for agency as a person cannot act without being able to think or deliberate (Allen, 2002). Shifting subjectivities suggest that these aspects of subjectivity are in motion; as workers experience changes in their perspectives, expectations and personal truths, they encounter shifts in their connective agency and consequently, create corresponding implications for their subjective well-being.

This exploratory interpretivist study therefore attempts to answer this question:

How do workers in connected organisations experience connective agency and what does this mean for their subjective well-being?

Some central terms and concepts

This thesis uses a number of terms and concepts to explain the studied phenomena. These central concepts are introduced and defined here as they will be used extensively throughout the thesis, some of these terms will be explored and conceptualised in further depth in the literature review and findings chapters.

Agency: This concept has received much attention in management research and literature, however, many ambiguities and contradictions remain when trying to define it. In social sciences, agency is defined as an individual's ability to act independently and having the free will to make own choices (Barker, 2002). The dominant perspective views agency as a duality (Hewson, 2010); and as something that is static (Hobson et al., 2014; Kolb et al., 2012; Mazmanian, 2013). For the purposes of this thesis agency is defined as a subjective, interpersonal and temporally embedded experience (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Hewson, 2010). I focus specifically on connective agency which is a subjective experience of feeling in control over personal technology use and in terms of how connected one remains to work including after-hours (Kolb et al., 2012).

Connectivity: The term 'connectivity' refers to the level of connection between technological devices in organizations (Collins & Kolb, 2013). Wilson, Boyer O'Leary,

Metiu and Jett (2008) suggest that connectivity is something that enables teams and individuals in organizations to remain close to each other even when they are not in the same physical space.

Connected organisations: This definition refers to organisations that provide information and communication technologies (such as smartphones, laptops and tablets) to their employees in promise of increased work flexibility and autonomy (Towers et al., 2006; Mullan & Wajcman, 2019; Wajcman & Rose, 2011 Mazmanian). By using these devices, employees have increased connectivity to their organisations outside of work hours and spaces.

Subjective well-being: This concept refers to a type of well-being that individuals can experience (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999). Subjective well-being is a self-reported perception about one's quality of life, and consists of three aspects: positive affect or positive emotions, negative affect or negative emotions and life satisfaction with various aspects of one's life, including work and personal life (Diener et al., 1999; Yadav et al., 2014). I use the terms subjective well-being throughout the thesis.

Structure of thesis

The thesis describes and discusses the research carried out in order to answer the research question outlined above. The second chapter reviews the key literature and relevant empirical studies that have been conducted in the past. It is divided into four main sections, starting with a broad overview of work and technology, including the conceptualisation of connected organisations and how technological advancements have created changes in temporal and societal elements of work and life. The chapter then moves on to consider the conceptualisation of worker agency in connected organisations, and previous research on how and when workers experience agency or how and when they lack agency. The third section of the literature review looks at the concept of worker subjective well-being and how connectivity might enhance or erode individual well-being. The final section of chapter two brings these concepts together to form the foundation of the research question.

Chapter three begins by re-stating the research question and describing the research philosophy and study approach used in this research. It also describes the research design including participant recruitment, organisational context and demographics, and data collection techniques of semi-structured interviews, electronic diaries and follow up member checking interviews. The methods chapter also presents the various stages of a framework analysis (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994; Ritchie & Lewis 2003), which was used to analyse and interpret the collected data.

Chapter four contains a detailed explanation of the findings from the framework analysis, and includes examples from the interviews and diary entries. It is divided into three main sections, each focusing on a different type of agency. Each of these sections focuses on the underlying effects from the three elements of agency experiences (intrapersonal, temporal and interpersonal). Finally, the implications of agentic shifts for the subjective well-being of workers are analysed. This findings chapter is followed by discussion chapter which debates the findings, their relation to past research, and the contribution that the findings make to the constructs of connective agency, subjective well-being and connectivity. Implications are also discussed at the end of chapter five. The thesis is concluded with a summarisation of the key conclusions from the study and the theoretical contribution achieved through this study. Limitations are identified and some directions for future research are suggested.

CHAPTER TWO: Literature review

Technology and the resulting connectivity have had a profound effect on people and organisations (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2013; Duxbury & Smart, 2011; Wajcman & Rose, 2011). With technological developments such as smartphones it is now possible to be continuously connected to work while in non-work domains. While this creates many benefits for work and life in general, there are also significant issues, especially when people want to have control and agency over their own connectivity. As technology enables organisations to reach their employees outside of work, creating greater organisational control over people, workers can experience a decrease in personal agency over their connectivity levels. This can create important implications for workers.

This literature review considers the various concepts and empirical findings with regards to the influence of connective agency and worker subjective well-being, and is structured as follows. The review begins with a general overview of the interwoven changes in work, organisations and technology. This first part of the review focuses on how advances in technologies lead to changes in how people work and the rise of connected organisations. The three subsections focus on the concept of connected organisations, temporal-spatial changes (such as time boundaries) and social changes (social norms) to work brought about by technology. The second part of the literature review then shifts its focus to worker agency in connected organisations, how it has been conceptualised in the literature and how the duality of agency has been applied to connectivity behaviours in prior research. The third part of the review looks at the concept of worker well-being, with a particular focus on subjective well-being, and how various connectivity behaviours influence worker well-being. The final section brings together the concepts of connectivity, agency and subjective well-being to emphasize the key ideas and processes underlying the research question of this study.

Work and technology

Conceptualising connected organisations

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) were traditionally used for work between the hours of nine and five, however, over the last two decades they have transformed the way work is done. Work is no longer limited to specific hours in specific locations, as ICTs (smartphones in particular) enable the extension of work in both temporal and spatial dimensions (Towers, Duxbury, Higgins & Thomas, 2006). Due to technologies, organisations are becoming more connected within and outside of the workplace (Butts, Becker & Boswell, 2015). Most communication that was done face-to-face in the past is now conducted electronically. The increasing use of smartphones to stay connected to work has created 'the new night shift' where workers connect to work (or stay connected) to deal with work related communication after assigned working hours (Butts et al., 2015).

Organisational borders become extended and mobile ICTs such as smartphones erode the boundaries between the 'culturally different' spheres of work and non-work (Towers et al., 2006). These changes are perceived in various ways by the workers. The study by Towers and colleagues (2006) shows how the boundary between work and non-work is not fixed but shifts, and how different attitudes and behaviours towards time and space influence these shifts. By providing smartphones to employees, the meanings of time and space change. The boundaries between work and non-work are mental not physical, the concept of single, objective space and time has been challenged and instead it is proposed to be socially constructed (Towers et al., 2006). Mobile communication technologies can blur or remove the boundaries between work and non-work life and extend work's reach (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019). With the removal of these boundaries and the creation of continuous connectivity, connected organisations become the norm.

Work has changed dramatically over the last 20 years (Wajcman & Rose, 2011). Communication is no longer limited to face-to-face, letters or landline phone calls. Instead workers can choose to connect via multiple media, including mobile devices

with continuous internet connection and instant messaging capabilities. These changes have been associated with an increased pace of work and longer working days. This ubiquitous connectivity enables workers to work flexibly and have control over when and where they complete work tasks, however it also creates pressure to be continuously available and responsive through multiple media (Wajcman & Rose, 2011). Flexibility has become a buzzword or a rhetoric that many organisations use to attract and retain employees. Connected organisations promise their workers a high amount of flexibility which will enable them to have a better work-life balance. This flexibility is offered through telework – where people regularly work at home or remotely at least once a week during scheduled work hours (Towers et al., 2006).

Matusik and Mickel (2011) argue that we are now in a 'new age' in workplace connectivity. This is due to the increased flexible and mobile work and an increase in non-traditional work arrangements (Matusik & Mickel, 2011). More companies are choosing to provide mobile ICT devices such as smartphones and tablets to their employees, which significantly alter how, when and where workers engage in work tasks. These alterations are partly due to the newly created expectations of continuous availability and increasing communication between employees and their organisation (Cavazotte, Heloisa Lemos, & Villadsen, 2014). Company-provided ICT devices create a compelling signal regarding these expectations, signalling that employees should be continuously available for work in order to fulfil their work role.

Emerging research suggests that when employees have access to communication technologies and/or they are provided with mobile ICT devices, this increases expectations that employees will remain connected with the organisation via technology (Richardson & Benbunan-Fich, 2011). Aside from these issues, ICT might also make it harder for some workers to find or keep a job because due to the rise of telework different personal qualities are now becoming more valued (Hadley, 2007). For example, individuals are now expected to be flexible and accessible in order to solve work issues faster. Traditionally employers valued employee punctuality and presence at work, while currently being flexible and responding quickly to issues regardless of time and location is more valued (Hadley, 2007). Portable devices, especially smartphones, can change expectations about responsiveness and

connectedness because they have the Internet function which enables email communication anywhere (Mazmanian, Orlikowski & Yates, 2005).

Temporal-spatial changes

Due to the mobility of currently available technologies, people can complete work regardless of the time of day, and take work home without having to wait for the next day. Due to this and the importance of time regimes in society, how people experience time changes (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019). These experiences now include time-space compression, time accelerations and time pressure. The general assumption is that technology speeds up the pace of life due to constant connectivity (making a person constantly available) and removal of the boundary between work and leisure (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019). This also lengthens working time. Because employers can contact workers during their personal designated family time, work problems become the focal point during off-work hours. The removal of temporal boundaries, and the resulting work intensification or spillage into non-work time influences work culture encouraging employees to work longer hours. While flexible working arrangements are supposed enable people to choose when to work or 'shift' their working hours to their preferred time of day, studies show that this does not tend to happen for many workers. Instead of 'shifting' their working time, people end up engaging in work activities during assigned hours as well as outside those hours (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019). This suggests that flexible working arrangements encourage work intensification and long working hours rather than encouraging the 'promised' *balanced* ways of working.

Some of the past studies, however, do not take into account the temporal elements that extend work. Instead, work extension is considered a part of the new 'normal' of work, and this extension is a result of increased use of smart communication technology, not temporal changes. Mullan and Wajcman's (2019) study found that there was an increase in work extension between 2000 and 2015 meaning that technologies are blurring the boundaries but only to a small extent. This was also found to be true mostly for professionals and managers, but not all of the working population. This suggests that mobile technology does not *significantly* alter the

temporal elements (specifically work extension) of work. However, mobile devices can create time pressure through instant notifications and constant checking which create work stresses spilling into non-work time (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019), suggesting that these changes are subtle. Mullan and Wajcman (2019) argue that technological devices and time pressure have an indirect relationship, that is, time pressure is not created by extensive ICT usage but is due to structural changes to work in general and ICT is just a symptom of those changes (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019).

Many workplaces now have work intensification, long working hours, and involve multitasking (Tapia, 2004). Adoption of technologies in organisations has led to phenomena such as time starvation, time famine and time deepening – where workers are completing many more tasks at faster speeds and experience extreme level of stress (Tapia, 2004). While working hours increase, leisure time is in decline, with workers doing an equivalent to a full extra month of work a year. Some scholars attribute changes to work time to technology, while others attribute it to management changes, such as cost cutting and having a consumer centric view (Tapia, 2004). There is also a decline in time-based scheduling as people start to coordinate their social and work lives in a more ad hoc, spontaneous, non-time bound way (Geser, 2006). As technologies such as smartphones erode the traditional temporal boundaries it becomes up to individual workers to regulate them (Geser, 2006). Apart from Duxbury, Higgins, Smart and Stevenson's (2014) study, there is limited research showing how workers regulate these time boundaries, and the factors that influence their perception about being able to do so.

Time is viewed as a limited resource in contemporary society and has an assigned social meaning, which is directly influenced by work being extended to home-time, evenings and weekends (Towers et al., 2006). Because it is viewed as a resource, when time is not used for work activities it may be perceived as temporal waste by organisations (Towers et al., 2006). Traditionally, social time could be divided into three cycles: the daily round (or the traditional working day that includes getting up, eating, working, having breaks, going home and doing personal activities), the weekly routine (two weekend days and five working days) and the annual routine (fifty working weeks and two vacation weeks). These cycles have been altered due to new

working practices and through ICT developments (Towers et al., 2006). Vacations are now increasingly used for work activities and staying in touch with the office during vacation and working during weekends is becoming normalised. Many workers claim that they are feeling pressured or rushed, including on weekends (Towers et al., 2006). This suggests that personal time schedules are becoming more synchronised with organisational time schedules. Organisational time schedules are important for production and performance, but they can start to interfere with personal time schedules. Working hours are also increasing, especially for those in higher status positions. Where junior workers used to have longer hours than senior, this has now reversed, suggesting that temporal-spatial changes may influence workers at different hierarchies in different ways.

Studies show that employee after-hours work via technology is influenced mostly by the organisational distribution of technology (Richardson & Benbunan-Fich, 2011). By providing ICT that enables work regardless of time and location, temporal waste can be reduced as workers are able to be more active in different times and spaces; checking email on the bus is one such example. Mobile technology enables work in 'third spaces' (outside work and home in places like cafes). This enables workers to be in two different spaces (physical and virtual) and in two different times (work time and relaxing time) at the same instance, and such temporal proximity is enabled through mobile devices. Studies show that technologies are not increasing the amount of leisure time. Instead they increase the number of tasks that need to be completed. Time used for personal gratification then becomes 'slow time' while engaging in multiple activities at the same time (multitasking or completing a task instead of relaxing) creates 'fast time', or 'time-space compression'. This compression reduces a person's ability to balance work and non-work time so that they are not in conflict (Towers, Duxbury & Thomas, 2005, p. 6)

Due to these developments, Work-Life Balance (WLB) has therefore become a big theme for organisations in developed countries, with organisations trying to enhance flexibility and balance by implementing job-sharing, flexitime and other non-standard work scheduling. These organisations are also increasingly providing technology so workers can have the flexibility to complete work outside the office, at home or in the

third spaces. This can reduce work and non-work conflict by reducing time pressure, as people can do overtime work from home, and by giving people more control over their schedules and increased opportunities to spend time at home. However, these new temporal arrangements for work also increase conflict and studies show increased family conflict due to working at home (Towers et al., 2006).

Smartphones can also be used to fill in dead-time (for example while commuting) and allow for 'connected presence' which refers to the idea that an individual is always connected (Mazmanian et al., 2005). This can create problems for individual WLB by reducing or even removing time off work. ICT-integrated workplaces can also have different expectations compared to traditional workplaces. Perlow (1998) conducted a study that shows that managers in technologically advanced and ICT supported workplaces have certain expectations regarding employee work. These expectations include working longer and more hours, being constantly available, making work a priority, and putting in extra effort (Perlow, 1998). Quesenberry and Trauth (2005) also found that there are increasing expectations for employees to be prepared to work extra hours and to be continually available on their phone or computer. Bittman and colleagues (2009) argue that expectations to work increase if employees are given mobile ICT. Fenner and Renn (2009) also add that the expectation to use organisationally provided ICT leads to increased supplementary work. Technologically assisted supplementary work (TASW) can create a different psychological climate at work, which can lead to an expectation for longer working hours (Fenner & Renn, 2009). The distribution of certain types of technological devices (specifically handheld devices) by the employer is a key driver of after-hours connectivity to work, perhaps because such devices enable greater mobility (Richardson & Benbunan-Fich, 2011) and create new expectations (Obushenkova et al., 2018).

Due to technology, workers can use their 'downtime' (travelling, waiting rooms for example) to complete work tasks (Rose, 2014). This suggests having control over and making good use of otherwise 'wasted' time. The concept of 'thickening of time' refers to when an individual's attention is beyond their immediate physical environment (Rose, 2014, p. 1005). This is not always ideal as some workers don't want to fill in the 'break' times with more work. Flexible working hours also result in a looser concept of

standard working time (Rose, 2014). This can improve productivity and adaptability by allowing workers to choose when to complete work and when to take breaks, but it can also increase workloads and decrease perceptions about being able to disconnect from work during non-work times and in non-work places. Workers perceive increased expectations to be available and responsive outside normal work hours and have increased perceptions of control over work (Rose, 2014). Some studies show that this phenomenon does not extend to all workers and types of work. For example, mobile service engineers did not experience altered boundaries of working hours (Rose, 2014). More recent studies, however, show that availability expectations extend to workers from organisations within different industries (Obushenkova et al., 2018), suggesting that being continuously available for work-related issues is becoming a widespread phenomenon regardless of the nature of work.

Total availability is becoming synchronous with customer service and is becoming the norm for many organisations in knowledge and service work, not just traditionally work intensive organisations such as law and management consulting, but also retail and hospitality (Mazmanian & Erickson, 2014). Due to the increasing practice of total availability, individual workers are finding that they are losing power over their temporal working conditions and schedules. This means many knowledge workers and their managers are feeling pressured to be constantly connected to work (Mazmanian & Erickson, 2014). Employers make matters worse by offering their workers' total availability to customers and clients, and if employees refuse to engage in total availability they are in danger of not achieving professional success. Matusik and Mickel's (2011) grounded theory study focused on convergent mobile devices (such as smartphones, tablets and multifunctional computing) and found that these devices create expectations for workers to respond faster and be always accessible not just by their employers but also from external factors such as family. Because of these pressures, employees compare having a smartphone to being always 'on-call' (Matusik & Mickel, 2011). This suggests that the temporal-spatial changes to work and non-work domains are also creating societal changes, which further influence workers' ability to manage their temporal boundaries and work schedules.

Societal changes

A key change in society and organisations that has greatly influenced work and workplace relationships is the advancement in mobile ICTs (Sias, 2008). Due to these technological advancements, the way people interact and spend time with others has changed profoundly (Cahir & Lloyd, 2015). Smart communication technology is becoming a key factor in interpersonal communication and relationships, with some theorists suggesting that it has superseded face-to-face interactions (Drago, 2015). Some people are concerned that this means in-person interaction skills will suffer and as individuals become more reliant on communicating through technology they will not be able to communicate with each other in-person, and that the quality and quantity of in-person interactions will suffer (Drago, 2015). Other theorists view technology as a positive addition to relationships because it enables people to feel continuously connected, to maintain interaction without being physically co-present and to engage in ritual interactions which can help to assure individuals that their relationships persist and are on-going (Chayko, 2014; Eden & Veksler, 2016; Lee, 2013). Many workers also view smartphones as tools that can help them manage and control interactions (Middleton, 2007). In contemporary societies, people maintain their relationships through both online and offline interactions and most people use online interaction to maintain relationships with people who they first met face-to-face (Chayko, 2014; Eden & Veksler, 2016).

Despite these positive aspects, mobile ICTs such as smartphones can also lead to some deterioration in interpersonal relationships. According to Tertadian (2012), smartphone usage can lead to interpersonal conflict because individuals become upset when their interaction partner is on the phone during face-to-face discussions or tasks. For example, 'phubbing' refers to the act of ignoring someone in a social setting by paying attention to the smartphone instead (Chasombat, 2014), and interrupting face-to-face communication to answer calls and messages. Being on the phone during physical interactions reduces the person's engagement (acts as a distraction) in that interaction and suggests that the in-person interaction is not as important as the interaction happening via the smartphone (Tertadian, 2012). Invasive, disruptive or

impolite use of smartphone is considered anti-social behaviour by most people (Middleton & Cukier, 2006). However, some individuals say they feel like there is no excuse not to respond to messages and emails at any time (Middleton & Cukier 2006).

Social norms exist to regulate social behaviour within particular social groups and settings (Mazmanian, 2013; Hall, Baym & Miltner, 2014; Warren, 2003). These norms are socially constructed, are unwritten, and are enforced informally. However, in order for norms to influence individual behaviour they must be internalized (Hechter & Opp, 2001). Norms can change over time and can be very different between different social groups or people of different demographics. People can choose whether to follow or not follow norms. However, going against the norm usually results in negative judgement from others (Hall et al., 2014). Individuals who violate or go against the norm, are usually punished with sanctions by others (Hechter & Opp, 2001). When things are new (such as the introduction of new technology), norms can emerge and evolve rapidly. For example, with the widespread usage of smartphones, new norms about using the phone in public or during face-to-face interactions have emerged. Despite this emergence, norms for public use of phones are contested and not everyone shares the same norms (Hall et al., 2014). Although some norms are contested and not shared by everyone, social norms are a major factor in individual usage of smartphones (Gimpel et al., 2014), and connectivity behaviours and these norms are developing rapidly.

In terms of current smartphone usage, there are emerging norms to be constantly connected, accessible, responsive and flexible (Mazmanian, 2013). There are also increasing expectations for continuous checking and responding to phone calls and messages, including during after-work hours and in non-work places. These norms are especially prevalent in social contexts where most individuals use or have a smartphone. In these contexts, it becomes the rule and develops into a coercive norm as individuals comply to and reinforce the pressure (Mazmanian, Yates, & Orlikowski, 2006). Due to the ease of sending, receiving and responding, these norms encourage the intensification of interaction and communication.

While over-usage of smartphones can at times be perceived as rude or anti-social, the expectation of being always available through ICT devices is also quickly becoming a new norm (Mazmanian et al., 2005). This suggests that individuals who resist technology and avoid using it by switching it off or leaving it at home (Magee, Agosto, Forte, & Dickard, 2014) are at risk of damaging their relationships because their lack of responses and communication might be viewed as negative behaviour that goes against the norm.

Due to social norms, individuals start to carry their smartphones everywhere, keep them constantly on and respond to messages everywhere and anytime (Barley, Meyerson, & Grodal, 2011). Social norms in certain contexts can also include notions of when and where it would be inappropriate to contact a co-worker on the phone (Barley et al., 2011). Conforming to social norms regarding the use of smartphones can still lead to different types of users. Past research identified different types of smartphones users: while some were 'enthusiastic' about using smartphones, some tended to use their smartphones in 'balanced' ways and others were identified as 'trade-offs' (discussed in more depth in the next section) (Dery, Kolb, & MacCormick, 2014, p.559).

Currently there is also a norm to answer or respond to phone calls and messages even when involved in face-to-face interactions. This can be explained by the concept of 'caller hegemony' which refers to the act of giving phone communication higher importance than to the present person. Caller hegemony is confirmed by social norms which allows individuals to give their phone priority (Salovaara, Lindqvist, Hasu, & Häkkilä, 2011; Tertadian 2012). Despite this becoming a social norm, most people still perceive this as rude behaviour and feel like they are less important when another person interrupts a face-to-face interaction by answering their phone (Middleton & Cukier 2006; Tertadian, 2012). This can lead to interpersonal conflict and damage the relationship.

Despite the normative pressure to be constantly connected (and to basically be a high user), some individuals resist these norms and use (or do not use) their smartphones in ways that go against current expectations. Due to social norms

regarding the use of smartphones, non-use may be viewed as antisocial, and not being in touch all the time considered socially offensive and irresponsible (Mazmanian, 2005; Ribak & Rosenthal 2015). Being unavailable can be considered disrespectful and sometimes individuals will try to contact the unavailable person through other channels if they cannot be reached on their smartphone (Salovaara et al., 2011). These norms can change behaviours that individuals engage in when using their smartphone.

Looking at social norms, Harmon and Mazmanian's (2013) study used news articles and advertisements to uncover two popular discourses about smartphone usage. The first discourse encourages the out-of-touch 'Luddites' to integrate smartphones into their everyday life, promising benefits of connectivity and mobility for becoming a productive multitasker. The second discourse encourages the distracted addicts to disconnect in order to be 'authentic humans' (Harmon & Mazmanian, 2013, p. 1051). These discourses suggest that there is an 'ideal state' of use or non-use. Despite being difficult to fulfil, these two discourses create powerful influences on people's everyday smartphone usage. Study participants experience conflict and instability as they go between the ideal states on a daily basis and this instability can be partially related to their attempts to align their usage and behaviour with the contradictory idealised discourses of connecting and disconnecting. Both discourses provide guidance on how to use (or not use) smartphone to achieve autonomy and control, togetherness and productivity, but the recommended practices are contradictory and mutually exclusive. Harmon and Mazmanian (2013) conclude that when looking at smartphone behaviours aimed to achieve the above values of the ideal state, one needs to consider the social, cultural and institutional pressures that influence the use and experience (Harmon & Mazmanian, 2013).

Schlachter, McDowall, Cropley and Inceoglu (2017) argue that the social-normative organisational context is a significant factor in individual use of ICT during non-work hours. If there is perceived organisational pressure to be constantly connected and available for work, this pressure is perceived to be coming from multiple sources (supervisor, co-workers) and is higher when expectations are vague. Subjective norms for availability and increased use of ICT are also linked in a reciprocal way- so norms increase use, and use increases norms or promotes a culture of availability (Schlachter

et al., 2017). Contextual cues show organisational expectations for constant connectivity. These cues include distribution of ICT to workers (which leads to increased usage), organisational cultures that value aspects such as long working hours, immediacy and a high dedication to the job. These result in voluntary ICT use off-hours and high work-related contact during off-hours. For example, if managers contact workers all the time the worker engages in more voluntary ICT use and enacts responsive behaviours like not switching off device, or carrying it everywhere (Schlachter et al., 2017). Employees tend to mimic or adopt behaviours of other people in their social group, such as co-workers (Derks, van Duin, Tims & Bakker, 2015). This suggests that the way that workers use communication technology is influenced by organisational culture (Derks et al., 2015) and extends work. These aspects of social, temporal and spatial contexts can influence a person's sense of agency.

Worker agency in connected organisations

Conceptualising worker agency

Existing literature defines the concept of agency as a process carried out by a social actor and embedded in time, which is informed by past events and oriented towards present and future events (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Agentic actions are both temporal and relational (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). This means social actors adjust their agentic orientation depending on the temporal context they are in (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). The orientation or level of agency that social actors possess can be constrained or enabled by the context. Agency experiences also include habitual action, as habits still involve attention and effort and have a conscious purpose, even though these actions are usually taken for granted or not reflected upon (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). While agency has been described as purpose, routine (habit) or judgement, it can actually include all of these factors (Wilkinson, 2014). Agency is intrinsically social and relational because it focuses on the actions of actors within different social contexts and environments (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). The concept of agency remains a debated topic, with some scholars saying it is simply

intentionality, while others saying it is the power to reflect on social context and to act with purpose either as an individual or as a collective (Giddens, 1984).

Despite the significant influence of external factors (temporal and social contexts), agency is considered to be mostly an intrapersonal experience as it involves the ability to intentionally influence one's life circumstances (Bandura, 2001; 2006). According to Bandura (2006), people are self-regulating and proactive beings, not just onlookers of their own behaviour. The four main components of human agency include intentionality (this refers to the idea that behaviours are intended to achieve a goal), forethought (a process involving setting goals and anticipating certain outcomes, or visualising a future that motivates action), self-reactiveness or self-regulation (a process involving executing actions to achieve a set purpose) and self-reflectiveness or the ability to reflect on the self and the meaning of one's pursuits and ability to adjust one's own actions if necessary (Bandura, 2001; Hewson, 2010). Self-efficacy (the belief that one's actions can lead to desired results or outcomes), a part of self-reflectiveness, is crucial for agency (Bandura, 2006). Efficacy beliefs can be self-hindering or self-enhancing (Bandura, 2001), meaning that these beliefs greatly influence perceptions of agency and actual behaviours. People anticipate outcomes by observing the consequences of events and actions in the world around them (Bandura, 2001).

Besides intentionality, Hewson (2010) proposes that agency also consists of power and rationality. Some people have more power, capabilities and resources suggesting that they also have more agency, while rationality involves using knowledge and intelligence to guide one's actions. Hewson (2010) also states that agency is an action rather than a passive state. Agency includes doing things, exerting power or controlling things, while a lack of agency occurs when one is acted upon, is an object of events or is being controlled. People experience both agency and lack of it (Hewson, 2010), suggesting a duality of agency. Hewson (2010) discusses the three 'types' of agency that people can engage in: individual agency (individual person acting), proxy agency (acting on behalf of another agent such as managers representing organisation or CEO) and collective agency (agents collaborating together such as social movements). According to this typology, managers are considered to be agents by proxy as they are

perceived or expected to be acting in the principals' (owners of organisation) best interests instead of their own interests (Wang, 2009). When they start to act in their own interests the organisation faces an agency problem (Wang, 2009).

Agency is a socially embedded experience, as in most contexts individuals cannot have full control over what happens to them due to the presence of other people (Bandura, 2006). Social factors such as social inclusion and support are closely related to individual sense of belonging, self-esteem and feeling of control (Malik & Obhi, 2019). Social inclusion refers to the idea that people are able to fully participate in society (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2016). Social inclusion is related to agency because it is about self-determination to participate and be in control of one's destiny. This means that social inclusion is not about simply assimilating into dominant norms and values (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2016). These ideas suggest that social exclusion is related to a lack of personal agency, meaning that agency experiences can shift according to the social context.

The idea of an *ideal* worker is increasingly becoming commonplace. This refers to someone who can dedicate or commit to long working hours, have strong work orientation, and take on extra responsibilities (Wilkinson, 2014). 'Willing slavery' to work extra-long hours, work intensification and other behaviours suggests there is an element of agency, since a person is doing so out of their own free will. However, this behaviour can also be attributed to the organisational pressure and culture of overwork (Wilkinson 2014), suggesting a lack of personal agency. When it comes to agency in connected organisations, literature reports on experiences of control and experiences of no control, creating a duality of agency. This duality suggests that people can either feel agentic or not agentic when it comes to controlling their own connectivity to work.

Agency over connectivity

Human agency is a perspective that suggests that humans and their actions are not determined by technologies that they use (Leonardi, 2011). At any point, a person can choose to turn off a technological device or use it in another way. Even with most

constraining technologies, people still control how those technologies impact their work. Humans enact their agency in response to technology's material agency (Leonardi, 2011). Material agency refers to the capacity of nonhuman subjects to exercise their own agency; for technology this agency is 'performability' (things that people cannot directly control). People must learn how to manoeuvre around material agency such as rejecting technology or using it not for its original purpose (Leonardi, 2011). At times people feel constrained by technology and must change something in their environment to achieve their set goals that are being constrained by material agency. This means that people may perceive that sometimes technology is constraining their goal achievement or at other time it is enabling their agency (Leonardi, 2011). Leonardi (2011) suggests that material agency should not be perceived as a threat (or a constraint) to human agency. Instead, material agency should be seen as something that constraints or enables people's actions, and this depends on how people perceive or construct it. Interpreting research on technology involves understanding that everyone can give different meaning to the same object or action (Doolin, 1998). Technologies are used by people within a complex social structure, therefore, technology is constructed differently by different people and can have different impacts on personal agency.

Doolin (1999) proposes using the concept of sociotechnical network, where both the social and the technical aspects are important for understanding connectivity and technological outcomes. Technology is influenced by complex social structures through development, modification and appropriating (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2013), and human behaviour is increasingly mediated by technology. Humans have intentionality which activates material properties of technologies. The mutual effect of human and technology agency on each other can be seen as a part of information ecology, which is further impacted by social structures. Humans use knowledge about the past, present and future to evaluate the consequences of their actions (agency experiences), which means that their agency is embedded in a temporal and social context (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2013). All technology is social, as it is created through social processes and interpreted within its social contexts. This suggests that human agency

over technology and connectivity can be enabled by specific social and temporal factors.

Technology and social media enable another platform for social connection and monitoring social relations. This suggests that technology creates another social context that can influence personal agency and create opportunities for social inclusion and exclusion (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2016). For example, some social media have the 'seen' function which shows when the receiver has read the message (Malik & Obhi, 2019). When someone sends a message but is left on the 'seen' function instead of getting an immediate response, they may feel that they are being ignored and socially excluded. Experiences of social exclusion have many negative impacts on people, such as reduced ability to cope and increased state of resignation, leading to depression, helplessness and alienation (Malik & Obhi, 2019). Malik and Obhi (2019) also argue that there is a strong link between social exclusion and perceived control and experience of agency, and this link needs further investigation (Malik & Obhi, 2019).

Agency refers to the concept and experiences of 'free will', and agency influences how people control their connectivity in order to not get overwhelmed (Kolb, Caza & Collins, 2012). This means workers can choose their level of connectivity with some workers remaining almost constantly connected (Kolb, 2008). People are not passive users and have control over the mobile devices that they use. They are 'knowledgeable agents' (Russo et al., 2019) meaning they experience agency over technology and know how to use it in order to match their values and preferences. They can choose how much impact technology has on their daily life (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2013; Russo et al., 2019). People also have different preferences in how connected they are – so what is considered too much connectivity to some may be a good amount to others (Kolb, Ivaturi, Henderson & Srinivasan, 2015). While smartphone usage amplifies positive and negative work engagement behaviours, (MacCormick, Dery & Kolb, 2012) some workers resist disconnection and want to maintain near-constant connectivity levels. Experiences of agency and self-efficacy enable people to use technology how they want.

Mobile ICT enables people to have schedule control through the amount of temporal flexibility that a worker has in their work schedule (Schieman & Glavin, 2008). When people have schedule control, they can decide when to start and finish work. Using mobile ICT also increases flexibility by enabling people to plan their days more flexibly and change those plans at short notice if needed (Hadley, 2007). Mobile ICT also allows workers to have greater location flexibility, which means that they can work from any location (Hadley, 2007). This means that workers who are given mobile ICT by their organisations can perceive and have greater flexibility. Quesenberry and Trauth (2005) also discuss how asynchronous communication can lead to increased flexibility by increasing schedule control and reducing time barriers. People can also use mobile ICT to work from home, which can also increase flexibility (Wajcman, 2008). These studies suggest that having schedule control or being able to engage in flexible working arrangements can create feelings of agency through, and over technological connectivity.

When workers receive ICT devices, they can choose whether to and how to use them. They can decide how connected they are to work and to people at work (Mazmanian, Orlikowski, & Yates, 2013), thus they experience agency. The norms and expectations that they have for their own and others' behaviours influence how they use their smartphones. Past research shows that some workers engage in resistance, do not use these devices, and actively control their connectivity (Magee et al., 2014; Satchell & Dourish, 2009). Other workers accept and use these devices in balanced ways, while some people become dependent on their devices and overuse them (Casey, 2012; Lundquist, Lefebvre, & Garramone, 2014). These differences in behaviours suggest that people have different expectations about their smartphone usage and may also be influenced by social norms to different degrees (Aversano, 2007), influencing their agency experiences.

People can also engage in a wide variety of behaviours when using their smartphones and can even develop new habits (Oulasvirta, Rattenbury, Ma, & Raita, 2012). Habits can be defined as automatic behaviours that are context specific and can have positive or negative outcomes - such as the maintenance of relationships as a positive outcome, or addiction as a negative effect. One of the current most common

habits in terms of smartphone usage is compulsive checking for new calls, emails and messages (Orlikowski, 2007). Many people check their phones when waking up and before going to bed and checking one's smartphone throughout the day becomes a habit (Lee, Chang, Lin, & Cheng, 2014). This habit turns into a compulsion to check and use one's device in any place, on any transport, during meetings, when watching television, and at any time of day and night (Middleton & Cukier 2006; Pivetta, Harkin, Billieux, Kanjo & Kuss, 2019). Habit is a major factor in ICT behaviour (Gimpel et al., 2014) and is a debated aspect of human agency.

Smartphone use is so frequent in modern daily life that using it becomes a nonconscious, routine and automatic activity that occurs without deliberation or rational choice (Gimpel et al., 2014). Using smartphones to complete work-related tasks during commuting or travel time has become normalised and can be seen as having created individualised 'mobile offices' (Guo, Derian, & Zhao, 2015). Connectivity through smartphones extends into vacations, weekends, and into hobbies and other leisure activities (Middleton & Cukier 2006). Individuals also engage in multitasking on their smartphone, for example interacting with co-workers on the phone while physically being at home doing other tasks (Camacho, Hassanein, & Head, 2013). By engaging in these connected behaviours, individuals believe that smartphones enable them to monitor and control information flow. However, this leads to a compulsion to check and an inability to disengage from smartphone interactions, behaviours that people find difficult to explain (Mazmanian et al., 2006).

Recent studies of professional knowledge workers have identified typologies or categories of technology users and patterns of connectivity behaviours (MacCormick et al., 2012; Matusik & Mickel, 2011; Geiger, Waizenegger, Remus, & Wingreen, 2016), or typologies of boundary management strategies (Duxbury et al., 2014). These studies focus on specific devices, dimensions of connectivity or investigate connective behaviours across a range of technologies and software (Geiger et al., 2016). Matusik and Mickel (2011) propose that there are three types of technology users: enthusiastic, balanced and trade-off. While the enthusiastic user is positive about smartphone use, embraces expectations, uses the phone frequently and does not implement limits on smartphone usage, the balanced user sets clear limits on smartphone use (for example

turning it off in the evening). Trade-offs on the other hand feel significant personal costs when using their smartphone and want to control their usage but struggle to implement limits and boundaries (Matusik & Mickel, 2011). These differences can be explained by the varying amount of pressure that comes from others' expectations and the different levels of specificity of the sources where the pressure is coming from. While enthusiastic and trade-off users have more sources (people) of pressure and less specific sources (such as society), balanced users have fewer sources of pressure and more specific sources (such as co-workers or supervisors). This means that they can implement limits more easily because it is easier to predict and manage expectations from specific sources. It is important to note that the self is also a source of pressure, however this idea requires further investigation (Matusik & Mickel, 2011).

In their longitudinal study of professional knowledge workers with Blackberry devices, Duxbury and colleagues (2014) identify three groups of smartphone usage that workers implement in order to manage the boundary between work and family: segmentors, integrators and struggling segmentors. These types of users are similar to those proposed by Matusik and Mickel (2011). The segmentors only use their smartphones during working hours and set strict boundaries on their use, while never using their devices for personal reasons, such as keeping in touch with family (Duxbury et al., 2014). The integrators are similar to Matusik and Mickel's (2011) 'enthusiastic' users. This group of users combines their work and family roles, and uses their devices everywhere and at most hours of the day (Duxbury et al., 2014). Integrators believe that they are able to manage the work-family boundary through their self-discipline and have no expectation of receiving help to manage their work-family boundaries from their organisations. Finally, the struggling segmentors are similar to to Matusik and Mickel's (2011) 'trade-offs', and seem unable to control the boundaries between work and personal life and fail to resist organisational pressure to be continuously connected (Duxbury et al., 2014).

Duxbury and colleagues' (2014) study also show that the three types of users stay the same from pre-adoption to seven months later, suggesting that the pre-adoption strategies influenced the success of their post-adoption boundary techniques. Pre-adoption, both integrators and struggling segmentors worked long hours and brought

work home. However, these two groups have different views of technology and therefore different approaches to boundary management. While integrators viewed technology adoption positively, used devices in ways that minimised work-family conflict, and focused on self-discipline to manage the boundaries, struggling segmentors lacked this discipline and prioritised work demands over family demands (Duxbury et al., 2014). Struggling segmentors were also the only group out of the three who focused on and blamed external (organisational) pressures to be available for work 24/7 on their inability to manage work-family boundaries. Finally, segmentors deliberately placed strict boundaries prior to Blackberry adoption and continue to use this strategy to stop the increasing workload from become unmanageable (Duxbury et al., 2014). These three types of users identified by Duxbury and colleagues (2014) have been linked to the user types identified by Geiger and colleagues (2016) in their study of professional knowledge workers.

Geiger and colleagues (2016) looked at how IT professionals deal with constant connectivity and their study revealed four types of users with different patterns of use. All four types are responsive and available outside working hours. The four types of users include: the pragmatist (characterised by constant responsiveness and having high autonomy), the bricoleur (characterised by variable responsiveness and having high autonomy), the maniac (characterised by variable but mostly or sometimes extremely high responsiveness, being always on and having high autonomy) and the passenger (characterised by constant responsiveness, having low autonomy, and perceiving consistent external pressure to be available). The study did not reveal any hypo-connectivity or resistance from any of the four types (Geiger et al, 2016). These identified typologies, including typologies proposed by Matusik and Mickel (2011) and Duxbury and colleagues (2014), suggest that while there are a number of types of users and connectivity strategies and behaviours, agency experiences are viewed as a duality and that people either have agency or they do not. The studies also suggest that knowledge workers display the same connectivity behaviours across time, as boundary management strategies stayed the same from pre-adoption in Duxbury and colleagues' (2014) study. These findings suggest that agency experience stays the same and does not change over time. However, as organisations become more connected,

and the changes within the temporal-spatial and societal elements becomes more influential in connectivity behaviours, agency may not continue to be static. This means that as technology changes, it is important to consider any fluidity or shifts that may occur regarding agency experiences across different 'types' of users and across different temporal and social contexts.

Due to more workplaces offering flexible and mobile work it is becoming more vital to stay continuously connected to work (Symon & Pritchard, 2015). A study by Symon and Pritchard (2015) investigates how workers manage their connectivity as part of their identity management (Symon & Pritchard, 2015). The authors focused on engineering company workers who used connectivity practices to perform certain identities which were categorised under three themes: being involved and committed, being contactable and responsive, and being in demand and authoritative (Symon & Pritchard, 2015). Workers tend to construct identities that are favourable and avoid those that are unfavourable. Worker identities are constructed, maintained, resisted and challenged over time and depending on context. Constructed identities are never fully under one's control as they are socially negotiated (Symon & Pritchard, 2015). This is also true for technology use in identity construction. Technology use and connective behaviours are also negotiated and influenced by social factors and individuals do not fully determine their technology use, instead this is negotiated through sociomaterial practices (Symon & Pritchard, 2015). Symon and Pritchard (2015) argue that it is not connective states but different agencies (individual, material and social) that produce connectivity. These sociomaterial configurations also include power relations that are also re-performed through identity performances. Due to power relations, the responsive worker is valued while the disconnected one is socially excluded (Symon & Pritchard, 2015).

Gorski (2017) conducted a phenomenological study on how, when and why mid-level and senior managers use their smartphones. The study found that managers do not feel guilt about sending emails to workers after hours because emails are perceived as something that does not require immediate attention. However, managers still expect a fast response from their subordinates in Gorski's (2017) study. While workers feel guilty if they do not look at and respond to emails straight away,

most perceive emails as not ‘real’ work and as an interruption to ‘actual’ work during office hours. Responding to emails after hours enables them to remove this distraction during contracted or assigned work hours. While some workers laugh at their overuse of technology, they still want better and newer devices, as these devices make workers feel more productive and efficient (Gorski, 2017), suggesting that they also feel more agentic.

Contrary to the belief that employees suffer more from lack of agency, managers can experience even less personal agency regarding connectivity due to the concertive control and expectations from peers and subordinates (Mazmanian et al., 2013), and organisationally provided smartphones may be perceived as a signal that managers should be constantly (technologically) available to employees (Obushenkova et al., 2018). This creates a cycle because when managers display near-constant connectivity it suggests that behaviours such as responding after hours is normal and expected, creating pressure for others to comply and thus creating a ‘norm’. This norm is reinforced if there are positive outcomes such as promotion and also if the technological devices are provided by organisation (Derks et al., 2015).

Consideration of connectivity agency must also take into account those who perceive themselves as ‘non-users’, and although there is little research on smartphone non-users, research attention is increasingly considering this specific resistant group (Aversano, 2007). Non-use of smartphones is seen as ‘pushback’ wherein some people question usage and new behaviours associated with smartphone connectivity (Morrison & Gomez, 2014). Pushback may occur for a number of reasons, including wanting downtime, preferring more face-to-face interactions and wanting to retain a sense of privacy (Gomez, Foot, Young, Paquet-Kinsley & Morrison, 2015). There is a common misconception that people who do not use technology do so because they lack access to it, or they do not have the right capabilities or knowledge on how to use it (also known as a digital divide). Other scholars argue that workers do not use technology when it has not been successfully implemented or there is resistance to change (Koskinen, 2019). However, technology non-use is much more complex and not all non-users do so because of digital divide or technophobia. Some people simply choose not to use ICT or only use some of its functions, such as texting

(Koskinen, 2019). Non-users are less influenced or pressured by connectivity norms and do not want to be constantly available through technological connection (Aversano, 2007). However, most non-users believe that their non-use cannot endure long term and feel that emerging norms will eventually influence their participation. Using technology is considered as the norm while non-use is considered to be an abnormal behaviour (Koskinen, 2019), thus non-users see their resistance as only temporary (Ribak & Rosentahl, 2015).

Non-use of smartphones is considered to be more difficult compared to non-use of other technologies (for example Social Networking Sites or email) because phones are frequently carried and used for a number of different services such as information seeking and navigation (Lee et al., 2014). Because of this, people usually stop using their device temporarily rather than not use it at all. Although past studies tend to view users and non-users as a binary, usage (and non-usage) can vary and take on many forms so it should be viewed as a spectrum of behaviour (Baumer, Ames, Burrell, Brubaker & Dourish, 2015). For instance, people can move between use and non-use of technology throughout their lifetime (Selwyn, 2003). Non-users are not all the same, but they are characterized by having unstable and inconsistent use (Lenhart & Horrigan, 2003; Park, Middleton, Allen, Freeman, Rickard, Nansen, et al., 2013). Non-use behaviours include boundary management, habit change and 'lurking' (seeing messages or emails but not responding to or engaging with them) (Gomez et al., 2015). Unavailability can also be achieved by muting or shutting down the phone or leaving it at home (Salovaara et al., 2011). Many organisations and some researchers view non-use as a problem behaviour that should be fixed (Selwyn, 2003), however it could instead be seen as exercising free will (or agentic experience) and this aspect of technological behaviour requires further academic research.

Looking at outcomes of connectivity needs to consider the role of human agency, as there has been no empirical evidence to suggest that people have complete lack of agency over technological devices (Russo et al., 2019). Most technological interruptions are believed to be initiated by employees themselves through compulsive checking of devices for new messages and emails. When people disconnect it is their agentic decision to stop or break the constant connectivity or take a break

from devices (Russo et al., 2019). These disconnection decisions can either be planned in advance (switching off at specific hours) or unplanned (not answering a call to avoid interrupting task at hand). In Russo and colleagues' (2019) study, participants regulated their connectivity in order to achieve promotions or gains at work and to prevent losses within their work and non-work domains. Russo and colleagues (2019) found that workers have four motivations for disconnection: to improve their performance by preventing interruptions, to establish a personal digital philosophy, to minimise anti-social behaviours and to shield priorities in life (Russo et al., 2019). These behaviours suggest that workers experience agency to disconnect and control their connectivity to work, and this is mostly due to their own intrapersonal characteristics. However, some intrapersonal factors, when combined with specific factors within the social and temporal contexts, can create experiences that are characterised by a lack of connectivity agency.

Lack of agency over connectivity

Boudreau and Robey (2005) investigate human agency in the use of organisational technologies. They find that although technologies are products of human action they also act as constraints on human agency (Boudreau & Robey, 2005). People adopt behaviours of others in the social groups, such as co-workers (Derks et al, 2015). This means technology behaviour and use is strongly influenced by organisational culture and co-worker behaviour (Derks et al, 2015). Through organisational provision, the smartphone becomes a major component in the reconfiguration of employment relations and furthers work intensification and development of networks of mobile control (Brivot & Gendron, 2011). As employees interact with the technological devices such as smartphones, the social and the material aspects of this interaction influence each other to create new ways of working and organizing (Leonardi & Barley, 2008). However, it is not just employees who are being influenced by and controlled through mobile technologies; their managers' behaviours and movement are also under surveillance (Obushenkova et al., 2018).

While technologies are more likely to reinforce hierarchical power (Doolin, 1998) suggesting that employees would feel less agentic compared to workers in more senior

positions, managers feel the same pressure to stay connected (Barker, 1993). This might happen due to concertive control through peer-surveillance. The perceived values of connectivity in the workplace become translated into norms or rules that are reinforced by workers, their peers, and managers, creating the pressure to conform (Barker, 1993). Due to mobile ICTs, organisational control is no longer confined to organisational boundaries but extends into open social spaces and creates instant and continuous surveillance of individuals (Martinez, 2011). Employees are constantly connected and are subject to multiple controls regardless of where they are in the social landscape – whether they are at work or at home (Martinez, 2011). This control is also extending to managers who are now becoming targets of scrutiny of their colleagues and even subordinate employees. Smartphone surveillance and peer pressure to stay connected to work mean that there is no longer a central actor in command (Brivot & Gendron, 2011) and managers become both actors and targets of mobile control.

Workers feel like they have to live with constant connectivity and become personally responsible for managing this without assistance or support from their organisation (Mazmanian & Erickson, 2014). There are smartphone and tablet applications and technologies created to help individuals manage the information flow and any interruptions, and to encourage a balance between work and home. However, these interventions do not address the underlying economic and organisational factors that exacerbate temporal-spatial work issues such as the total availability problem. Mazmanian and Erickson (2014) argue that due to these underlying structures, individual workers have limited ability or say in their levels of availability, so there needs to be collective or organisational strategies to enable individual workers to take time off or not be totally available (Mazmanian & Erickson, 2014).

However, Mazmanian (2013) challenges the assumption that it is impossible to avoid constant connectivity, even when individuals use mobile technologies. She argues that different people who use the same technologies can still have different levels of connectivity and responsiveness and she attributes this to the norms and expectations that exist in organisational contexts (Mazmanian, 2013). However, employees within the same contexts or groups can still have different levels of

connectivity and different patterns of technology use (Mazmanian, 2013) suggesting a degree of personal agency. Such agentic factors (a personal preference for connectivity for example) influence how an employee connects and conducts their work.

When norms such as (near) constant connectivity become established, work and non-work boundaries become blurred creating greater ambiguity and seemingly less control for employees' over their private lives. While some workers choose near-constant connectivity, most workers moderate their connectivity (Kolb et al., 2012) and those who create clear boundaries are more likely to feel in control of their connectivity to work (Cousins & Robey 2015). Feeling in control gives employees agency experiences in regard to technological connection, and this can be increased or decreased for specific tasks which allows employees to manage their 'connective flow' (Dery et al., 2014, p. 560) Those in senior positions believe that they have connective autonomy (Wajcman & Rose, 2011), and this is perceived as 'competent professional' behaviour (Mazmanian, Orlikowski & Yates, 2013).

By assuming that everyone has total agency to act how they want, both of the discourses found in Harmon and Mazmanian's (2013) study (the idealised discourses of connecting and disconnecting) promote unrealistic expectations. However, agency is complex, more distributed experience, which is greatly influenced by other people and institutions. This is particularly evident for individuals in more senior positions (such as managers) where individuals perceive even less agency over their smartphone use as they feel pressure from subordinates to remain connected and thus cannot just 'disconnect' (Harmon & Mazmanian, 2013). People shift between various states of connectivity according to the pressures from the two discourses to connect or disconnect (Harmon & Mazmanian, 2013).

Modern society can be seen through Foucault's concept of panopticon (1979). As the visibility of all aspects of life increases through social media and other technologies, individuals become more controlled through the 'invisible gaze' (Foucault, 1979), and greater visibility enables organisations to track (surveillance) workers throughout their lives (Leclercq-Vandelannoitte, Isaac & Kalika, 2014; Martin, 2013). Technology can record and monitor what individuals do and their work

activities. However, this surveillance is often unnoticed or invisible, creating a deep sense of self-discipline in employees (Leclercq-Vandelannoitte et al., 2014). As people do not know exactly when they are watched, surveillance becomes internalised and leads to self-discipline due to expectations that bad behaviour is visible and will be punished (Wang, 2007). These factors can result in self-restraint behaviours when people attempt to conform with the norms and expectations of the perceived watchers (Martin, 2013). Towers and colleagues (2006) found that such self-surveillance behaviours by workers are a major cause of work being done outside of assigned work hours. This suggests that surveillance, and even the perception of being watched can result in reduced agency over connectivity to work.

Technology can enable surveillance as a continuous gaze on employees creates a 'portable panopticon' (Leclercq-Vandelannoitte et al, 2014), which means that worker privacy is reduced. As people carry mobile devices everywhere they become voluntary participants in their own surveillance. Technologies also shift hierarchical control to distributed control, meaning that control no longer only resides with top managers (Leclercq-Vandelannoitte et al, 2014). While technology enables greater surveillance of workers at the employee level, it also creates a 'reverse panopticon', where everyone is a guard and a prisoner at the same time, regardless of work rank. At the same time these technological devices are taken for granted, meaning workers usually do not see them as salient surveillance mechanisms (Wang, 2007), and this suggests that some workers might not realise that their autonomy and agency experiences are linked to these devices.

Cavazotte and colleagues (2014) investigate how employees use company provided smartphones. Although these technologies are meant to reduce time spent working, the study found that they actually create longer working hours. Their findings suggest that people intensify their commitment to work and feel unable to disconnect. However, they perceive the increased usage as a personal choice, rather than the result of external pressure. At the same time, they find it difficult to explain why they intensify usage. This means that while people believe that they have more freedom in their work, they may actually have limited autonomy due to the company provided technology and the resulting work commitment intensification (Cavazotte et al., 2014).

This suggests that organisational cultures can have 'unrealistic' expectations about overwork and this ideology can shape worker perceptions. Cavazotte and colleagues' (2014) participants were highly reflexive about the processes of work intensification and their own role in reinforcing this work intensification cycle, but perceived it as a 'personal choice', suggesting that they believed that their constant connectivity was under their control. They also engaged in detachment and trivialisation techniques to justify intense habits such as addictive behaviours and highlighted a perceived distinction between real and not 'real' work (checking email after-hours was seen as 'not real' work). Despite these techniques, Cavazotte and colleagues (2014) concluded that these workers were powerless and addicted to continuous connectivity to work (Cavazotte et al, 2014). This implies that they feel a lack of agency, created by availability expectations, and are unable to stop their hyper-connectivity behaviours. Since the sense of control is linked to positive cognitive outcomes such as positive affect and satisfaction, the ability to control one's own connectivity to work can also influence one's well-being.

Worker connectivity and well-being

Conceptualising worker well-being

Employee well-being is important for communities as well as organisations, because work is a significant part of employee life and can have significant impacts on physical and mental health (Yadav, Johri & Bhattacharjee, 2014). Recently, organisations have shown a growing interest in creating and maintaining employee well-being, with issues such as burnout becoming a central concern for organisations (Yadav et al., 2014). Earlier this year, burnout has been added to the World Health Organisation's list of chronic diseases under 'occupational phenomena' (World Health Organisation, 2019). Page and Vella-Brodrick (2009) state that employee well-being consists of subjective well-being, workplace well-being and psychological well-being. This thesis will focus on subjective well-being as it is becoming an increasingly important area of organisational research and is directly influenced by agency. The three components of subjective well-being (positive affect, negative affect and life satisfaction) can move in different

directions at different times (Page & Vella-Brodrick, 2009), suggesting that well-being can change quickly.

Components of subjective well-being include: emotional responses, domain satisfaction and global judgements of life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1999). Each of these need to be understood in their own right yet the components often correlate substantially. This means that subjective well-being is a general area of scientific interest rather than a single specific construct (Diener et al., 1999). Moods and emotions go together and are called affect, with positive and negative affect being two independent factors and therefore needing to be measured separately as they can occur simultaneously (Diener et al., 1999).

There are a number of types of well-being that workers can experience, with subjective well-being considered to be one of the most important measures (Diener et al., 1999). Subjective well-being refers to presence of positive experiences and absence of negative experiences (Yadav et al., 2014). This also includes general life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1999). A number of factors influence employee well-being including organisational support, which includes belonging to an organisation or a collective, having positive work experiences, and perceiving support given by the organisation. Another factor is the work-family culture or the ability to balance work and family roles, which includes having autonomy and flexibility to structure work-family aspects or roles in order to decrease or avoid role conflict. Workaholism is another factor that influences employee well-being. This is negative for well-being because it can often create work intensification and encourage compulsive work behaviours, which are usually done at the expense of other roles (Yadav et al., 2014).

A factor that increases worker well-being is passion for their work. When a worker experiences harmonious passion s/he wants to engage in an activity they find important but the activity is still under person's control and is in harmony with other aspects of life, preventing conflict (Yadav et al., 2014). When a worker experiences obsessive passion, however, this does not result in increased well-being because it results in engagement in an activity that is not under the worker's control. Passion for

work is linked to experiences of intense positive feelings and engagement (Yadav et al., 2014), suggesting that it is one of the key factors for employee subjective well-being.

Subjective well-being is how individuals evaluate their life according to life satisfaction and experiences of positive and negative emotions or affect (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011). Subjective well-being is high when an individual is satisfied with life and experiences frequent positive emotions (such as comfort and joy) and infrequent negative emotions (such as anger or sadness) (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011). Conversely, negative emotions are more likely to lead to negative outcomes, such as work-life conflict (Butts et al., 2015). Emotions are experienced through two neurophysiological systems: the pleasure-displeasure continuum and the arousal or activation system. Emotions are a combination of these two systems. For example a positive emotion such as being content is pleasurable but has a low level of activation, meaning that it is not an intense emotion. The degree of arousal or activation can vary greatly between different positive or negative emotions (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011). It is important to note that emotions are not isolated or discrete and can therefore be reported as ambiguous or overlapping. Individuals who experience positive emotions at work are more likely to feel happy, engaged or satisfied, while those with negative emotions are more likely to experience workaholism or/and burnout.

Workaholics have a strong internal drive to work excessively hard and have a compulsion to work beyond expected organisational requirements and are linked to lower subjective well-being and burnout (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011). Burnout is a major well-being issue in organisations and can lead to increased turnover, absenteeism, reduced organisational commitment and reduced performance, creating further issues for organisations and employees (Yadav et al., 2014). Burnout can be divided into two types: emotional exhaustion (extreme chronic fatigue due to ongoing work demands) and cynicism (distanced or cynical attitude towards work or colleagues) (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011). When work hours become longer and workers experience work intensification, they are likely to have reduced well-being (Yadav et al., 2014). Working extra hours or after hours also creates work-non-work conflict as individuals neglect their non-work roles. High well-being on the other hand creates job satisfaction, enhanced performance, higher commitment and lower

turnover (Yadav et al., 2014), suggesting that positive subjective well-being of workers is important for organisations (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011). However, even positive subjective well-being can turn bad, and engaged workers can experience greater work-family conflict if they extend their resources into extra-role work behaviours, if they are too engaged they can become addicted and this will remove opportunities for recovery during off-work hours (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011).

Increased work hours, workaholism and burnout are exacerbated by technology and connectivity, meaning that subjective well-being is also influenced by how connected people are to their work. Digital well-being is becoming more important for organisations and communities. Due to this, there has been a steady increase in the creation of software and device applications that support well-being and reduce negative effects from technology overuse, though so far these developments have produced limited benefits (Monge Roffarello & De Russis, 2019). While technology-enabled connectivity increases flexibility and autonomy, suggesting that it enhances well-being, at the same time, ICT devices create longer work hours (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019), increase stress (Lee et al., 2014) and lower well-being (Russo et al., 2019). The implications of connectivity on worker subjective well-being are discussed in more depth in the next two sections.

Connectivity that enhances

Digital devices such as smartphones can enhance and fulfil information, social, coordination and communication needs (Kneidinger-Müller, 2019). A fulfilling social life and social support from friends and family is correlated to subjective well-being, and those who engage in high amounts of social activity tend to be the happiest (Diener & Seligman, 2002). This also extends to individuals self-classified as introverts (Fleeson, Malanos & Achille, 2002). The ability to participate in social aspects of life has intrinsic value in a person's quality of life, especially because it increases feelings of agency and empowerment (Andrade & Doolin, 2016). When a person can maintain their relationships, they are more likely to feel psychological comfort and emotional support, which reduces emotional stress (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2016). These

findings suggest that social participation is strongly linked to life satisfaction and that close social connections are linked to enhanced subjective well-being.

While smartphone usage and behaviours can vary greatly, some smartphone behaviours are perceived to be either positive or negative. Higher usage of smartphones can enable the maintenance of social connections (Diaz, Chiaburu, Zimmerman, & Boswell, 2011), which is usually perceived as pro-social behaviour. The perceived improvements in communication can occur due to a number of reasons. Mobile ICT devices allow individuals to stay connected to each other and to communicate and collaborate regardless of where they are. This suggests that these technologies facilitate more effective communication and collaboration not bound by location or time (Diaz et al., 2011; Richardson & Benbunan-Fich, 2011). This means that individuals who use these devices can perceive improved communication and collaboration because of this continuous connection, making communicating at a distance easier and speeding up communication.

Through technology and connectivity, people can experience various communication elements, emotional responses and work-non-work conflict (Butts et al., 2015). This happens because every communication experience has its own meaning, connotations and interpretations. Depending on the type of work event and the affective tone used during electronic communication, workers can experience anger or happiness. However, happiness is only experienced when the communication goal is achieved and positive appraisal is received (Butts et al., 2015). This study by Butts and colleagues (2015) is one of few studies to show positive outcomes of technology-mediated communication during off-work time. Despite the scarcity of such study findings, it shows that connectivity to work can create positive outcomes for worker subjective well-being.

As work can become an important part of a person's identity (Porter & Kakabadse, 2006; Towers et al., 2006), ICT and connectivity can help to maintain and support a person's ability to complete work tasks outside of the assigned working hours and enable a continuous connection to work. For people who want to remain connected to work, or 'work extenders', this connectivity results in increased feelings of control over

where and when they can work (Tower et al., 2006). Research shows that work extenders feel good about being constantly available for work demands (Towers et al., 2006), suggesting increased subjective well-being.

Vincent (2011) has conducted a number of studies on emotional attachment to smartphones. This refers to the idea that when mobile ICT devices are incorporated into daily routine, they can become a constant companion in an individual's emotional life (Turkle, 2007; Wehmeyer, 2008). This is especially true for devices that are constantly present during important life events (Beer, 2012). Vincent (2011) found that although people do not tend to think of their smartphones in emotional terms and tend to deny being emotionally attached to their phones, they still feel a range of emotions when discussing their experiences and their smartphone in general (such as feeling panic when leaving their phone at home). Individuals have a need to be socially connected and this need can be enabled by smartphones because individuals can be constantly connected through the device (Vincent, 2005). This is referred to as 'emotional tethering', where people are constantly connected to their social networks and come to depend on the phone to maintain these emotional connections so much that they cannot imagine being without a phone (Vincent, 2005). Vincent (2015) suggests that smartphone usage creates electronic emotions and memories which can be evoked when interacting with or even just thinking about the smartphone.

When employees have smartphones, there is a general expectation for their productivity to increase (Tremblay, Paquet, & Najem, 2006). Past studies and theories link mobile ICT and telework to efficiency and productivity (Duxbury & Smart, 2011; Towers et al., 2005). This might happen because individuals can choose what time of the day they work and schedule their work according to personal peak performance times rather than working during traditional hours which might not be during personal performance peak time (Tremblay et al., 2006). Having a smartphone also enables individuals to stay on top of work demands and carry out work tasks regardless of time or location because mobile ICTs can maintain a continuous connection to work and information (Diaz et al., 2011). Other scholars argue that due to these technologies, people can now work flexibly enabling work to occur at the best times for the person in question (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019). For workers with children, the flexibility

offered through connectivity is particularly important because having this technology means that they can stay at home to look after their children and work from home (Martin, 2018). Due to mobile technologies enabling these multidimensional practices of time (Wajcman, 2008), many individuals perceive increased flexibility and improved well-being. These positive effects were also found by Brauner, Wöhrmann, Frank and Michel (2019) where workers with specific flexible working hours and time schedules seem to have the highest subjective well-being and work-life balance. However, this is only the case when workers have strong control over their working hours (Brauner et al., 2019). Despite these debates and implications, however, there is little empirical research on how technologies influence workers' organisation of their tasks, and most of these studies focus on managers or professionals (Mazmanian et al., 2013; Mullan & Wajcman, 2019).

There are two contrasting perspectives on the consequences of continuous connection to work. This is known as the 'empowerment/enslavement' paradox (Schlachter et al., 2017). The 'empowerment' part comes through the increased flexibility and control, which enables work-life balance, leading to increased satisfaction and well-being and reduced conflict. The 'enslavement' refers to the increasing work intensification and reduced worker control (discussed in more depth in the next section) Studies showed increased well-being when individuals feel like they can actively control their ICT use and manage their time and work-life boundaries (Mazmanian, 2013; Middleton 2007). Workers often rationalise their ICT use as useful and necessary while downplaying negative effects or stating that they are a good trade-off for autonomy and flexibility (Schlachter et al., 2017). This suggests that workers perceive technology-enabled connectivity as a positive addition to their work and one that enables greater well-being. However, some workers can experience connectivity that creates highly negative outcomes for their subjective well-being.

Connectivity that erodes

The continuity of electronic connection to work activities can create problems for individual work-life balance (WLB) as the ability to disconnect or have 'time off' work may be compromised (Dery et al., 2014). Dery and colleagues' (2014) longitudinal

study of workers in a global financial company shows how smartphone usage changes over time and that disconnecting from work has become seemingly impossible and often undesirable for the majority of workers. Barley and colleagues' (2011) study focuses on email ubiquity resulting in stress and feeling overloaded due to social norms and perceived expectations to handle large loads of emails. These expectations and the resultant anxiety about losing control or falling behind means that many workers choose to extend their working hours (Barley et al., 2011), and by doing so and engaging in continuous connectivity, create negative outcomes for their subjective well-being.

Constant connectivity behaviours are especially prevalent in individuals who receive their smartphones from the employing organisation (Richardson & Benbunan-Fich, 2011). However, this behaviour (which can increase the perception of being constantly connected) also depends on personal factors; even if all employees receive company phones, some will use and check them more often. This suggests that constant connectivity behaviours can depend on personal factors such as gender, age, tenure, user-device attachment and type of job. This suggests that individuals with certain personal factors are more vulnerable to negative effects of smartphone-induced constant connectivity. However, this does not mean that when trying to address this problem only certain demographic groups should be considered, because the problem can still remain for others. For example, compared to males, females tend to be more effective at work-life boundary management. This can create expectations that they will be able to manage their work and non-work responsibilities without any interventions (Crowe & Middleton, 2012). If this assumption becomes a social norm it could lead to the intensification of work and domestic responsibilities for females which will increase the potential for stress and burnout. These findings mean that receiving and using company smartphones can create the expectation to remain connected and uphold the perception of being constantly connected, and this makes it difficult for individuals to disconnect from work (Fenner & Renn, 2009). This can create a number of negative productivity and health related consequences and should therefore be addressed by workplaces that provide mobile ICT to their employees and managers.

Extensive use of smartphones reinforces constant connection and increased availability expectations without individually giving a socially acceptable way to disconnect (Mazmanian et al., 2005). This can also lead to 'absent presence' problems. This refers to the idea that while individuals can maintain a connection and stay engaged through their smartphone, they become disengaged with their immediate surroundings or issues. This absent presence, the use of dead-time and multitasking can lead to family and colleague resentment, as well as making it difficult to disengage from work. Being constantly connected is also not optimal for everyone. Kolb and colleagues (2012) and Mazmanian and colleagues (2005) show that individuals can have different connectivity needs and require different levels of connectivity.

The 'enslavement' half of the 'empowerment/enslavement' paradox decreases worker control and flexibility by tethering workers to their organisations, creating work intensification, blurring work-life boundaries, reducing recovery times and reducing subjective well-being (Schlachter et al., 2017). The study by Schlachter and colleagues (2017) showed that voluntary use of connecting technology after assigned work hours (predominantly found among knowledge workers) can create issues for subjective well-being by reducing recovery time (from work activities) and reducing the ability to psychologically detach (the ability to switch off mentally and not think about work after hours). The inability to detach psychologically has been found to create work-life conflict and reduce subjective well-being. Voluntary use is also associated with reduced well-being, higher amount of stress and increased rate of absenteeism (Schlachter et al., 2017). These findings suggest that continuous connectivity can produce detrimental outcomes for workers' affect and satisfaction with work and non-work life domains.

Regardless of whether it is actual or perceived constant connectivity, it can still have serious implications for both employees and their managers. Past studies have shown that the feelings of being constantly connected to work can result in a number of health and performance related problems. For example, Richardson and Benbunan-Fich (2011) discuss how constant connectivity can result in technostress which is inversely related to productivity. This means that the constant connection created by the smartphone, which is usually given to increase productivity, can produce

contradictory results because it has the potential to create stress and burnout, which lead to reduced performance (Richardson & Benbunan-Fich, 2011). Productivity can also be reduced because constant connectivity creates the potential for constant interruptions which reduce concentration on the task at hand (Grauers & Wall, 2012). Constant connectivity can also be detrimental to health because it can cause insomnia, stress and even depression (Grauers & Wall, 2012). This is because expectations to be constantly connected are considered to be stressful, and if an individual does not answer calls or texts, they can also feel guilt. However, turning the smartphone off does not alleviate these problems because then the individual may feel stress about potentially missing out on important information (Grauers & Wall, 2012).

While mobile technology enables efficient collaboration and communication that can help control work demands, at the same time it can become an 'electronic leash' leaving no means to escape from work (Diaz et al., 2011). Despite these findings suggesting that employees have little control over their connectivity, Mazmanian, Orlikowski and Yates (2013) conducted a subsequent study showing that knowledge professionals regularly exercise autonomy while using mobile email devices. They argue that workers can consciously maintain a constant connection to their work, giving them greater flexibility and ability to complete work, resulting in an increased sense of control (Mazmanian et al., 2013). However, this creates the 'autonomy paradox' where higher levels of autonomy in choosing when and where to work can lead to increased company expectations and norms to work longer hours (Mazmanian et al., 2013). Even when there is no clear expectation to always be available, employees still choose to check their smartphones regularly after work hours and during the weekend (Mazmanian et al., 2006).

When workers cannot psychologically detach after hours and are preoccupied with work issues, their recovery is hindered (Sonnentag, Arbeus, Mahn, & Fritz, 2014). Continuous use of smartphones and other devices can also lead to psychological dependency and addictive behaviours (Russo et al., 2019). Work can become addictive and technology use can be instrumental in driving addictive behaviours (Porter & Kakabadse, 2006). Technology and work can therefore create self-reinforcing addictive tendencies. Behavioural addiction involves engaging in behaviours that bring relief,

stimulation or comfort, but also encourages compulsive use, creating harm to self or others. Individual harm from addictive behaviour often manifests as deteriorated health, while societal harm involves violence towards or neglect of others (Porter & Kakabadse, 2006). Because organisations support and reward workaholism and encouraging long working hours creates a culture of workaholism, anyone not displaying that behaviour may become ostracised and disadvantaged (Porter & Kakabadse, 2006). Connectivity and technology can create addiction by enabling flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997), that is, the state of mind where a person is fully engaged in a task that is not too hard (anxiety inducing) nor too easy (boredom inducing) and all other tasks don't matter (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). ICT can satisfy all of that criteria as it enables control and engagement in tasks at the appropriate level of skill, while also providing instant feedback – encouraging continued use (Porter & Kakabadse, 2006). When someone is addicted to technology or connectivity, further problems can arise because addiction to one entity usually encourages addiction to others, such as gambling, alcohol and other substances (Porter & Kakabadse, 2006). This means that for some people, connectivity can significantly erode subjective well-being.

Continuous connectivity has also been found to create multiple risks such as traffic issues caused by using technology while driving, disrupting sleeping patterns, reducing the quality of interpersonal interactions, reducing performance and decreasing life satisfaction (Kneidinger-Müller, 2019). Because it enables and encourages compulsive checking behaviours and addiction, it can also lead to information overload and distress (also known as technostress). Kneidinger-Müller's (2019) study found that being out of reach or practicing mobile unavailability created positive emotions for some people. This was particularly salient in certain situations such as during home time, where people viewed mobile unavailability positively (Kneidinger-Müller, 2019). This suggests that for most workers in connected organisations, the ability to be unavailable or to disconnect from work is an important element for achieving subjective well-being.

Connecting the concepts

The ‘new age’ in workplace connectivity, characterised by increased flexible and mobile work offered through organisationally provided technologies and availability of non-traditional work arrangements (Matusik & Mickel, 2011), means that work is no longer limited to specific hours in specific locations. As technologies enable the extension of work in both temporal and spatial dimensions (Towers et al., 2006) and blur or remove the boundaries between work and non-work life (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019), organisations can be said to become ‘connected’. Recent research suggests that when employees in connected organisations have access to communication technologies or they are provided with mobile ICT devices, this increases expectations that they will remain connected with their organisation via the provided technology (Richardson & Benbunan-Fich, 2011). Portable devices such as smartphones, and the resulting near-constant connectivity to work, change expectations about worker responsiveness and connectedness (Obushenkova et al., 2018). Over a short period of time, these expectations become social norms, and come to be a major influence in worker connectivity and technological behaviours and experiences (Gimpel et al., 2014).

Schlachter and colleagues (2017) also argue that the social-normative organisational context is a significant factor in worker connectivity during non-work hours, especially if there is perceived organisational pressure to be constantly connected and available for work. Workers also tend to mimic or adopt behaviours of their co-workers (Derks et al., 2015), suggesting they can adopt others’ connectivity behaviours. These findings suggest that the way workers use communication technology is influenced by organisational culture (Derks et al., 2015), as well as being influenced by the changes within temporal contexts. As technologies provided by connected organisations erode the traditional temporal-spatial boundaries, it becomes up to individual workers to regulate these boundaries (Geser, 2006). This means that the different aspects of social, temporal and spatial contexts that workers find themselves in can influence a person’s experience of agency in regard to their own connectivity to work.

Agentic experiences are both temporal and relational in nature (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998), meaning that changes to these elements can create changes in agency. Despite the significant influence of external factors (temporal and social contexts), literature suggests that agency is mostly an intrapersonal experience, depending on the individual's sense of intentionality and self-efficacy (Bandura, 2001; 2006), and that it is dual, in that people either experience agency or a lack of it (Hewson, 2010). Past studies and literature tend to treat agency as static (Hobson, Fahlen & Takacs, 2014; Kolb et al, 2012; Mazmanian, 2013): as something that does not change. However, it seems that people can experience varying levels of agency and transition between higher levels and lower levels of agency. This suggests that agency experiences may be more fluid than current theories suggest, and this idea needs further investigation.

While some workers will experience a lack of agency and therefore conform to expectations to stay connected to their organisation via technology, if they do not share the attitudes and expectations for continuous connection, they can experience feelings of imprisonment and entrapment (Hall & Baym, 2012). This could then lead to feelings of resentment towards those who are (not necessarily intentionally) enforcing this expectation (Hall & Baym, 2012). Past studies show that negative relationships and social outcomes at work can create significant health, career and performance problems (Madden, Mathias, & Madden, 2015), suggesting that there is a relationship between agency and well-being outcomes for workers. This means that it is important to consider the processes that influence worker agency experiences in increasingly connected organisations.

Studies show that personal control (or agency) and social support are key factors in individual well-being in adulthood and these two constructs are tightly linked (Smith, Kohn, Savage-Stevens, Finch, Ingate & Lim, 2000). Greater personal control is linked to better emotional health and well-being; while social support is linked to positive mental health outcomes and lower distress. Smith and colleagues (2000) also find that emotionally supportive relationships increase feelings and experiences of interpersonal agency and personal control. These findings suggest that personal agency and subjective well-being are related to and influence one another. While technology enabled connectivity increases flexibility and autonomy, suggesting that it

enhances agency experiences and subjective well-being, at the same time connectivity can create longer work hours and increase workaholism and burnout (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019), which decreases perceptions of agency experience and lowers subjective well-being (Russo et al., 2019).

These studies show that different experiences of agency and connectivity can create various emotions, moods and satisfaction levels, suggesting they have a direct impact on subjective well-being. The three components of subjective well-being (positive affect, negative affect and life satisfaction) can also move in different directions at different times (Page & Vella-Brodrick, 2009), suggesting that subjective well-being can change quickly. During the literature search I have found evidence that agency, connectivity and subjective well-being are related and may influence one another. To help explain this interconnection, I considered a number of theories such as the Actor Network Theory, the Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour and Role Theory. However, these theories only focused on singular aspects of my research question, such as the relational networks between people and devices, or technological behaviours. Furthermore, they did not consider outcomes such as subjective well-being. The literature review also identified that the concepts of agency, connectivity and subjective well-being have not been studied together in organisational contexts, meaning that despite some initial links found in the literature, there was no established overarching theory I could use to explain the dynamics between them. To address these research gaps and answer my research question I have therefore integrated the three concepts together within the qualitative interpretive study approach, discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: Methodology and research context

This chapter outlines the methods I have used to address and explore the research gaps and questions raised in the literature review. After discussing the study objectives and approach, the chapter outlines the processes I went through to recruit organisations and participants for the study and the data collection techniques I have used. This section also includes a brief description of the challenges that were faced during participant search and recruitment. The second major part of the chapter outlines the steps I took in carrying out a framework analysis and how it enabled me to develop the key concept and its three themes of this study to help me answer the main research question.

Study objectives and research question

Originally this research had a different focus. It aimed to explore how user-device relationships (including smartphone behaviours and attitudes) influence interpersonal behaviour and experiences within individual roles of and role relationships between managers, subordinates and co-workers. However, once I commenced data collection and after the first few interviews I noticed that the participant responses shifted focus. My participants wanted to discuss their experiences around topics such as personal control over connectivity and agency experiences, highlighted the discrepancies between perceived organisational beliefs and actions and how the interplay between these created certain implications for individual work-life experiences. During initial stages of transcription and analysis I also noticed emerging patterns about connectivity and agency influences on participant emotions and satisfaction with work-life domains. These patterns showed that these are the topics my participants found to be most important when it comes to their connectivity to work, thus the focus and contributions of my study shifted to reflect these findings.

As presented in the literature review, people and organisations can have different expectations and norms about connectivity and engage in various technological

behaviours (Fender, 2010; Gimpel et al., 2014; Mazmanian, 2013; Orlikowski, 2007; Wehmeyer, 2008). These expectations and behaviours can influence how individuals perceive their own and others' control over connectivity and agency over connectivity in work and non-work domains.

Past research shows that when organisations provide ICT devices to their employees, it usually leads to changes in connectivity expectations, as well as changes in the usage of these devices (Bittman et al., 2009; Richardson & Benbunan-Fich, 2011). This includes increased expectations to work outside of work hours and spaces, and increased expectations to be continually connected to work (Richardson & Benbunan-Fich, 2011). These expectations and behaviours are true for office-based workers and teleworkers (Ruppel et al., 2013).

As technologies such as smartphones erode the traditional temporal boundaries it becomes up to individual workers to regulate them (Geser, 2006). There are however limited studies showing how workers regulate these time boundaries (Duxbury et al., 2014), and the factors that influence their perception about being able to do so. My study also focuses on workers with organisationally-provided smartphones, which allows for the exploration of expectations, behaviours and interpersonal experiences of those individuals who refuse to use these devices to their full capacity (which can be perceived as resistance to social or organisational norms).

Some studies show that these phenomena do not extend to all workers and type of work. For example, mobile service engineers did not experience altered boundaries of working hours (Rose, 2014). More recent studies, however, show that availability expectations extend to workers from organisations within different industries (Obushenkova et al., 2018), suggesting that being continuously available for work-related issues is becoming a widespread phenomenon regardless of the nature of work.

My literature review showed that agency, connectivity and well-being are related and may influence one another. These concepts, however, have not been studied together in organisational contexts. The way people experience connectivity agency

may have substantial implications for their well-being outcomes, and this is becoming an increasingly important topic of inquiry as organisations become more connected.

Therefore, this study aims to answer the following overarching research question:

How do workers in connected organisations experience connective agency and what does this mean for their subjective well-being?

Research philosophy and study approach

Philosophy

This research project uses a qualitative research philosophy (Flick, 2009). Qualitative research allows the researcher to understand a phenomenon from the point of view of the participants and from the phenomenon's particular context (Myers, 2013). Qualitative research is therefore the most suitable for studies when individual perspectives are required or when the phenomenon is highly subjective (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Qualitative research is also preferable for exploratory studies, when the topic is new or when not much research has been done on it (Myers, 2013). It is concerned with answering the what, why and how research questions and produces rich data (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

Qualitative research is especially suitable for exploring topics such as interpersonal behaviour and individual perceptions because these phenomena are not easily (if at all) quantifiable. Using a qualitative approach will enable the research to capture behaviour and events related to social activity in a rich and meaningful way (Conway & Briner, 2009). A qualitative approach can be helpful when trying to understand causal processes that are ambiguous or highly subjective and during times when the studied phenomenon cannot be sorted into discrete categories (Kaplan & Maxwell, 2005). Qualitative research is best for conducting studies in natural settings and with consideration to the phenomenon's context, which can have significant influences on the phenomenon (Kaplan & Maxwell, 2005). Qualitative research also attempts to understand why certain phenomena occur, why individuals believe or act the way they do and what certain phenomena mean to them. In essence, qualitative research is

about learning how people make sense of their circumstances (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). To achieve this, qualitative research could include explorations of individuals' everyday habits and routines (Kaplan & Maxwell, 2005). Qualitative research endeavours to understand how individuals interpret their experiences (Merriam, 2016) and as such, can incorporate a number of different philosophical paradigms and diverse methods.

Study approach

Due to its explorative nature, this research adopts a multi-voiced interpretivist approach. The interpretivist approach states that individuals create knowledge in particular contexts, and that realities can be subjective and multiple (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This research uses an interpretivist approach with the underlying assumption that there are multiple realities which are constructed by individuals (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991). Interpretive studies suggest that individuals construct and associate their own meanings to objects, situations and events that happen around them. This means that in order for researchers to understand particular phenomena from the participant's point of view, they need to gain access to the subjective meaning that those participants ascribe to the phenomena. In other words, to understand the phenomena in question, the researcher must attempt to enter the world that has been created by the participants (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991). Interpretive studies assume that reality, knowledge and human action are socially constructed through human interaction and that the researcher is also a part of this process. This means that there is no single objective reality and that every interpretive study produces unique findings that cannot be replicated by others (Walsham, 1995).

Multi-voiced interpretivism or polyphony (Bakhtin, 1984; Cunliffe, Helin, & Luhman, 2014) presents reality as seen through the eyes and heard through the voices of participants. As there is no one right answer it is also important to capture the polyphony (or the multitude) of the different voices involved in the phenomenon of study in order to understand its complexity. By using this approach I am able to explore the rich layers of meaning attached to events by my participants and the complex interplay of sense-making they participate in.

The multi-voiced focus of interpretivism enables to explore how participants construe their experiences alongside how the researcher construes the same events and experiences (Cunliffe et al., 2014). The aim of my research is to explore individual perceptions and experiences of agency, while recognizing the highly relational aspect of connectivity (since connectivity exists between people and between people and objects). Agency and subjective well-being are perceived differently by different people and their meaning changes depending on the context. By using multi-voiced interpretivism I am able to explore how people grapple with tensions, showing their voice and their contradictions, and showing the movement and conflict in experiences and perspectives.

Originally, I considered using a more structured qualitative approach, similar to those used by past connectivity and technology studies, and such as the one proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). However, these approaches focus on creating highly structured data matrices and discrete data categories, which do not allow for the inclusion of ambiguous or contradictory findings. During data collection and initial analysis I identified shifts and ambiguities in all of the participant responses, meaning that they could not be sorted into discrete categories without potentially excluding minority or deviant voices and perspectives. By excluding these perspectives I would not be able to fully answer the research question, which aims to explore various subjective experiences. The structured qualitative approach as proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) also focuses on reporting the exact numbers of participants with particular responses. This approach would have been suitable in a study where certain participants only experienced one type of connective agency experience. However, all of the participants in my study reported experiencing all of the identified types of connective agency and various subjective well-being outcomes (all 30 participants experienced shifting connective agency and shifting subjective well-being), and as such listing them by number would have been redundant. Agency and well-being are also highly subjective as every person's experience and context is unique, meaning that I needed something highly flexible, such as multi-voiced interpretivism, to inform my data collection and data interpretation as I explored the fluid and subjective nature of these experiences.

Research design

Participant recruitment and selection

The study involved using purposeful sampling, which includes recruiting participants with specific characteristics while ensuring they are heterogenous by deliberately including cases that vary widely. This type of sampling enables the researcher to identify themes that cut across a variety of people (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). For this study, convenience sampling was used to recruit organisations. Potential participant organisations were identified through personal contacts and organisations known to me. The samples need to include relevant cases, meaning that they need to have symbolic representation, where samples are chosen due to having a circumstance or a characteristic that is salient to subject matter of the study, and need to have some diversity (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). With this in mind I gained access to workers in three medium-large organisations in Auckland, New Zealand, that provide smart devices to their employees and their managers. The organisations were from IT, governmental and public services sectors. All organisational and participant names were changed to preserve anonymity and confidentiality.

Data was collected at the three organisations with 30 participants in total (Table 1 summarises study participants demographics). Previous studies suggest that 12 to 60 interviews should be sufficient for qualitative research, with higher numbers needed for more heterogeneous participants (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006; Saunders & Townsend, 2016). The key consideration for the number of participants is to have a number that provides a balance between representativeness and quality of responses (Saunders & Townsend, 2016). By collecting data in three organisations, there was a possibility that there might be differences in organisational contexts and that these differences can influence connectivity norms and practices. These differences, however, are considered in the interpretation of findings and are important for increasing heterogeneity of participants.

Searching and gaining access to organisational members was a lengthy process with a number of challenges on the way. It is important to note that a couple of approached

organisations (a trade union and an IT company) originally expressed interest in participating, however, upon learning what the research was about the top management of both organisations refused to let the workers participate because they thought (as stated in their email) that it would make the organisational atmosphere worse than it already is. The trade union (which was approached originally but decided against participating) further explained that they already had mounting discontent from employees about the technology usage norms and connectivity levels expectations. This suggests that there are already growing issues with connectivity control and worker agency and well-being across different types of organisations, in turn suggesting that this topic is timely and important.

The study participants included employees and their managers in order to get a better understanding of how workers at different levels of organisational hierarchy experience agency and connectivity control. Criterion sampling ensures that all of the individuals shared some similar characteristics in common with each other (Watts, 2016). For example, the study included participants who were working full time at the three organisations, whose jobs included a semi-mobile work component, and who were given smartphone devices by their organisation to use them for work.

Organisational context and participant information

All three participating organisations provide technology such as smartphones to all of their employees to enable flexible working hours and mobile work. However, none of these organisations have any guidelines or policies regarding the use of these devices or any rules regarding connectivity after official work hours. The following is a brief summary of how each of the participating organisations operates and the type of work their employees engage in. All organisation and individual names have been changed to pseudonyms to protect confidentiality. Please note that the trade union which refused participation is different to the one that participated in the study.

Kiwiprax is a trade union organisation. They stand for social justice, decent work, safe workplaces and decent wages. The union is run by its members and is entirely not for profit. The working hours are 24 hours a day, seven days a week due to most of the

members having rotating 24 hours, 7 days a week jobs. Kiwiprax workers also engage in a lot of mobile work.

Nomilos is a local government organisation. It typically functions on a 9am to 5pm basis but workers also occasionally have on-call weekends. Most workers at Nomilos have both mobile work and office-bound work.

Connectigen is a large, multinational IT company. It develops, manufactures and sells computer software, consumer electronics and services (for profit). It has a 24 hours a day, seven days a week working structure due to having overseas networks and operations. The majority of workers have mobile and flexible working arrangements.

Participant demographics

For this study I have used responses from 30 participants. The demographic questions for this study asked about the gender, age group, ethnicity, level of education, tenure, position (manager or employee) and organisation. The participants in the study consisted of 16 males and 14 females. The age ranged from 24 to 65 years of age. There were five participants at the managerial level and 25 participants at the employee level (had no direct reports). There was not much variation in terms of ethnicity with the majority (21 participants) identifying as New Zealand European. There were also two Eastern European, two South African, two Middle Eastern, one European, one Asian, and one Indian. The level of education varied greatly with five participants with high school diploma, two with a technical certificate, 14 with a bachelor degree from university and nine with a postgraduate qualification. Tenure ranged between one year and 10 plus years. There were eight participants with a 1 to 3 years tenure, 11 participants with a 3 to 6 years tenure, four participants with a 6 to 10 years tenure, and seven participants with a tenure of over 10 years. The participants were from three organisations – 11 participants from Nomilos and Kiwiprax each and eight participants from Connectigen. Table 1 includes the summary of the demographic data of the participants in this study.

These demographics suggest that, for the most part, there is heterogeneity in the studied population as characteristics such as age, gender, job type, tenure, industry

and level of education vary among participants. However, there is little variation in terms of participant ethnicity and the majority of participants were at the employee level. This means that the findings of this research might not be applicable to individuals from different cultural backgrounds, this is further discussed in future research directions.

Table 1. Study participants

Name	Gender	Age group	Ethnicity	Education	Tenure	Position	Organisation
Aaron	Male	31 - 40	NZ European	Undergrad	3 - 6 years	Manager	Connectigen
Ahmed	Male	31 - 40	Middle Eastern	Postgrad	10+ years	Employee	Nomilos
Aiden	Male	20 - 30	NZ European	Undergrad	1 - 3 years	Employee	Connectigen
Alexandra	Female	20 - 30	NZ European	Postgrad	1 - 3 years	Employee	Nomilos
Ashlee	Female	20 - 30	NZ European	Undergrad	1 - 3 years	Employee	Nomilos
Blake	Male	20 - 30	NZ European	High school	3 - 6 years	Employee	Kiwiprax
Brett	Male	31 - 40	NZ European	Postgrad	1 - 3 years	Employee	Kiwiprax
Claire	Female	31 - 40	NZ European	High school	3 - 6 years	Manager	Connectigen
Dean	Male	51 - 60	NZ European	Tech certificate	10+ years	Manager	Nomilos
Hannah	Female	20 - 30	NZ European	Tech certificate	1 - 3 years	Employee	Kiwiprax

Hazem	Male	31 - 40	Middle Eastern	Undergrad	10+ years	Employee	Connectigen
Jess	Female	20 - 30	NZ European	Undergrad	3 - 6 years	Employee	Connectigen
Kanisha	Female	31 - 40	Indian	Undergrad	6 - 10 years	Employee	Connectigen
Kayla	Female	20 - 30	European	Postgrad	3 - 6 years	Employee	Connectigen
Keith	Male	51 - 60	NZ European	Postgrad	6 - 10 years	Employee	Kiwiprax
Kelly	Female	41 - 50	NZ European	Undergrad	1 - 3 years	Employee	Kiwiprax
Leah	Female	31 - 40	NZ European	High school	1 - 3 years	Employee	Kiwiprax
Lee	Male	31 - 40	Asian	Undergrad	10+ years	Employee	Nomilos
Lisa	Female	20 - 30	NZ European	Postgrad	1 - 3 years	Employee	Nomilos
Margaret	Female	61 - 70	NZ European	Undergrad	3 - 6 years	Manager	Kiwiprax
Matt	Male	51 - 60	NZ European	High school	10+ years	Employee	Kiwiprax
Murray	Male	51 - 60	South African	Undergrad	6 - 10 years	Employee	Nomilos
Nikolina	Female	20 - 30	E. European	Undergrad	3 - 6 years	Employee	Nomilos
Patrick	Male	41 - 50	NZ European	Postgrad	10+ years	Employee	Nomilos
Pippin	Male	31 - 40	South African	Undergrad	3 - 6 years	Employee	Nomilos
Ronald	Male	61 - 70	NZ European	Postgrad	6 - 10 years	Manager	Kiwiprax
Ross	Male	51 - 60	NZ European	Postgrad	3 - 6 years	Employee	Kiwiprax

Ryan	Male	31 - 40	NZ European	Undergrad	3 - 6 years	Employee	Connectigen
Tara	Female	31 - 40	NZ European	High school	3 - 6 years	Employee	Kiwiprax
Vesna	Female	51 - 60	E. European	Undergrad	10+ years	Employee	Nomilos

Data collection techniques

Testing the techniques

Before commencing a research project which will require some time commitment from the participants, it is important to conduct pilot studies to ensure the appropriateness of the proposed research tools. Pilot interviews are especially important for checking whether the interview questions are clear, appropriate and cover the phenomenon under investigation (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). It is also often necessary to check how well the diary data collection technique and its medium work, and what kind of data the researcher can expect (Axup & Viller, 2006). With this in mind, the current research included pilot studies comprising four pilot interviews and five pilot diary studies. The volunteers for the pilot studies were found through my personal and social networks and came from information technology, design and retail companies.

Conducting pilot interviews enabled me to practice and review the interview questions in a real interview context. At the end of each pilot interview, the participant and I discussed any of the questions that were difficult to understand and any other issues that the participants raised. After each pilot interview, the interview schedule was revised. Questions deemed repetitive by the pilot study participants were omitted while questions that the participants thought to be important (but were originally missing) were added. The pilot interviews lasted between 35 and 42 minutes, and from this finding it was decided that the research interviews were expected to last approximately 40 minutes.

Conducting pilot electronic diaries enabled me to check whether the questions made sense and that the medium (Google Docs forms) worked and was easy to use. There were no issues with the electronic diary medium or the diary questions. Participants reported the overall experience as user-friendly and easy to complete. However, after the first day of pilot diary studies (which ran for three consecutive days) one of the participants suggested including a question about general smartphone usage. This question was subsequently added to the diary webpage where it remained for the rest of the pilot study.

Although the participants of the pilot study agreed to and signed the participant consent form, none of their interview answers or diary responses were used in the findings of the overall study since the participants' organisations were not able to participate in the study. These interviews and diary entries were used strictly for the purpose of improving the questions and ensuring their adequacy and the feasibility of the study as a whole (Axup & Viller, 2006; van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

Research Interviews

Interviews are used to gain insight into individuals' experiences, perspectives and attitudes. This technique applies well to qualitative and exploratory research which asks the 'what' and 'how' questions (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012). An interview schedule is included in Appendix 3.

This study used semi-structured interviews. This type of interview consists of themes that the researcher plans to discuss in a broad and flexible way (Alvesson, 2011). Using interviews enables the researcher to see and understand certain situations from the interviewee's point of view (Fontana, Frey, Denzin, & Lincoln, 1998), which was the aim of this study. Each participant was asked to participate in a semi-structured interview lasting approximately 40 minutes. Interview questions are open-ended, non-leading and clear (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). I also used probing questions to amplify, expand, and explore ideas and to challenge inconsistencies (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). When interviewees were unsure about their answers, I gave them time to think, emphasized that there were no right or wrong answers, expressed

interest in everything they had to contribute or acknowledged the sensitivity or difficulty of the topic (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

The 30 interviewees provided good breadth and variation in their answers (representativeness) and interview responses were high quality (rich, detailed and at times ambiguous), both aspects important in qualitative interviews (Alvesson, 2011). The findings presented in this thesis attempt to have both representativeness by including interview quotes and diary entries from all 30 participants (this also enables multi-voiced interpretation during analysis) and high quality responses by including more quotes and diary extracts from participants who offered in-depth information, interesting and revealing experiences, and insightful interpretations and reflections (which commonly happens in qualitative research according to Alvesson, 2011). Some quotes were also emphasised in analysis because they revealed a participant's lack of insightfulness or self-reflection which was important to include in multi-voiced interpretation of the findings. Although this means that some participants might be given a stronger voice in analysis and findings their ideas and experiences are put under the same amount of critical scrutiny as others and their key reflections and interpretations are backed up with relevant findings from other participants (Alvesson, 2011).

Diary studies

Diaries were used to explore individual behaviours, routines, patterns of behaviour and reactions to behaviours. Diary studies can help to study processes over time and enable the researcher to study daily behaviour in greater detail (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007; Hess & Wulf, 2009; Marchant & O'Donohoe, 2014). The main benefits of using a diary study are that diaries remove the influence of the interviewer and allow participants to focus on what they perceive to be important (Axup & Viller, 2006). This collection method ran for one week (seven consecutive days); not longer to avoid reduced participation (Axup & Viller, 2006), and not shorter to avoid missing any possible differences in daily routines depending on which day of the week it is.

The participants were able to choose whether to complete their diary entries online or write their entries in paper diaries (provided by researcher). Only one participant chose to use the paperback diary. For electronic diaries, Google Docs forms were set up and emailed to participants (see appendix 4). These were able to be accessed through multiple platforms (tablets, computers, and smartphones) and from multiple browsers. Email reminders (for paperback diaries) and emails with electronic diaries were sent to participants every day to remind them to complete their diary entry. In order to avoid missing out on any information and enable triangulation, the participants were asked to participate in semi-structured interviews before diary studies and in follow-up member-checking interviews after diary study completion (as recommended by Hess and Wulf (2009)).

Diaries can be defined as documentary sources of data (Gibson & Brown, 2009). This type of data is analytically focused, which means that it is created for the purpose of answering specific research questions (Gibson & Brown, 2009). Diaries can be structured (have specific questions and specific desired responses) or unstructured (where participants can write about any topic that they choose) (Gibson & Brown, 2009). The current study used semi-structured diaries which contained flexible and simple general questions about their own and their co-workers', manager's or employee's smartphone usage and interactions. When studying smartphone usage norms, behaviours, and their consequences, diary studies are more suitable than observational methods not only because they remove most of the researcher influence (Hess & Wulf, 2009), but also because the majority of user-device processes are covert and are therefore not able to be observed by an outside party. The diary stage of data collection proceeded better than expected with all of the participants completing the entries each day diligently. The diary entries provided useful supporting (and sometimes contradicting) accounts of smartphone behaviours and attempts at connectivity control.

Member-checking follow-up

In order to avoid missing out any information and to ensure sufficient data is collected, the participants were also asked to participate in follow-up member-checking

interviews (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) lasting approximately 10 minutes (see appendix 5 for follow-up member-checking interview schedule). These were conducted following the completion of diary studies in order to check whether the participants want to share any new insights. All of these follow-up interviews were done over Skype video, for participant convenience. Member-checks refer to the process of checking if participants agree with data and interpretations of the researcher in order to increase credibility (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) and validity (Kaplan & Maxwell, 2005) in interpretivist/constructionist approaches. Member-checks can be formal or informal, and can be done during data collection or afterwards. They can provide participants a chance to add any extra relevant information and/or to correct any errors that might have occurred during data collection (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Such member-checks can also aid data analysis for interpretive studies.

Researcher reflection

Conducting research that adopts a multi-voiced interpretivist perspective means that the researcher must be reflexive of their own influence on the interaction (such as during the interview) and also on how the researcher's own background, perceptions and attitudes can influence analysis of gathered data. Reflexivity involves attempts to view the subject matter from different angles or interpretations and challenges to the chosen interpretation (Alvesson, 2011). Being reflexive also means that during interpretation phase, the researcher should be offering alternative or multiple interpretations (Alvesson, 2011). This meant that during data collection and analysis I needed to keep in mind that my personal experiences with technology and my beliefs about connectivity and well-being could influence the interpretations of the findings. To be more reflexive, I used a research diary to record notes about the interviews, participants' body language and gestures, and other social cues. These personal reflections helped me to keep an open mind about what I saw and heard, and to consider various interpretations.

This research also adopts Alvesson's (2011) assumption that the researcher is a part of the research context, and thus the researcher‘s presence is expected to be embedded in the context of the research. This means that the researcher is already

involved within the (studied) situation and influences the interactions under observation. Interactions between the researcher and participants (during interviews) create new meanings of reality which construct different implications for the participant and for the researcher.

As multi-voiced means containing many different voices, unmerged into a single perspective, and not subordinated to the voice of the researcher (Bakhtin, 1984), it was also my task as the researcher to make the connections between various participant voices and create interpretive layers around them. Each of these voices has its own perspective, its own validity, and its own weight within the findings. To show these voices and stay true to the data I transcribed the interviews verbatim as they were heard in interviews and diaries, used participants' direct words and my own interpretations while also considering a priori issues as another voice. By going back and forth and using reflexivity I was making sure that there is a balance between the different voices and that the conflicting, contradictory and deviant voices were included to present the full, rich picture and show the multiple perspectives on connective agency and subjective well-being.

During the interviews, the interactions between me and participants varied, and some participants became more open to sharing sensitive information or mentioning ideas or beliefs that they view as socially unacceptable. For example, many participants expressed their gratitude for assured confidentiality and anonymity of their interview answers as they confided about engaging in smartphone usage (or non-usage) that they believed to be in contradiction to the social or organisational norms. These interactions created new meanings of reality for both the participants and the researcher, and enabled new interpretations to emerge. The study also enabled participants to be more reflexive, with some stating that the participation in this research '*made me a lot more conscious of how often I used my phone, and how lost I feel without it*' or made them recognise their smartphone habits as unhealthy, as well as helped them to be more reflexive in everyday life:

> '*I loved it Lena, I really totally, you know I sort of did not expect to do it, it was like you know I'm doing you a favour, but I thought a lot about it, it*

was actually really good and I particularly.. as well as the interview, you know making you stop and think about it was actually quite good, that was really good, but doing the diary each day made me kind of… it actually caused me to review the day… and I actually found that that was quite a good thing to do, a good sort of discipline to do so thank you'

These participant reflections, as well as my own (noted down during data collection and analysis) helped to develop more insightful and in-depth multi-voiced interpretations of the research findings. Although there were no questions directly asking participants to talk about the components of subjective well-being (life satisfaction, negative affect and positive affect), the interview questions and diary entries gave participants a chance to reflect on how their connective behaviour and agency can lead to various outcomes for their mental, physical and social aspects of life. A number of participants also mentioned that participating in this research allowed them to reflect on their behaviours and well-being. This suggested to me that well-being is a very important aspect of connectivity and connective agency for these participants and leaving the concept of subjective well-being out of my interpretations and findings would have meant silencing these voices or prioritising my own ideas over those from participant perspectives and reflections. Therefore the concept of subjective well-being was integrated into the study in response to participants highlighting the concept.

Level of analysis

When conducting research, it is important to consider its level of analysis in order to avoid wrong interpretations and applicability of data (Klein, Dansereau, & Hall, 1994). This research aims to explore phenomena at the micro level – individual workers (at employee and managerial levels within organisations). This level of analysis is appropriate for the research questions and theoretical framework. Smartphone use, agency and management studies usually focus on the individual level (Cousins & Robey, 2015; Orlikowski, 2007). A micro level of analysis is also suitable when exploring individual perceptions, behaviours and experiences (Klein et al., 1994) as these can greatly vary between individuals.

Framework analysis

Qualitative research can be analysed using a number of different methods (Myers, 2013). In the later stages of data collection and once all data was collected, a number of different analyses were considered for the next phase of the research. As the research question focuses on individual experiences of agency and connectivity control, I first considered using narrative analysis (Riessman, 2008). However, narrative analysis is most suitable for studies focusing on experiences of fewer than 10 participants, meaning that using narrative analysis for this research would either produce results lacking in depth (if I was to include all 30 participants) or, if I focused on no more than 10 participants from my study, I would potentially exclude important or interesting findings. I also considered using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which involves creating codes to shows patterns or themes in findings. Much of qualitative research involves generating meaningful themes from data such as is the process in thematic analysis, however, although the initial phases of my analysis included theme and category generation from the data, I needed to go further in order to fully interpret my findings and their implications.

The Framework Analysis is similar to thematic analysis as it involves continuous refinement of themes in order to develop a conceptual framework (Smith & Firth, 2011). However, for this research, framework analysis is considered to be a better fit with the research objectives than thematic analysis, because it underlines how both a priori issues and ideas that emerge from data can guide the development of the analytic framework (Parkinson, Eatough, Holmes, Stapley & Midgley, 2016). Framework analysis is appropriate for thematic analysis of textual data, particularly interview transcripts, where it is important to be able to compare and contrast data by themes across many cases, while also situating each perspective in context by retaining the connection to other aspects of each individual's account (Smith & Firth, 2011). While mostly used in policy, healthcare and education research, this analysis can also be applied to management studies. Framework analysis can be used with semi-structured interviews, diaries, and observations (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid & Redwood, 2013) and is particularly useful when dealing with a priori issues. This is one

of the key aspects that make it different from and potentially more in-depth than thematic analysis. This aspect makes framework analysis a good fit for this study since the interview and diary questions are based on a number of a priori issues such as changing norms, increasing connectivity and worker agency and control.

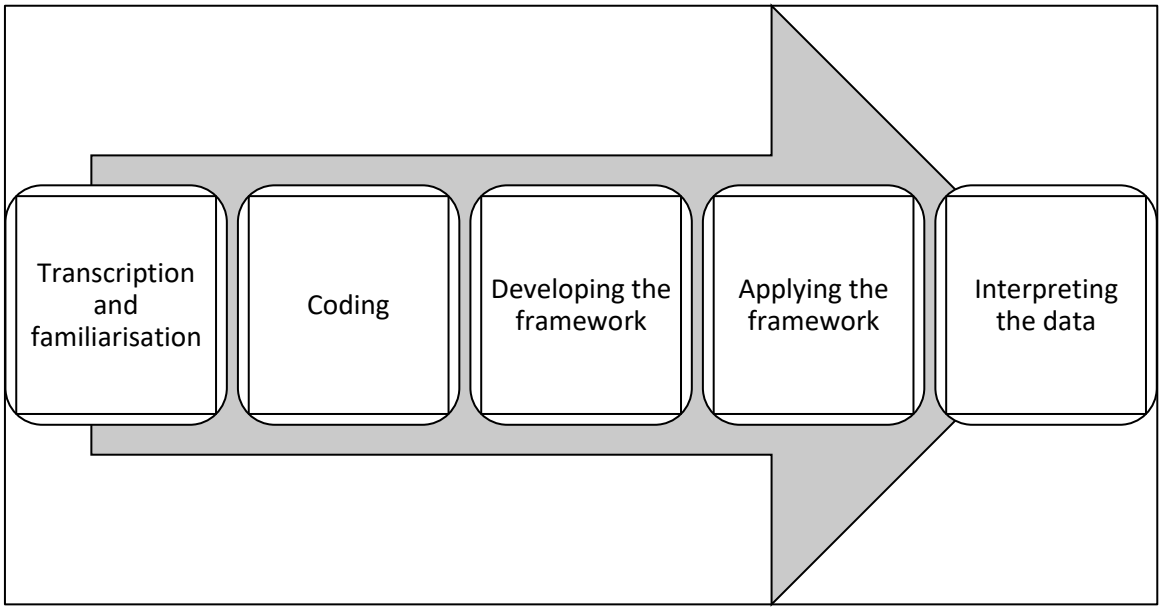
To help me make sense of the gathered data I chose to use the framework analysis, which is useful when wanting to develop a framework or a key concept that can help to interpret and explain data (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003; Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). As the Framework Analysis is not aligned to any particular epistemological, philosophical or theoretical approach, it can be used with a range of qualitative approaches (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). This analysis is driven by original accounts of participants making it a good fit with multi-voiced interpretivism and my research question. It also considers a priori issues which I treated as another voice in the interpretation of my findings. Framework analysis is particularly useful for my data because it is flexible in that it allows amendments or change throughout the process, and it is possible to progress in clear steps but also to go between steps and go ahead or go back to reconsider earlier ideas. These revisions, and going back and forth, gave me room to deal with shifts and contradictions, to reflect on the patterns and non-dominant perspectives. It also enabled me to ensure that I am not privileging or giving more power to specific or dominant voices and to make sure that I am not privileging my own voice but also not leaving it out or diminishing it.

The steps in the Framework Analysis can be viewed as a metaphorical ladder (Hackett & Strickland, 2018) each step representing a distinct stage of analysis (please refer to figure 1). This ladder metaphor highlights the fact that interpretive analysis is a continuous, flexible and iterative process in which the researcher frequently moves up and down between the different stages of analysis, and backwards and forwards across the data to identify emerging themes (Hackett & Strickland, 2018). These revisions, and going back and forth, gave me room to deal with shifts and contradictions, to reflect on the patterns and non-dominant perspectives and ensure the balance between various voices that were involved in the interpretation of the data. These aspects of the Framework Analysis enabled me to have a better

understanding of the perceptions and experiences' of my study's participants, which was crucial for answering my research question.

Framework analysis is useful when answering research questions that are contextual (what is the nature of what exists?), diagnostic (what are the causes of what exists?), evaluative (how effective is what exists?) or strategic (identifying new theories or actions) (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). This typology of research questions fits with the research presented in this thesis as it asks how workers experience agency and what this means for their connectivity control. This question involves exploring the nature of agency which is highly contextual.

Figure 1. Steps of the framework analysis



Step 1. Transcription and familiarisation

The purpose of this stage of framework analysis is to immerse oneself in and to get to know the data extensively (Parkinson et al, 2016). Familiarisation involves immersing yourself in data: listening to audio, reading transcripts and notes (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). For this research, the familiarisation stage involved listening to each interview recording and transcribing all of the material verbatim. Transcription helped to familiarise myself with data. I also read each interview and diary multiple times while

noting down any recurring words, phrases and key ideas. Listening and transcribing the interviews enabled me to note the emotional ambience of each interview (note down any laughter, sighs, and exclamations). Each of the interview transcripts (and relevant notes) was typed up into a Word document and combined with the same participant's diary and follow-up interview to create one full document for each participant. From this point, I refer to these documents (containing the interview, the diary and the follow-up) as transcripts, unless referring to a particular data collection technique.

The process of transcribing and familiarisation enabled me to become aware of what issues participants emphasised, what they thought was important and what they thought was not important. I was also able to note anything that seemed relevant to or potentially significant for answering the research question. For example, one of the participants, Hannah, a solo mother working for Kiwiprax (trade union), had tears in her voice as she talked about how her perceived low agency and resulting (perceived) inability to disconnect from work was negatively impacting her time and relationship with her infant son. She spoke of having to continue working during non-work hours and the guilt she felt towards her son for doing so, and I was astounded by the sense of overwhelming emotional pain her words and the way she spoke conveyed.

Step 2. Coding the data

This research, similarly to the majority of qualitative studies (Wong, 2008), uses data coding and categorisation to prepare it for analysis and interpretation. The process of coding is done in order to make sense of large quantities of raw information, to identify any important patterns in the data and finally to extract meaning from these data and patterns (Wong, 2008). A number of CAQDAS software programs have been developed to help make the coding process faster and more efficient. NVivo is one of the CAQDAS tools for organising the data (MacMillan & Koenig, 2004).

These software programs are in no way analytical methods in themselves (MacMillan & Koenig, 2004). NVivo allows for the integration of different parts of the research project which means it can link the theory, past research and data together. As the data is coded and linked into patterns, it allows the researcher to discover new

ideas and understandings that can aid in answering the research questions more thoroughly (DeNardo & Levers, 2002). Aside from this, it is the researcher that is considered to be the main analytical tool and it is the researcher, not the software, who synthesises the data, decides which themes to create, and draws meaningful conclusions from it (DeNardo & Levers, 2002; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011; Wong, 2008). Therefore, this research uses NVivo 11 software strictly for making the data manageable by enabling the organisation and storage of data. All coding, theme creation and interpretation of the data is done by me.

Coding data starts with perceiving some sort of a pattern (Boyatzis, 1998). Once a pattern is identified it becomes possible to start coding and categorising the data by labelling this pattern. Boyatzis (1998) suggests that in order to see these patterns, a researcher must be open and flexible as well as have some theoretical knowledge. During this phase I looked for specific words that participants used, repetitions, patterns and contradictions. Codes can arise from specific words mentioned directly in data or from the phrases that implicitly refer to a concept (Joffe & Yardley 2004). My research used both methods. Some codes were created using participants' exact words in order to stay true to data (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003), while others were interpreted using the implied meaning of words and phrases. The example presented in figure 2 shows how codes and categories were identified from an interview quote from one participant's transcript. Some codes were also created from patterns in the data and checked against the previous research and theory. These patterns arose from participants' implied and actual words and expressions in interview transcripts and diary entries that linked to specific ideas found in prior research and literature. For example, technology or connectivity addiction and work-life balance were prominent patterns in the data.

Figure 2. Example of coding

Interview transcript: Blake, 27 year old male employee at Kiwiprax	**Codes created from participant's words or implied meaning**
'If I forget to turn my phone off and I'm sitting there on **Thursday night at 7 oclock** and **I get a phone call I'd just answer it**… for the most part I find it **hard to switch off** sometimes because of other stuff with work **like a stressful case**, I **take stuff home now and then to work on it at home**. It's not the case of the phone going off every time but in saying that I **have started to turn it off on weekends** because at that point it will start **distracting me** because **I'll be out with friends or family**. **It's not what it used to be,** I was almost 24/7 and stupidly told people about it too so now **there's a lot of members out there who (think that)**.'	Inability to switch off (code derived from implied meaning) Stress (code derived from participant's exact wording when he talks about having a '*stressful case*') Working at home (code derived from participant's exact wording) Disconnecting from work (code derived from participant's exact wording when he talks about turning his smartphone '*off on weekends*') Behaviour changes (code derived from implied meaning) Distractions (code derived from participant's exact wording when he talks about '*it will start distracting me*') Engaging with friends and family (code derived from implied meaning) Work expectations and pressure (code derived from implied meaning)

Coding nodes can be created in two ways: the top-down or 'deductive' method, where nodes are pre-constructed through theory and past studies, and the bottom-up or 'inductive' method, where nodes arise from the data as the researcher reads through it and identifies patterns (Joffe & Yardley, 2004; Wong, 2008). Both methods are useful because while deductive coding allows for replicating, refuting or extending prior research, inductive coding allows for the exploration of new areas (Joffe & Yardley, 2004). Although this suggests that either of those methods can be used on its own, it is impossible to have themes arise strictly through inductive coding because the researcher who conducts the identification of codes is influenced by previous knowledge. In this research, coding was also influenced by a priori issues. It is also important to avoid using only the data-driven (inductive) method and to use the research questions derived from theories to guide the analysis in order to avoid 'reinventing the wheel' (MacMillan & Koenig, 2004). In order to avoid this, the current research at first focused mostly on creating codes from a priori issues, existing theory and past studies.

I started the coding process by reading the transcripts and coding words and phrases that are relevant to a priori issues and past literature. This was done by using the concepts and studies I identified and discussed in the literature review. After the first read through of the transcripts I generated a number of codes based on my literature review. For example I had codes such as "work-life balance", "increasing expectations", "work intensification", "time pressure", "surveillance", "addiction", "stress", "fear of missing out", "flexibility", and "autonomy". These concepts and ideas have been previously identified as a priori issues in past studies on connective behaviour (Mazmanian et al., 2013; Mullan & Wajcman, 2019; Porter & Kakabadse, 2006) meaning that these codes were created deductively. At this stage I went back and forth between my literature review and participant transcripts to connect data and a priori issues.

After these initial readings and identification of codes within my data that are relevant to previous literature I moved onto the inductive coding stage as I noticed patterns and concepts that were new or not covered in previous studies. As analysis progressed a number of new codes were derived from data alone. Bansal and Corley

(2012) suggest that qualitative analysis usually involves a tight interweaving of data and theory. This means that when creating codes it is important to always consider data and theory as parts of a circular system. My research also integrates codes that were derived from the data alone, in order to comply with the qualitative nature of the study and to avoid losing interesting findings. The new codes were those that were not found in literature review or that contradicted ideas in the literature. By re-reading and identifying patterns from the data I created a number of new codes including: “working in downtime”, “wanting subordinates to not be constantly connected”, “looking after staff”, “unfair expectations”, “inability to change usage”, “safety”, “connectivity emotions”, “leaving smartphone at work”, “contradictory behaviours”, “contradictory expectations” and “conflicting thoughts”. Using both inductive and deductive methods, all of the responses that were deemed relevant to the research questions, or that were deemed interesting were coded across all of my participants’ transcripts. After multiple re-readings and creating deductive and inductive codes until there were no more new codes being generated I had generated 184 codes from the data I then used these codes to create categories in the initial analytical framework.

Step 3. Developing the analytical framework

The next phase of the analysis involved grouping codes into categories. This forms a working analytical framework. This stage of the analysis is done in order to organise data in a meaningful and manageable way which allows for retrieval and exploration during the final stages of framework analysis (Parkinson et al., 2016). When developing the framework or index, a priori issues (from interview guides and literature), emerging issues in the data and patterned issues will inform the framework; the first version is often descriptive and relies heavily on a priori issues (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994).

It is likely that several iterations of the analytical framework will be required before no additional codes emerge. From the codes generated in the second step of the framework analysis, I created broad sub-categories by combining some codes together or removing codes that were not relevant for the research question. For example I combined the codes ‘pressure from co-workers’, ‘pressure from managers’ and

'pressure from organisation' together under the 'pressure for connectivity to work' sub-category, and removed the code 'jealousy about co-worker's device' from the generated sub-categories. The generated categories were based on key interest areas and were purposefully broad to enable the framework to be flexible and open to issues emerging from the data. Relevant or similar codes and sub-categories were combined to create eight broad categories. The following table (Figure 3) summarises the initial eight categories with their sub-categories (indicated in bold) and key codes, which were identified in the second step of the analysis.

Figure 3. Initial categories

Key sub-categories and codes	Categories
Connectivity as norm Self-expectations Co-worker expectations Customer expectations Organisational expectations	**Norms and expectations** This category looks at expectations from various sources for using smartphones in certain ways. It also explores how constant connectivity is now considered the norm.
Pressure for connectivity to work Pressure from managers or subordinates Peer pressure Customer pressure Self-pressure Time pressure	**Time and pressure** This category looks at how most of the participants feel like they have to be connected to work regardless of time of day or location. It also looks at pressure for connectivity from various sources and time pressure.
Accepting connectivity Communicating 24/7 Taking phone everywhere Constant checking Constant connectivity	**Acceptance and amplification** This category looks at how some individuals accept constant connectivity. It also looks at mobile work, continuous communication and constant checking.
Contradictory behaviour Conflicting thoughts Contradictions in behaviour and expectations Conflicting organisational messages Contradictory manager behaviour	**Conflict and contradiction** This category looks at conflicting or contradictory thoughts and behaviours in regards to smartphone usage, and conflicting managerial and organisational behaviours.

Not multitasking Not using at home or off work hours Switching off work Forgetting the phone Leaving phone at work Resisting technology	**Rejection and resistance** This category looks at non-usage behaviours such as not using phone after work hours or switching off, unintentionally or intentionally leaving the phone at work, ignoring phone communications and resisting technologies overall.
Having control over phone Delayed response Disconnecting from work **Boundary management** **Positive effects** Efficiency Flexibility **Positive emotions** Comfort Relief Social connection	**Empowered workers** This category looks at how some people feel in control over their work-life boundaries and phone usage. It includes changes to work-life balance and how individuals use (or not use) boundaries to have control over their lives. It also considers the positive emotions and effects individuals experience when using or not using their smartphones.
Contradictory usage Mixing work and non-work usage Working outside hours Working in downtime Breaking own rules **Blurred boundaries** **Conflicting behaviour** Habit Avoidance **Feeling conflicted**	**Conflicted workers** This category looks at how some people feel conflicted about their control over smartphone usage. It considers contradictory behaviours and usage, feeling conflicted or unsure about one's own control over work-life boundaries and experiencing conflicting emotions during smartphone use or non-use.
Lack of control Phone controlling user Intrusiveness of phone Inability to switch off work **Negative behaviour** Addiction Distraction Anti-social behaviour **Negative emotions** Anxiety and FOMO Guilt Resentment Being overwhelmed	**Imprisoned workers** This category looks at how some people perceive lack of control over their own life or feel an inability to switch off, or to separate their work and personal life. It also considers the negative emotions, behaviours and effects individuals experience when using or not using their smartphones.

After generating the initial eight categories out of key codes and sub-categories (patterns identified in the data), I combined the categories which had relevant or similar sub-categories or those that seemed to be closely related to each other (such as the three types of workers). The eight initial categories were developed into three initial key themes: *normalisation of hyperconnectivity, control and resistance* and *work-life agency*. The framework with initial categories and themes is presented in figure 4.

Figure 4. First version of the analytic framework

Initial categories	**Initial themes**
Norms and expectations Time and pressure	**Normalisation of hyperconnectivity**
Acceptance and amplification Conflict and contradiction Rejection and resistance	**Control and resistance**
Empowered workers Conflicted workers Imprisoned workers	**Work-life agency**

The first theme, *normalisation of hyperconnectivity*, includes aspects of participant responses that talked about social norms and pressures to be constantly connected (or hyperconnected). This theme's categories focus on the temporal and intrapersonal (social) aspects of increased connectivity as highlighted by the participants in my study. The second theme, *control and resistance,* focuses on how participants perceive control and power in terms of their connectivity to work. Its categories include

responses that show acceptance and amplification (increased connectivity to fulfil social norms of constant availability), conflict and contradiction which is characterised by a lack of clarity in terms of who is controlling whose connectivity, and rejection and resistance, where participant responses show non-use and dislike or fear of smartphone technologies. Finally, the third theme, *work-life agency,* consists of empowered, conflicted and imprisoned workers and its categories focus on the different ways participants experience work-life balance and the resulting effects on their affective well-being. These themes and categories were formed and developed into an initial framework which was then applied to the rest of the data.

Step 4. Applying the analytical framework

After developing the initial version of the framework, it is then applied to other transcripts and refined to include issues that emerge from data (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). As new insights emerge, the framework needs to be continuously revised and refined. This stage also involves going back to original transcripts to code and categorise data that was relevant to the newly emerged themes. The refined version/s should include diverse attitudes and experiences. Revising the framework involves creativity and intuition to make judgement calls about what is important to be included, meaning that the researcher must judge what is meaningful and significant. The key aspect of the revised framework is that it should be able to fully address the research questions (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994).

In this phase of the framework analysis I realised that the initial (developing) themes and categories did not fully capture the movements between different types or amounts of connectivity agency experienced by the participants. Developing themes were also not broad enough to include various implications of these agency shifts. For example, normalisation of hyperconnectivity could not include other norms that contradicted the 'hyperconnectivity' norms and expectations. As I revised the framework I realised that the developing theme 'work-life agency' was a part of a much broader concept of agency and that agency experiences were 'shifting'. This realisation made me reconsider the whole conceptual framework as it suggested that connectivity agency might be conceptualised as three shifting types of agency

(indicated as refined themes in figure 5), each with its own experiences and implications.

Figure 5. Final version of the framework

Refined categories	Refined themes	Core concept
Intrapersonal elements Temporal elements Interpersonal elements	**Abundant agency**	**SHIFTING AGENCY**
Intrapersonal elements Temporal elements Interpersonal elements	**Absent agency**	
Intrapersonal elements Temporal elements Interpersonal elements	**Ambiguous agency**	

The first version of the analytic framework evolved in a number of ways as I progressed with this step of the analysis. The initial theme *normalisation of hyperconnectivity* was split into two of its categories. The *norms and expectations* category was mapped onto *interpersonal elements* categories across all three refined themes, as its sub-categories and key codes focus on the social aspects of connectivity and agency. The *time and pressure* category was mapped onto the *temporal* and *interpersonal elements* categories across all three refined themes, as its sub-categories and key codes focused on both the time (temporal) aspects and the social (pressure) aspects of connectivity and agency.

The categories of the initial theme *control and resistance* were also split and mapped across refined categories. The *acceptance* sub-category went into the *intrapersonal elements* category within the *absent agency* theme, while the *amplification* sub-category went into the *intrapersonal elements* and *interpersonal elements* categories within the *absent agency* or *abundant agency* themes, depending on whether the increased connectivity was perceived as under participant's own control or not. The *conflict and contradiction* category was mapped onto the *intrapersonal elements* and *interpersonal elements* categories within the *ambiguous agency* theme, as conflict or contradictory behaviour can occur within the individual (such as conflicting thoughts) or between individuals (such as contradictory communication). Finally, the *rejection and resistance* category was mapped onto the *intrapersonal elements* category within the *abundant agency* theme, as its sub-categories and key codes focused on participants' stories that talked about agency experiences where participants felt agentic to reject or resist constant connectivity.

Originally, when I identified shifts in agency experiences I planned to use a continuum (from falling agency to rising agency). However, as analysis progressed, I identified the differences and shifts in the three elements, and the tensions and the contradictions that participants experienced, which suggested to me that there is a third separate experience of connective agency - ambiguous agency. As I realised that this shifting agency is the key underlying idea of my research findings, the initial theme *work-life agency* became the foundation for the core concept in the refined version of the framework analysis. I mapped the initial category of *empowered workers* onto the

abundant agency theme, as its sub-categories and key codes focused on agency experiences where participants felt in control of their connectivity. The *conflicted workers* category was mapped onto the *ambiguous agency* theme, characterised by uncertainty and confusion in terms of participants' connective agency. Finally, the *imprisoned workers* category was mapped onto the *absent agency* theme, as its sub-categories and key codes focused on participant experiences where they did not feel agentic or in control of their connectivity. These refined themes became the foundations of the core concept of shifting agency. The refined framework was then applied systematically to all of the transcripts (using NVivo) in order to organise the data according to framework themes and categories (as suggested by Ritchie & Spencer, 1994 and Parkinson et al, 2016), and to facilitate the final data interpretation.

Step 5. Interpreting the data

Gradually, characteristics of and differences between the data are identified, perhaps generating typologies, interrogating theoretical concepts (either prior concepts or ones emerging from the data) or mapping connections between categories to explore relationships and/or causality (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). In this final stage of analysis, the focus moves from data management towards understanding it and interpreting the data set as a whole (Parkinson et al, 2016). During this phase of framework analysis (as seen in figure 5) the data was interpreted and understood as being a typology (or different experiences) of the key phenomenon of the study, the shifting agency. These movements (themes) between different types of agency (abundant, absent and ambiguous) also contain different elements (categories) of intrapersonal, temporal and interpersonal nature, that influence the types of agency my study participants can experience. Each theme also included implications of the three elements within each type of agency experience for the participants' subjective well-being. The created framework was used as a tool for analysing and interpreting data in order to answer the key research question of this study - *How do workers in connected organisations experience connective agency and what does this mean for their subjective well-being?* These themes, categories and their implications are discussed in depth in the findings chapter.

Examples from the data

This section demonstrates the process I used for interpreting participant quotes in specific ways. The following passages from one of my participants, Aaron, show his connective agency experiences. Below, I explain how I identified and interpreted the shifts in Aaron's connective agency by looking for specific words, sections and references within the quotes that either directly talked about or implied different agency experiences throughout his day:

> *'I don't use my phone at the table with my family, with my children and I try really hard not to use my phone in front of my children as well so I engage with them not my phone, which is why I do my emails in the morning before they get out of bed.'*
>
> *'The smartphone is always there, it's always within arm's reach you know, it keeps you really connected to work all the time and makes it very difficult to switch off. I think I have become entrenched in the always on kind of approach to work in that I will read emails before I go to bed at the end of the night just to make sure I'm not missing anything before I go to sleep and I'm checking it in the morning and I'm always checking my phone through the day as well.'*
>
> *'I would like to remove some apps off it that are there to sort of disconnect myself further. So I have all of my notifications off now, I only engage with the phone if I actively do it rather than the phone telling me to look at things, so I'm trying to train it a little bit I guess and make it sort of on my terms. I know I habitually look at it all the time and that's what I'm trying to break. I tend to have it with me at all times.'*
>
> Aaron, manager, Connectigen

I coloured the quotes according to the three different types of connective agency experiences. The green coloured quote indicated abundant agency, where Aaron feels

able to disconnect from work – as indicated by his words *'I don't use my phone'* - and be present when spending time with family. This also shows the temporal dimension of his agency when he talks about checking emails in the morning before his children wake up.

The orange coloured quote indicated absent agency. Here Aaron's reflections suggest that he is unable to switch off or disconnect from work, in case he misses important information or is needed for work issues. In the orange quote Aaron talks about '*always checking*' his phone through the day and the smartphone making '*it very difficult to switch off*', which implies his inability to control his connectivity and that he is experiencing absent agency. This quote also conflicts with his previous (abundant agency) quote, suggesting shifts in his connective agency experiences during the same day.

Finally, the violet coloured quote shows ambiguous or unclear agency, where Aaron is unsure whether he is in control of his connectivity, but wants to gain agency by '*trying to train the phone a little bit*', suggesting that currently he does not feel fully agentic. Habitual checking of connective devices can also be interpreted as ambiguous agency since it can be both an automatic or non-conscious behaviour and contain aspects of intentionality (which is a part of agency). Aaron also talks about his connectivity behaviours having a habitual characteristic, suggesting ambiguous agency experience. These quotes are showing the tensions Aaron is grappling with, the contradictions, how much agentic movement and conflict is present throughout his day. These quotes also show how the different experiences of agency can shift depending on the temporal (morning, evening through the day) and social (around his children) contexts Aaron finds himself in. The three types of connective agency experiences, as shown in this example, are used to structure the research findings chapter to enable me to explore the identified shifts in elements and agency experiences, as well as the different types of subjective well-being experiences that mirror these shifts.

The second example in this section demonstrates specific subjective well-being experiences for my study participants. I explain how I identified and interpreted the

subjective well-being outcomes for one of my participants, Kelly. I did this by looking for specific words, sentences and references that either directly talked about or implied how she is feelings, her emotions and affect and satisfaction in relation to connectivity and connective agency:

> *'If it* (the smartphone) *was taken away I'd feel relieved *laughs* but also out of touch, so I do quite like being connected. I get far more pleasure out of my phone and the constant communication, I love it; I love that constant feeling of being part of a family or whānau. So I'm a* ***phone-aholic****, so I carry two. Overall with both phones I'm severely attached, I left my phones at home one day and had to go straight into a meeting and was feeling severe anxiety for the entire hour and a half because I did not have my phone, it was terrible.'*
>
> *'My work phone definitely evokes emotions, like sometimes I feel dread and I hear it when it's not ringing and that's anxiety, work-related stress. It's just increasing the workload and sometimes becomes unmanageable, when I come out of a meeting and there are like 8 voice messages and emails, I just feel absolute dread listening to them. The constant nature of the phone, the constant presence, I do dream about throwing it out of the window.* ***I'm trying to put some boundaries****, because I can see how pervasive the behaviour becomes and how it just overwhelms people.'*
>
> Kelly, employee, Kiwiprax

These quotes from Kelly show the contradictory subjective well-being outcomes. The green coloured words and sentences show how connective agency is linked to enhanced subjective well-being by creating positive affect such as feelings of '*pleasure*'. When Kelly is able to maintain a continuous connection by using her smartphone (suggesting agency), she also experiences feelings of social closeness and a '*family*' feeling. This quote implies that when she is experiencing connective agency

through using two smartphones to maintain a constant connection her subjective well-being also becomes enhanced.

Conversely, when Kelly experiences absent agency, as suggested by her expression *'increasing the workload and sometimes becomes unmanageable*', her subjective well-being outcomes mirror this shift and become eroded. This is shown in orange colour where Kelly talks about highly negative affect such as '*anxiety*', '*stress*', and feelings of being overwhelmed. Expressions such as '*absolute dread*' further imply the negative impact on subjective well-being associated with absent agency experiences, since she can only '*dream about throwing it out of the window'* suggesting that she feels unable to actually switch her smartphone off. In both passages from Kelly, I have also indicated aspects of agency in a bold font. These words show that Kelly realises her addiction to smartphones, calling herself a *phone-aholic*, but is trying to put *boundaries* on her connectivity to reduce the negative impacts on her subjective well-being. This suggests that she is being reflective of the link between her connective agency and subjective well-being outcomes.

Finally, the violet coloured sentences are interpreted as equivocal subjective well-being. I have coined this term to indicate experiences where participants experience contradictory outcomes for their subjective well-being. In Kelly's case she is experiencing feelings of relief when she is disconnected but at the same time she feels '*severe anxiety'* and the fear of missing out – as indicated by her expression '*out of touch*'. This well-being outcome can be linked to her experiences of ambiguous agency, which I inferred from her expression '*I'm severely attached*' and '*I'm a phone-aholic'*, both of which suggest that she does not feel like she is fully in control of her smartphone usage.

Ethics

The ethical issues arising from this project are confidentiality and anonymity, informed consent, voluntary participation, and the participant's right to withdraw.

The transcripts will only be available to the researcher to protect confidentiality. A coding system was used instead of participants' and participating organisations' names

to protect confidentiality. Although some of the interviews were conducted at organisations during normal business hours (which can potentially lead to other employees knowing who is participating) there will be no reference made to any individual participants within any publications in order to protect confidentiality and ensure anonymity. Participants also had the option of having the interview outside of their organisation's premises and business hours if they were concerned about their anonymity. All data collected will be stored in an electronic file on password protected computers. Individual responses of the participants were not and will not be shared with any party participating in the research, including the employer. This has been clearly stated in the various participant information sheets and consent forms.

Participants were fully informed of the nature of the research and the purposes for which the resulting information will be used. Participant information sheets and consent forms were provided to organisations and individual participants. Participants needed to give their consent prior to commencing interviews and diary studies by ticking the relevant boxes confirming that they have read the participant information sheet and agree to participate in the study.

Participation in this research was entirely voluntary. There was no compulsion in any way for either the organisations being approached or their employees to participate. When employees chose not to participate, they were not required to provide a reason for this, and organisational agreement was obtained to state that participation or non-participation will not impact upon employees' relationship with the organisation or affect their job in any manner. This is fully explained in the participant information sheets. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the project. Organisations and participants had the right to withdraw completely from the study at any time without providing a reason. Participants could also withdraw their data at any time within 14 days after the follow-up interviews.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the methods I have used to answer the research question of this study. It talked about the qualitative multi-voiced interpretivist study approach,

participant recruitment, selection and demographics, and the data collection techniques I implemented. The second part of the chapter discussed the steps of the framework analysis and the development of key themes and the core concept of shifting agency. The next chapter applies this conceptual framework structure to present my key findings and their implications to answer the research question of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: Research findings

Agency is the ability to intentionally influence one's life circumstances (Bandura, 2001; 2006). Because agentic experiences are both temporal and relational, it is argued that the three main elements that influence human agency are intrapersonal, temporal and social (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). The intrapersonal element is something that exists in a person's mind and includes things like self-efficacy, habits, reflexivity and identity. Temporal elements focus on time schedules, time-based boundaries and historical contexts. Finally, social elements are about the personal and organisational relationships, social norms and group dynamics (Schlachter et al., 2017). The following findings will show that provision and adoption of smartphones and the resulting changes in individual connectivity interact with these three elements to produce a variety of experiences and outcomes for workers. This chapter addresses the previously posed research question:

How do workers in connected organisations experience connective agency and what does this mean for their subjective well-being?

Findings suggest that workers can experience and move between different levels of agency due to shifts and differences within the three elements (intrapersonal, temporal and interpersonal). This means that when there are shifts in the three elements, agency can be considered to be 'in motion'. The findings presented here show how workers in connected organisations shift and move between levels of connectivity agency, which I have labeled abundant, absent and ambiguous. The findings suggest that people experience different agency at different times which has important implications for their intrapersonal and interpersonal well-being. The findings are interpreted from multi-voiced perspectives through analysing the participants' interpretations of their reflections and experiences, and incorporating my researcher's interpretation of participant experiences. A number of a priori issues (such as flexible working, addiction, work-life balance and surveillance) are also considered in participant responses and interpretations. The findings are structured using the three themes (abundant, absent and ambiguous agency experiences) and

their categories (intrapersonal, temporal and interpersonal elements) that were developed for the final analytical framework in my analysis (as presented in figure 5).

Abundant agency

When people have or encounter favourable conditions within intrapersonal, temporal and social elements they are more likely to feel like they are in control of their surroundings and actions. This study finds that these participants perceive the right amount of personal control at various times of day and I have coined the term 'abundant agency' for such experiences. I define these experiences as having or perceiving the right amount of personal control to decide the amount, timing and frequency of one's own connectivity (including experiences of agency where one can disconnect). Abundant agency was the least pervasive theme for my participants, meaning that fewer of my participants experienced this type of agency frequently compared to the other two types of agency experiences. Furthermore, the findings suggest that not all of my participants experience abundant agency and some can only experience it during highly specific temporal and interpersonal contexts. Those participants who frequently experience abundant agency tended to focus on favourable intrapersonal elements as the key enabling factor for feeling agentic in terms of their connectivity, highlighting the importance of these elements in connective agency experiences.

My findings suggest that experiencing abundant agency coincides with having self-efficacy and sense of control, being reflexive, having the ability to manage temporal boundaries and engage in flexible work, and having social support to achieve desired connectivity. Experiences of abundant agency are also mirrored by certain outcomes for subjective well-being as they influence participants' mood, affect and satisfaction. Following sections examine how the intrapersonal, temporal and interpersonal elements interact with individual connectivity behaviours to create abundant or the 'right' amount of agency and what this means for worker well-being.

Intrapersonal elements

Participants suggested that intrapersonal elements contribute to their experiences of abundant connectivity agency and include having high self-efficacy and sense of control, being reflexive, and having a positive association between personal connectivity and self-identity.

As suggested in literature, participant responses suggested that the key factor in having a sense of control or agency is self-efficacy. When efficacy is present these workers can intentionally connect or disconnect technologically from work. When they have high self-efficacy, participants feel like they are in control of their connectivity and they can implement their own boundaries about disconnection from work. These workers can then take breaks or even leave their smartphones at work. This agentic experience is illustrated in the following data extracts where employees and managers discuss physically leaving their devices out of sight in order to feel refreshed for the next working day:

> *I've been around for quite a number of years and I find I need to be sustainable to actually draw a line and either leaving my little Nokia here at work or hitting the off button. When I leave it's extraordinarily helpful. It is very, very seldom that I respond when I'm at home. I need to come in fresh next morning then I can sort of really get into stuff.*
>
> Dean, manager, Nomilos

> *After I get home I put them* (phones) *in a bag and generally leave them until next morning but because I get up at 3 am* (for work) *I need to make sure I get some sleep, if you leave your phone beside the bed it would just ring 24/7.*
>
> Brett, Kiwiprax

> High self-efficacy and the resulting abundant agency is also reported in diary entries such as this one by Ashlee:

I purposely left my work phone at the office over the weekend. I do not take it home with me.

Ashlee, Nomilos

These responses show that when experiencing abundant connectivity agency, these workers feel like they can use their smartphones only as they want or intend to. This suggests that they feel a sense of control over how and how much they connect to work. This sense of control also enables individuals to only use their phones for certain functions and not all of the smartphone capabilities. For example, Patrick and Vesna from Nomilos refer to their devices as 'just phones' and feel agentic to only use the most basic functions (messaging and calling) to connect:

I don't have my work email connected to my phone so basically it's just a cell phone. People ring me and then I answer but I don't check email, messages or use any other software programs that we have here. So I keep that separate, otherwise I think about overall in terms of emails and check things when you're on holiday, that doesn't work for me, it's no good so it's strictly just a phone basically.

Patrick, Nomilos

I guess I'm not a high user of the mobile, my private one also. I'm also not aware of all the different kind of stuff it can do but I believe that we have some restrictions in usage, I don't really use it for anything other than texting

Vesna, Nomilos

I don't like that the public has it (smartphone number) because they call me at all times, I used to take my phone home and they would call me at 8oclock at night and I had to say I'm not working at this time, or they'd call me on the weekend and they'd be angry that I don't answer them till Monday.

Ashlee, Nomilos

These responses show that when individuals feel like they are in control of their own connectivity level, even when this means going against other's expectations (as suggested by Ashlee's response about angry customers) or when organisations implement technology such as smartphones against employees' wishes, they still have individual agency on how they use their devices, and they can choose not to engage with the 'smart' side of technology which increases their feeling of agency and control over their personal connectivity. Patrick's response also alludes to the fact that if he does not keep the work and non-work domains separate he will not be able to detach psychologically – suggesting that this has an impact on his well-being. His response suggests that it would be 'no good' to continuously check emails while on holidays.

Abundant agency occurs when these workers are able to consciously reflect on and control their usage or non-usage of smartphones. They make conscious efforts to manage boundaries between work and personal life, avoiding negative emotions or pursuing positive ones (which increases subjective well-being) that can be created by constant connectivity:

> *I thought about this in the past, so tried to consider how much I'm using my phone, I don't think it's emotions but it's almost like my go-to to fill gaps, if I'm sitting doing nothing then I'd grab the phone and it's kind of like a comforting object for that awkward moment where I don't know what else to do, so maybe that's like a comfort emotion.*

Hazem, Connectigen

> *First of all since it's my work phone I have it so people can get hold of me even though I say I don't answer it which is true, I'm still conscious of that. For instance working from home and going up to the shops or going out the back to do something I will actually take the phone with me so that I'm reachable in case there is a crisis. I don't feel like I always have to answer it, I'm quite relaxed about it, I certainly wouldn't say I obsess over it, just aware that is a line of communication for people. My*

role is relatively important and if a few computers or smartphones aren't working it affects your work, so I am conscious of that.

Keith, Kiwiprax

These responses show that these workers are able to reflect on their own behaviour and preferences and act in accordance to them, suggesting that they experience abundant agency. Through self-reflection individuals feel like they can control their connectivity level by engaging in behaviours such as purposefully switching their devices off or using two separate phones for work and personal aspects of life. Hazem also talks about feeling the positive emotion of comfort which suggests that his subjective well-being is improved as he reflects on it positively. Most participants in the study indicated using separate smartphones in order to manage their connectivity to work and personal life domains. For example, Ryan from Connectigen talks about having two separate phones so he can resist the temptation (possibly due to habit or addictive behaviours) to stay continuously connected to work:

I find it hard to switch off from work at all sometimes and having a smartphone is definitely a way to stay switched on, which is why I have two and I can put my work phone away and still carry on with calls and texting of my personal life and not be interrupted so that's a very deliberate tactic to help avoid that. So I carry two phones all the time, so I have my personal phone and it's completely separate, and I have my work phone. In the weekends I try not to look at my smartphone at all, my work phone. I try not to let having a work smartphone have negative consequences by carrying a personal one also. Lots of time when I'm out and about because I have two, I will just take my personal phone so that I can't be tempted to work, so that's pretty much why I run that system so that I cannot use it.

Ryan, Connectigen

This self-reflection about being tempted to work if he has his work smartphone on his person suggests that Ryan's tactics result in the agency to switch off and avoid

'*negative consequences*' in his personal life, and in this way avoid decreasing his subjective well-being. He uses two devices to keep his work and home life domains separate in order to be able to detach (switch off) from work. He realises that if he does not use these techniques his well-being would decrease as he would face negative consequences.

Experiencing abundant agency can also enable workers (who wish to do so) to maintain continuous connectivity to work, which is desirable for some participants. For these participants having the technology that enables continuous connection creates feelings of increased self-efficacy and sense of agency so they can achieve their desired level of connectivity:

> *I can work from wherever, I suppose. So I can work from home just as easily as I can work from the office - and I do. Probably the major thing is just being more mobile, so I'm not physically tied to a location; I can be wherever whenever, and get things done as required. I need to be constantly in contact, you know, know what's going on, and be able to be mobile and make, you know, decisions based on information whilst mobile, or communicate with people whilst mobile.*
>
> *If it was an urgent issue, I wouldn't be surprised if I was contacted, but I'm pretty, you know, I'm pretty open to that. It's the nature of the game, is that we, you know, work on big deals and constantly moving and changing and you've got so many different stakeholders across the world that these things do happen.*
>
> Aiden, Connectigen

Aiden's responses show that he can experience agency and choose to maintain the constant connection to work because he can select his preferred level of connectivity. He emphasises the ability to work in flexible, mobile ways, suggesting that he values such working arrangements and views them positively (increasing satisfaction with work domain and consequently subjective well-being). Aiden's further response may be linked to the idea of being a connected worker. Some people choose to prioritise

their work commitments over personal ones because their job makes up a significant aspect of their identity, and feeling agentic to stay connected to work enables these participants to fulfil their connected worker identity.

For these participants this means that those with specific personality traits (such as conscientiousness) or workers who see themselves as 'connected workers', can choose to be constantly contactable; and for these workers this enhances their perceived agency and sense of control:

> *I think that people think that I am more contactable, I think that's good because if organisers need support, if things aren't going to plan then they can ring me to get advice and it doesn't matter if I'm driving or if I'm at home then I can help them.*
>
> Leah, Kiwiprax

> *I guess I'm always sort of thinking about work so for me it hasn't been that kind of imposition here comes a piece of technology I used to be able to switch off completely now I can't, possibly even the opposite, there's less fretting, either if I think about something or something happens I can deal with it immediately and put it behind me rather than worrying about it or thinking about what's happened when I get to work, almost knowing instantaneously so for my personality type it's not been an imposition, it's almost liberatory for things I have to do.*
>
> Ronald, manager, Kiwiprax

These responses convey a sense of pride as well as the agency to engage in continuous connectivity to work, suggesting that participants who choose to remain connected and feel the agency to do so, can experience positive and even '*liberatory*' affect as a result. Both Leah and Ronald portray constant connectivity in a highly positive way, suggesting that for them it increases subjective well-being by creating highly positive emotions. Feeling agentic over their own connectivity (whether to disconnect or maintain the connection) and subsequently experiencing higher subjective well-being

is also closely linked to temporal boundaries and rules that exist in workplaces and society.

Temporal elements

Temporal elements are an important factor that contributes to experiences of agency. With the advancement of connective technologies and resulting changes to temporal elements, the concept of time itself has been put under scrutiny in academic literature (Towers et al., 2006). Since agency (or the absence of) is embedded within its temporal context these elements are important to consider when looking at worker agency in connected organisations. Temporal elements within abundant agency include time boundaries and temporal rules, and time flexibility.

When experiencing abundant agency, these workers feel like they can control temporal boundaries and implement their own time rules. Implementing time boundaries and having a clear distinction between work and non-work time was especially significant to participants from Nomilos organisation:

> *I like having them* (work and personal life) *very separate so that I can just turn off my work phone at the end of the day… usually turn off just before I leave and be done. Usually my rule is that I turn off my phone about 15-20 minutes before I go home just in case a customer rings me *laughs* and I won't have to deal with that before the end of the day.*
>
> Alexandra, Nomilos

> *There is no need for me to take it home and I wouldn't want to lose it so it just stays at the office. I don't take my phone home at all, I have strict Monday to Friday my 40 hours so I don't do any work on call or during the weekends so I don't need to have my phone with me so it's always at the office, in some situations maybe if I have something really important to finish I would let it ring and I'll get it later, check the messages and everything so that would be the only time that I don't answer it, if I'm too busy or if I'm talking on my landline I obviously wouldn't pick up the*

other one because it would be an interruption as well, only if I'm doing something I really need to finish or important and need to concentrate.

Vesna, Nomilos

Most of what we do is not lifesaving, with what we do, it's alright, we got some luxury with time.

Patrick, Nomilos

These responses show how these workers set 'time rules' for their connectivity, suggesting experiences of abundant agency. Some connected workplaces remain time bound (for example work is only done between 9am and 5pm) even though work-extending technology is provided. Temporal boundaries make it easier for workers to switch off or control their connectivity to work. Some of the responses show that workers feel comfortable in simply leaving their work smartphones at the workplace, so that connectivity does not remain for them after hours. Other respondents suggest that temporal boundaries are being eroded even in traditionally 9-5 workplaces; however they are still able to control their own connectivity and actively implement time rules:

I mean I have sort of gone out of my way to not have it impact my life. I guess if I did respond to emails after hours I'm sure it would be that but I've decided not to do that so I turn it off when I leave and turn it back on when I arrive again. So whatever happens within that has nothing to do with me. I think that there's the implied obligation that we have to be contactable almost round the clock. That's never been said but I think some people might expect us to respond to emails after hours but I make a point of not doing that. I don't think we should be responding to work queries after hours. Work issues should be dealt with in work time not home time. I've made a conscious effort to not look at it just because I know I might see something that will rile me up in the middle of the evening.

Pippin, Nomilos

> *I'm pretty reluctant to check my emails or anything during the weekend, though I do know that other people on the team do check their emails and come into work on weekends and I don't think that's appropriate, not inappropriate, that's probably the wrong word but I'm just like 'why would you bother' because if you work more than 40 hour week you're less efficient, just work what you're paid for, and my boss thinks the same way, don't work overtime.*

Lisa, Nomilos

According to these responses, workers at times feel like there is no need to take work connecting technology (such as their work smartphones) home, and that work should only be done during the assigned or contracted hours. Participants from organisations with less defined temporal boundaries are also able to implement strict time rules on their connectivity, as can be seen in this response by Kayla from Connectigen (an organisation that operates across multiple time zones):

> *So for sure email, we live on email. So the first thing I do when I go to sleep and get up is do my email then for starters check social media, check LinkedIn and then read a bit of news flashes to see what's important today. So I would say for sure I want to be responsive, so if I get an email and I'm reading it, my methodology is if I can respond in less than five minutes I should do it if I cannot do that then I'll do a mark and when I have more time I'll respond to it.*

Kayla, Connectigen

Having temporal flexibility also creates abundant agency experiences as being able to work anytime anywhere creates the perception of increased agency. The respondents from this study also associate being able to complete work wherever and whenever with greater connectivity agency:

I think that's because we've got these devices which is super mobile, like I can take this and work in a café or a different country or at home or in the office and it's always the exact same experience and if someone rings my phone number it's (tablet) going to ring, like I don't have a desk phone, everything is through there and I can forward it to my mobile, so we get a lot of technology that supports being able to work from wherever you want and at the times you want when it suits you.

I'm very very mobile, everywhere I go has Wi-Fi and we have our internal phone system is running through Skype for business so if anyone ever rings me I can generally answer on that or I can call them through this so I tend to do that more than ringing off my cell phone so my work cell phone becomes a lot of email, staying in control of email and making sure that things aren't unfolding, that nothing's gone wrong while I'm out and about, I do leave the office fairly regularly and so it's good just to be able to keep in touch.

Ryan, Connectigen

I don't even know how we used to be without one (a smartphone) because I mean when you're traveling how do you connect with people, how do you stay connected? We're a very connected world these days and I can't imagine not being connected 24/7. I'd be lost without it because I'm not in the office from 9 to 5 those days are so gone and we work for a global organisation so you need a device where you can be connected and that is the most portable device to connect you both personally and professionally.

Claire, manager, Connectigen

I actually don't need to switch off, from my point (of view) you're always thinking about it and the thing is I'm also thinking about my personal life during the day so I feel worlds for me are more colliding. I don't feel it's working 9 – 5, it's more, you work when you work sometimes in the

morning I'm not focussed and I'm thinking about random stuff so I don't mind working in the evening a bit more to achieve the same thing, as long as I achieve my goals I don't think it matters which hours or when I'm working.

Kayla, Connectigen

These responses suggest that at times workers want to have flexibility in their working hours and some prefer to have no time boundaries. Staying connected or in touch is seen as an important factor for feeling in control. As the contemporary organisations become free from temporal constraints, some workers also want to remove temporal limits in order to synchronise with contemporary work times and have more fluidity in their working schedules. Some even wish to have no temporal separation between personal and work life domains and would feel lost without being able to connect to all aspects of their life at all times:

I would feel bereft (if it was taken away), I'd be ducking in and out, it has very much become an integral part of both work and private life and I think it gets to a degree which is some people find a problem, I think I can sort of manage it, it does very much blur that distinction between work and private life, but for me that's not something… I guess because of my position where I have to sort of accept the encroachment onto my private life anyway it's more immediacy of it rather than worrying about things that might be happening and not hearing about them so it's probably beneficial rather than the opposite. I think at my level yes, well I decide, I make the decision to be constantly available, it's not a major disruption for me, it's not as if there's lots of calls for me. I guess it is like that psychological thing; I would rather have it on and have private time disrupted than have it off and feel like I was missing something. My phone is continually on for both work and private after the formal office hours and quite a few of my work calls are in that time.

Ronald, manager, Kiwiprax

I'm not really interested in philosophies about like being in one section of your life, you know what I mean, like being one person and then being another person. I doesn't really work like that for me, I just amalgamate everything into one thing. I love my work, I love my friends and I love my family and I love spending time doing all of those things but if they bleed over other things I don't mind it, I don't get upset about it.

Leah, Kiwiprax

These responses suggest that workers who have a preference for continuous connectivity and feel agentic to be continuously connected may experience improvements in their subjective well-being through positive affect and increased satisfaction. This increase in well-being is seen in Ronald's response when he highlights the psychological benefits of staying informed (even at the expense of private time) and in Leah's highly positive statements about loving her work and non-work aspects of life. These responses also show how temporal elements interact with social (or interpersonal) elements, which have significant impact on experiences of agency and well-being.

Interpersonal elements

Participants experienced abundant agency when social elements interact with their individual connectivity behaviours. These workers appear to experience abundant agency when they feel like they can be present in the social context (whether it is in person or via a technological channel) or when they can use connectivity to establish and maintain a social connection.

Participants perceived abundant agency when they were able to disconnect from work (or non-work) and be present in a social context. These workers talked about not being connected to work when spending time with family and being encouraged to do so by their managers or organisations:

On some days especially if I'm going out with the kids I don't need to be contactable by my wife or someone else I purposefully leave my phone

behind or in certain situations if I forgot the phone, like I'm not with phone today so I'm not contactable today, it's a good break.

Hazem, Connectigen

My wife and I talk about it a lot about how much we use our phones and how we need to limit the impact that has on our family life so it hasn't led to conflict but it's certainly something we're very aware of and we seek to address. So no phones at the table and that sort of stuff.

Aaron, manager, Connectigen

I think one thing I'm being really conscious of is presence when you're with your family and I think that it's really important not to lose that, you tend to lose that when there's stuff coming through, a drama or a fire that you need to put out so yeah there is an element of that.

Claire, manager, Connectigen

These responses show that when individuals are able to disconnect from work to be with their family they felt abundant agency. The idea that organisations supported this disconnection (from work) and work-life balance further contributed to experiences of agency. This links to literature that talks about how when individuals have social support they have higher sense of interpersonal agency and as a result experience well-being (Smith et al., 2000). Claire's response also links to the idea of being present or avoiding the problem of 'absent presence', which as highlighted in the literature review (Mazmanian et al., 2005) can create negative emotions and interpersonal conflict and in this way reduce subjective well-being. By experiencing agency and disconnecting from work during family time the workers in this study can avoid 'absent presence' issues and maintain their emotional well-being.

Another interpersonal element discussed by participants was the ability to control or use connectivity to maintain a social connection to others including colleagues and team members. It appears that modern connectivity norms encourage continuous connection for these participants and that it is perceived as negative to be

disconnected from others. Continuous connectivity to others may be interpreted as a positive part of life, suggesting that it is good for the subjective well-being of workers because it creates positive affect and increases satisfaction with work and personal relationships:

> *I think the norm is that everybody is a high user of smartphones. Everyone basically uses it all the time and if it gets taken away I'd feel that I'm not part, I'd feel that I'm not connected really. It's basically important to be (connected) because you don't know what's happening, you don't know what's going on, especially in relation to family matters, it's just a part of life.*
>
> Murray, Nomilos

These participants perceive social connectivity as a positive contribution to well-being and those participants using connectivity for social connection tend to feel more in control. These workers perceived higher agency when they are able to stay connected because they can fill in the time that is considered 'empty' with social interaction. In this response Kelly talks about connectivity filling in the social '*void*':

> (If the phone was taken away I would feel) *out of touch, so I do quite like being connected but this is more of a social thing than work thing, so I'm a widow, my husband died four years ago but at night I find that I am far more active on social media to fill the conversational void at home. I get far more pleasure out of my phone and the constant communication, I love it, the thing with work is, like the social side of work aspect, I'm not a drinker so I don't go out drinking with my colleagues, I love that constant feeling of being part of a family or whanau* (Maori word for family).
>
> Kelly, Kiwiprax

This response shows that Kelly perceives higher agency when she is able to maintain that continuous connection as it fills the time outside of work hours, reduces feelings of loneliness and provides a '*family*' feeling, increasing her subjective well-being. As past studies have highlighted, social network and support are key to individual happiness and life satisfaction, and are linked to increased feelings of agency (Smith et al., 2000). This suggests that workers in this study who experience connectivity agency and social support (that is enabled by and supports connectivity) are also likely to feel that their well-being is enhanced.

Agency abundance summary

I have adopted the term abundant agency and shown throughout the three elements, (intrapersonal, temporal and interpersonal) how experiences of abundant agency are linked to positive outcomes for workers' subjective well-being. When workers are feeling in control (to connect or disconnect), are able to work flexibly, and have a positive association between continuous connectivity and being a 'good worker', they experience abundant agency. These experiences and the ability to maintain a positive social connection appear to create greater satisfaction and positive affect and attitudes, and suggest a link between abundant agency and enhanced subjective well-being. However, these workers do not always experience abundant agency and positive well-being outcomes, meaning that at times workers can experience a decline in agency.

Absent agency

I have coined the term 'absent agency' as this study shows that participants can also experience times when they feel an inability to engage in actions that produce desired results. I define absent agency as an experience where one feels or perceives a complete lack of control over their connectivity. Throughout my findings, this type of agentic experience was highly pervasive, meaning that almost all of my participants experience absent agency throughout their daily life. The only participants whose responses suggested that they do not frequently experience absent agency were from Nomilos. All of the participants from Connectigen and Kiwiprax experience absent

agency, with employees from Kiwiprax in particular experiencing frequent absent agency which is mirrored by decreased subjective well-being. The key factor in creating experiences of absent agency for the majority of my participants is interpersonal in nature, suggesting that other people have significant influence on one's agency experience.

Absent agency can occur when perceived negative factors are present within intrapersonal, temporal and social elements. My findings show that experiences of absent agency can arise when one has low self-efficacy and lack of control. It is also more frequent when participants have addictive tendencies, internalise harmful expectations, have no or perceive not having control over temporal boundaries, and experience social pressure or concertive and cultural control. The following sections consider how these factors can lead to absent or eroded agency and the negative impacts this has for worker well-being.

Intrapersonal elements

The intrapersonal elements that contribute to participants' experiences of 'absent' connectivity agency include feeling a lack of self-efficacy or control, having addictive tendencies, internalising harmful expectations, and associating hyper connectivity (when there is too much connectivity to the point of being overwhelming) with their work role or identity.

While at times these workers feel a sense of control, at other times they can experience low self-efficacy or lack of control in regards to having agency over their connectivity. Feelings of low self-efficacy (which reduces perceptions of agency and control) lead to the perception of an inability to do what one intends to do (also referred to as intentionality). When these workers experience an absence of agency they feel like they do not have control over their own connectivity. This lack of control was apparent among most of the study participants, including those who experience abundant agency at other times. When experiencing an absence of agency, participants noted their inability to switch off or disconnect from work when they wanted to:

*I think that they're (smartphones) a necessary evil *corrects himself* a necessary part of doing business. The smartphone is always there, it's always within arm's reach you know, it keeps you really connected to work all the time and makes it very difficult to switch off. I think I have become entrenched in the always on kind of approach to work in that I will read emails before I go to bed at the end of the night just to make sure I'm not missing anything before I go to sleep and I'm checking it in the morning and I'm always checking my phone through the day as well.*

Aaron, manager, Connectigen

I think probably that there's always that temptation outside of work hours to turn it on and check it which then for example I've been in situations where I'll you know turn it on just before I'm about to go to bed, check it, see an email and it probably could have waited till next day but I've already started thinking about it, and stressing about it unnecessarily that I can't sleep and things like that. It sort of interrupts.

Tara, Kiwiprax

These responses show that these workers feel like they are lacking control and have to stay connected to work in case they are required or out of fear that they might miss important information if they disconnect. Aaron's response paints the device and constant connectivity in particularly negative way, calling it '*evil*'. This would suggest that due to a lack of agency, he feels extreme negative emotions because he cannot disconnect (or become psychologically detached) from work, suggesting that his well-being suffers due to the absence of connectivity agency. Tara also highlights the fear of missing out in her diary entry, which shows her continuous connectivity to work even when she is on leave:

I was on leave today. I checked emails on my phone in the morning and throughout the day in case anything urgent came up.

Tara, Kiwiprax

When people feel a lack of control or low self-efficacy, they can also experience the sensation of being controlled by external factors, in this case their smartphone devices. Participants in this study talked about their smartphones controlling their behaviours and connectivity:

> *In terms of nights and weekends I guess I'm at the phone's mercy.*
>
> Margaret, manager, Kiwiprax

> *I know that the phones, especially in our job tend to dominate our daily hours. Someone might be expecting a call or there is a call and it's 'oh I just got to take this'.*
>
> Matt, Kiwiprax

These feeling of being controlled by smartphones also led to some workers feeling like they are trapped or are unable to prioritise work and non-work domains.

> *I think my smartphone usage does start to hinder with my son, my son is 14 months old so he doesn't understand when mum is busy or always on the phone. I'm a solo mum so it's very hard sometimes for me to juggle. It probably cuts time away from my son because my phone goes off when I'm at home and I have to pick it up and sort things out. It doesn't ever stop, pretty much that. If I'm sick I'm still working because my phone is still going off, there are still problems to resolve.*
>
> Hannah, Kiwiprax

> *I think, I'm quite young and I'm just like starting out in all of this corporate crap, so happy this is confidential, and so at the moment it is kind of me working out when I will have to switch off to allow more time for family life because the behaviour I have at the moment is completely unsustainable and I think it will get to a point where I'll just crash. that's the thing about having the phone, it's so easy and so quick to check and it's very hard to resist the temptation because I always want to know*

what's happening but then when I do know what's happening it's stressing me out. So I will look to change that behaviour in the future.

Jess, Connectigen

These responses by Hannah and Jess highlight how low self-efficacy or sense of control can lead to forced constant connectivity to work which is linked to negative outcomes for both intra- and interpersonal well-being. In these passages, being unable to control connectivity seems to foster ill health and potentially damaged relationships. For example, Hannah and her infant child are affected by her inability to switch off from work and give her full attention to him. Jess' response also suggests that she has to prioritize work over non-work engagement while she is still young, even though she views this negatively, as suggested by her expression: '*all of this corporate crap'.* Jess speculates that if she hopes to prioritise family in the future, she will need to change her behaviour and achieve the agency to be able to switch off from work. Jess experiences negative emotions if she is too connected or if she is not connected enough. While she has fear of missing out (creating anxiety) she also finds herself feeling stressed out when she does '*know what's happening'.* This suggests that her well-being is also eroded (as stress and anxiety are highly negative emotions) when she feels that she has no agency over her connectivity choices.

Some participants, are reflective and want to change their connectivity behaviours, but also feel like they are unable to stop the constant connectivity. This can be seen in their attempts to regain agency but they fail to do so due to intrapersonal factors influencing their connective agency:

I was trying to do screen-free in my room at night but that did not work at all so it lives right on my bedside table and it's the last thing I check before I go to sleep as well and obviously first thing in the morning. I have it at all times even if I'm out with friends for lunch or whatever I'll probably have it sitting on the café table in case someone needs to call me from work or something.

Jess, Connectigen

I use it basically every day, I'd say seven days a week even when on the weekend I still use my phone, I do answer calls on the weekend and when I'm on call because obviously more calls are coming through 24 hours a day. I have tried (implementing boundaries on usage)*, but because the phone is there… you tend to pick it up, especially when you have some time on your hands you tend to pick it up, it's just a part of life now, maybe if you're at doctor's or you're sitting in the supermarket or in a shopping mall you go straight to the phone.*

Murray, Nomilos

I think the best decision I've made when I started here was keeping my phones separate, so when my phone rings I feel joy and elation, when my work phone rings I feel dread and horror. My work phone definitely evokes emotions, like sometimes I feel dread and I hear it when it's not ringing and that's anxiety, work-related stress. It's just increasing the workload and sometimes becomes unmanageable, when I come out of a meeting and there are like 8 voice messages and emails, I just feel absolute dread listening to them. I'm trying to put some boundaries, because I can see how pervasive the behaviour becomes and how it just overwhelms people. Since I've worked here I have seen people leave.

Kelly, Kiwiprax

These failed attempts at controlling their connectivity may be caused by the attempt to avoid negative consequences (by not disconnecting from work). Jess and Murray's responses show how they have given up on trying to control their connectivity to work and have accepted it as a '*part of* life'. Kelly's response shows how she has implemented boundaries between personal and work life domains; however, she still experiences a lack of agency when it comes to her connectivity to work. Her response suggests some erosion of subjective well-being as she now associates the sound of her work smartphone ringing (or connection to work) with highly negative emotions like 'horror' and 'anxiety'. She reflects on the overwhelming dread she feels when she is

forced to be connected to work and the phantom ringing she hears, which she attributes to work induced stress.

Experiences of absent agency can also be linked to individual addictive tendencies. Addiction to technology such as smartphones (and connectivity) has been identified as a priori issue in past studies (Porter & Kakabadse, 2006) and responses from this study suggest that addiction is a major factor in connectivity behaviours, agency and subjective well-being. Participants who also think they are addicted or display addictive tendencies are more likely to feel like they are lacking personal agency to act in a way they wish to:

> *I'm pretty bad because I was told not to take it home but I do, actually I think I'm sick to be honest, I don't look at it every hour but when I have time I just look at it, if there's emails I read it after hours. During the day when I'm outside I definitely look at it when I'm free when I'm not driving. I think it's just me, I feel like I have to respond, so it's personal, not from work, I was literally told not to take it home and not to even look at it, I even look at it when I'm on leave that's how sick I am. I could confess I'm really bad at that when I'm driving, it's…I don't know it's something… really I shouldn't be doing it but I just can't refrain from it.*
>
> Lee, Nomilos

> *I'm always on my smartphone, so I probably have some unhealthy habits around using it in regards to checking emails, so you're always… so I think I would wake up in the night and I would check my emails to see what's happening and I think that is probably a really bad habit but I have it and so many people have it these days. My routine is probably terrible in the fact that my phone is my life, so I've got all my emails and everything, it would be the device that I use most of the time and this is the device where I check my emails when I wake up, check my emails before I go to bed and all those terrible habits that you get into once you're in corporate space. in the older days where we used to fax orders*

in and that sort of thing, kind of once you left the office you switched off and you were sort of focused on your family but now there's an element of having to be really present and to be conscious of being present with your family because you can get addicted to email.

Claire, manager, Connectigen

If I go out to dinner I don't leave it on the table, it depends how close the people are, people know about my addiction, I am trying this thing where during the week at 8 o'clock at night I stop looking at my phone, my work phone, I stop answering it, it's my new thing, it's only been a week or two but I had to because I got to the point where I hear the work phone ring or sometimes I hear it when it's not ringing. So I'm a phone-aholic, so I carry two. Overall with both phones I'm severely attached, I left my phones at home one day and had to go straight into a meeting and was feeling severe anxiety for the entire hour and a half because I did not have my phone, it was terrible.

Kelly, Kiwiprax

As we are now in more social digital media space I have almost become addicted to checking on and adding to our facebook postings of our union and a personal account which doubles as getting the union message out as well.

Ronald, manager, Kiwiprax

These responses show addictive behaviour – the constant checking during all hours of the day or night, or while in social contexts and even in dangerous and illegal contexts (Lee using his smartphone while driving). For these workers, checking the phone becomes reinforcement and reward which further fuels addictive behaviours and leads to eroded control and absent agency over their connectivity. As can be seen in some of the responses, the workers recognise how unhealthy their behaviour is and how it reduces their well-being, however they are still engaging in addictive connectivity.

Experiences of absent agency can also arise when workers internalise hyper-connectivity expectations, justifying it as a personality trait or something that was set up by themselves. While participants may see internal pressure as personal agency, in reality this pressure is an internalised social norm, suggesting that it is not in fact agentic. Constant checking and connectivity becomes normal behaviour and is internalised by individuals:

> *I think it's… you do it yourself, so the pressure comes from me to check my phone all the time and the curiosity to see what's happening with the business while I'm sleeping, so the pressure doesn't come from anyone else, no one else tells me I need to check my phone at 4am but if I'm awake I kind of check it so I'd say it absolutely comes from us internally.*
>
> Claire, manager, Connectigen

> *I don't feel that pressure from my employer, but it is pressure that I put on myself - to make sure I'm always turning it on, checking it, and then that gets me back into that headspace and I can't snap out of it then… I'm worried I'll miss out if I don't check my phone in the evening. I have an expectation on myself to ensure I am on top of urgent enquiries whether I am working that day or not.*
>
> Tara, Kiwiprax

> *We advocate the use of our technology where the line between work and outside of office has been blurred so we want people to be able to work from home, work from on the road, take a conference call while they're driving, so if we advocate that to our customers we must embrace it ourselves.*
>
> Hazem, Connectigen

> *Yeah I do (find it hard to switch off), but that's probably just my own personality, you know; I think about it a lot, so yeah I do find it quite hard to switch off from work, and maybe this sort of stuff does*

contribute to that 'cause there's no clear delineation between work and personal hours.

Aiden, Connectigen

These responses show extreme fear of missing out (a priori issue) or appearing as someone who is not doing their job (being a bad worker). Some workers internalise the pressure to such a degree that they begin equating their availability to clients or customers as 'lifesaving', leading to eroded agency to disconnect:

My routine is that I put all my diary entries in it so it tells me where I need to be and when I need to be there and the calendar. I do feel pressure to use my work phone yes, I always have to answer or respond to missed calls or texts because that's my job. Union members pay for a service so I have to provide that for them. I always (need to be) responding and always on the phone, sometimes it's people's lifeline to talk to you.

Hannah, Kiwiprax

This section showed how certain intrapersonal elements (low self-efficacy, addiction and internalised pressure) interact with connectivity behaviours to erode worker and manager perceptions of agency which are linked to significant negative outcomes for subjective well-being. When workers experience absent agency or low self-efficacy in terms of connectivity control they can also feel like they are pressured or controlled by external factors rather than internal or intrapersonal elements. External pressures include changes in temporal elements, discussed next.

Temporal elements

Experiences of absent agency are also greatly influenced by temporal elements. Connected organisations are defined by a lack of temporal boundaries (a priori issue identified by previous studies by Mullan & Wajcman, 2019) and increasing intolerance for waiting, meaning that personal agency can diminish.

With the lack of temporal limits in contemporary organisations some workers feel like there is no excuse not to be constantly connected. When workers feel like they have no control over temporal boundaries they can experience absent agency. This especially applies to 24/7 organisations where workers feel like they have to be continuously connected. Previous literature shows that technologies such as smartphones are removing temporal boundaries (Towers et al., 2006), creating an absence of time constraints which leads to an eroded ability to disconnect. Vacations are now no longer work-free, and work hours are extended. There is even no longer wasted time (such as during commuting) as this is now filled in with work. Time is treated as a resource that must be used efficiently. Total availability has become a norm and this is also seen in responses from the current study:

> *They* (organisations) *use that expectation that you can't hide, you know if you got your phone and it's switched on they use that expectation that you need to get back to them, or if you missed a call you need to call back and ask what is the issue, it's not like you can hide for the day because that phone is available for you. Before the end of the day you contact that person, because there's no excuse.*
>
> Murray, Nomilos

> *I guess I try not to pretend that I haven't seen the emails because I think in this day and age it's a pretty weak excuse.*
>
> Ryan, Connectigen

> *I'm never ever, ever, ever switched off and like I went straight from finishing my university degree, my last exam was on a Saturday, straight to working here on Monday and then fully entrenched in here ever since. I've taken one holiday which was to central America for six weeks and it took me two weeks at the start to even gradually unwind or switch off at all and that was mainly forced because I had no internet connection so my smartphone was fucking useless but day to day I would say there's*

never a time when I'm switched off from work, weekends, evenings, mornings, never.

Now… even compared to when I started which was four years ago it's kind of like 'why didn't you get my call or see my text or see my email?' because you've got your phone so there's kind of an expectation that you are always connected and that you're always seeing whatever content is there. I think it is because it's easier to get in contact with the employees, so the efficiency of the company is better and the ability for employees to always be working.

Jess, Connectigen

These responses show continuous connectivity culture and that it is now normal or '*standard*' for employees to be working during personal and non-work time. Jess discusses checking her phone throughout the day, after work, and even into the night. Her response shows that she does not feel in control of her connectivity and feels that she can only disconnect when the technology fails. Jess also pinpoints negative and accusatory reactions when her response is not immediate, portrayed by the question '*why didn't you respond…?*' She notes that this immediacy expectation did not exist when she first started working for Connectigen.

Yes I think that there is an expectation because you can access your mail you are available and we also have Skype for business which is our internal instant messaging communication platform and because I have that installed in my phone most people do, it actually shows that you're always available unless you manually turn it off, so throughout the evening, the early hours of the day you can often get messages from people on the other side of the world who are either ignorant of or are ignoring time differences and are trying to get in touch with you.

Aaron, manager, Connectigen

Advances in mobile communication technology mean that there are no longer any time zone barriers. Aaron's response shows that unless he manually turns off the Skype application on his phone (which he perhaps does not feel like he can do) he continually feels the pressure from expectations to be available to customers from different time zones. He notes that due to the removal of temporal boundaries, customers are now '*either ignorant of or are ignoring time differences'.* This may also mean that due to the expectation for continuous availability, the concepts of work and non-work times and what is considered to be appropriate in terms of business contact hours are being redefined. This can further create experiences of absent agency. Other participants also talk about temporal pressures:

> *He* (the manager) *needs to answer it 24/7. We expect him to answer immediately because that's what he expects from us. He will only contact us if he's in some kind of emergency or needs information quickly, so he doesn't like to wait.*
>
> *The moment they send a text the stopwatch is on and they're* (co-workers) *thinking why are you not responding. So if 4 of them responded and I have not, I'd feel the pressure, I feel like I have to comment something back because everyone else has done so. I comply because they do mention it 'why have you not responded?' but they would have a more polite way like 'are you alright?' Usually for our lunch meeting everyone is agreeing for lunchtime, so someone would say 'oh are you so busy you cannot text or email?'*
>
> *Sometimes I get reminded why I did not respond to a call or a text message. It's just if you don't respond it's a sign that you're not interested… They want to believe that you are intentionally avoiding and don't want to be involved in certain matters, it can sometimes lead to a lot of resentment.*
>
> Ahmed, Nomilos

These extracts show that there is no tolerance for waiting and an increased pressure

for speed. Pressure is placed on both managers and workers for timely responses. The word '*emergency*' also creates a sense of urgent time pressure; however, what constitutes '*emergency*' is unclear. This suggests that employees might feel like they have to be prepared to respond to managers immediately at any point in time as the meaning of emergency may be ambiguous for employees and managers. This also suggests a power imbalance between Ahmed and his manager when Ahmed states that his manager '*doesn't like to wait'.*

Ahmed also invokes the metaphor of a stopwatch – suggesting that there is a lot of pressure in terms of time. He perceives the need to respond to messages and emails instantly, to which he complies in order to avoid conflict or resentment from his co-workers. The resentment noted by Ahmed may lead to reduced well-being as it is a negative emotion that can reduce satisfaction within the workplace relationship. Participants in this study talked about the increasing speed of communication, the new or increased expectations regarding timeliness and the reduced agency to maintain any temporal boundaries or rules for response time:

> *Yes well communication is on demand now, if you don't answer the phone they leave a message and the message can be frustrating.*
>
> Matt, Kiwiprax

> *I think that's changed as well as the workforce sort of evolved and there definitely does seem to be a bit of a mentality that you should be replying to emails straight away which I don't think we used to have and you should because it's on your phones you get them straight away and you should reply, people are respectful but there is an element of you're always contactable now. Mainly it would be around the email to be honest, and the expectation (from co-workers). There is an element of we're kind of always on so they want a reply as quickly as possible so that would be the biggest expectation, is around the speed and reply.*
>
> Claire, manager, Connectigen

> *We are definitely having to be more on-call so, especially for my particular role, if there is something happening at the end of the month or end of the quarter I have to be available, so I'm checking it more constantly at the end of the month and I'm expected to reply to stuff at the end of the month so even if it's in the evening I'll still have to reply to emails and stuff like that.*
>
> Kanisha, Connectigen

These responses suggest that at times these workers experience absent agency and feel like they have to reply to messages and emails immediately. Kanisha's response in particular implies that working from home or after-hours actually creates problems. These problems arise due to prioritisation of work during personal or family time, and inability to switch off. When work cuts into non-work time it can create conflict with family responsibilities and lead to reduced well-being for these participants, as conflict reduces satisfaction and increases negative affect.

Another implication of these responses is that perhaps due to the removal of temporal and time zone boundaries, individuals (at various levels of organisational hierarchy) are becoming less tolerant of waiting (even if it is frustrating) and seek near-instant response, which smartphone connectivity enables. The created pressure and resulting negative feelings (such as frustration) can further erode connective agency and subjective well-being.

Interpersonal elements

Experiences of absent agency can stem from specific social elements that reduce control over participants' personal connectivity. These elements include social norms and resulting pressure, managerial and concertive control, and the increasing culture of hyper connectivity.

Social norms can lead to individuals being continuously connected, and participants experience expectations and pressures and concertive control (from co-workers,

managers and organisations). This suggests a culture of overwork. The pressure is so strong that it erodes personal agency over connectivity to work for these participants:

> *Personally I think every staff member should have the option to decide how much technology they want in their life, especially from work, because in personal space you can control (*technology*)… I only want to talk when I'm ready to talk, sometimes a want a quiet space when I don't think or don't talk anything, when you're not in the best mood and someone wants to talk to you, you end up making them feel quite bad, unintentionally.*
>
> Ahmed, Nomilos

Ahmed's response shows how a lack of control over connectivity is also associated with negative affect (and reduced well-being) for both him and others. He believes workers should be active agents when it comes to their connectivity levels and technology use. As highlighted by other participants, smartphone provision by organisations actually encourages continuous connectivity use rather than balanced or healthy use:

> The reason Kiwiprax provides smartphones is '*so that we can be at the constant beck and call of our members, no, I think it's so we can be responsible to our members, I think that is really crucial, that while I'm saying I'm hating it I don't hate the members, I hate the constant demand on my time but I think that it's very important that we are always available to our members.*
>
> Kelly, Kiwiprax

Through language and the repetitive use of the word '*hate*', Kelly shows strong resentment (a highly negative affect) towards having to accept continuous connectivity but at the same time feels that she has a professional responsibility to be connected. Her expression '*at the constant beck and call of our members'* suggests she feels a complete lack of agency to switch her smartphone off or not respond to member calls.

You can't see my wink, but you know, the pressure of always working is… it's required so I think they give us smartphones because we are expected to be in touch. It's impossible to have downtime with the phone, so I'm not entirely fond of it, no. I can quite often feel annoyed when people are calling me or texting me constantly. Oh I'd be lost (if taken away), I'd be like completely lost plus they're so bloody expensive that I'd be annoyed but yeah if it was taken away from me I would freak out, I'd be like 'how am I to get in touch with anybody, how are they to get in touch with me?' so yes I am very attached to it but not in a positive way.

Jess, Connectigen

Jess' 'wink' implies that the organizational provision of smartphones is a deliberate action pressuring workers to stay connected. This suggests that new expectations are arising from supplying smartphone devices that enable workers' (near) continuous connection in these organisations. The organisational provision of smartphones may be deliberate to pressure or encourage these workers to be '*always working*' and connected to work. Jess' response also reveals her highly negative emotions as she reflects on feeling like she needs the device and is strongly attached to connectivity but it is a very negative attachment, suggesting that it leads to eroded subjective well-being for Jess.

Personally I think that it (the pressure) *is coming from within the organisation. I think he* (the manager) *wants it to have on us all the time and answer every single call that comes through. Previously there were some issues with people complaining about us not answering our phone and he's using that to see if we can curb that behaviour. We've only been under him for about a year so prior to that we were led by a very different team leader and they pretty much left us to our own devices whereas now he's looking into implementing all sort of changes which we personally deem as being counterproductive so there's a little bit of a strain there.*

We tried to avoid getting cell phones because of that extra pressure like 'well now you can take it wherever you want, you should be contactable wherever', so we actively tried to avoid that, but management decided that no, we should have cell phones, that's why I don't like them at all. I think generally speaking we didn't like the fact that we were told that we were getting the phones and that was done without consultation with us.

Pippin, Nomilos

In this reflection, the pressure to always be working, the pressure to stay connected and to work after hours appears to come from the organisation and managers rather than the customers. Pippin's response also suggests that managers use customer complaints as an excuse to pressure employees to remain connected to work after hours. The way he says '*curb*' when talking about the manager's attempt to stop workers from not being continuously connected suggests that the manager tries to exercise power over his employees' connectivity behaviours. These extracts show his resentment towards management for their provision of smartphones to employees without consulting them and managerial attempts to '*curb*' employee non-responsiveness, both of which highlight managerial control over employee connectivity behaviours. Although Pippin values his agency, he also reveals that his employer, Nomilos, encourages prioritization of work over non-work activities because they issue smartphones to employees against their wishes. This is further evident by Pippin's expression '*there's a little bit of a strain there'*, suggesting his (and his co-workers') experiences of absent agency have increased, created by connectivity expectations. Pippin's response suggests reduced well-being as he is unhappy when he feels he has no agency over his connectivity amount. The idea of customer expectations being the key source of connectivity pressure is also highlighted in this response from a manager:

Returning calls particularly to members is so important. Given that the union is what I call an upside down organisation we consider our bosses to be our members so other people and other organisers just prefer to

have the phone on especially if they have workers who work at night. Given that we are in a 24/7 economy and we have members working 24/7 it's not just the people who work from 8 to 6 get the full services of the union.

Ronald, manager, Kiwiprax

Ronald's response implies that members and customers are the real bosses. This suggests that he expects his employees to be responsive to work inquiries around the clock, using members' needs as a justification for his expectations for employee connectivity and he refers to them as '*our bosses*'. He further uses contemporary working norms as an excuse as he says '*we are in a 24/7 economy and we have members working 24/7'.* Another manager's response contrasts with Ronald's belief that workers should be constantly connected:

I would be disappointed if they (employees) *felt that they had to be contactable and if by having a phone that they were available for work questions at any time of day or night. I think in general in business the always on nature of having smartphones everywhere I think it creates unfair expectations on people at times and I think it takes a really strong culture to try to push back against that and it needs to happen right across the company because for most people, if their manager sends them a message in the middle of the night, they'll feel obliged to respond to it and I think that's generally unfair.*

Aaron, manager, Connectigen

Aaron's response suggests that he perceives continuous connectivity expectations as '*unfair*' and believes that there should be resistance against those expectations and behaviours. However, he also believes that it would take the whole organisation to come together and that it would require great effort - '*really strong culture to try to push back against that*' – in order for resistance to be successful. Aaron's response implies that he wants employees to have control over own connectivity instead of

managerial control. His response links to the idea of proxy or social agency, implying that he believes there is no other way to truly experience connectivity agency.

The findings of this research show that it is not just lower level employees who experience absent agency. Due to the growing social expectations to be constantly available, managers are also (if not even more so) experiencing pressure. These following responses show how managerial absence of agency and lack of privacy becomes visible to subordinates. This suggests that managers are under surveillance and have no agency to switch off. Employees at lower levels can see how the lack of agency and control creates negative effects for work and personal domains and as a result for well-being of managers:

> *If I was a team leader I'd have more issues because I would have to answer my phone 24 hours, so in my current role I'm better off than a team leader or manager. It doesn't matter if you're sleeping or cooking,* (if you are a manager) *people would still call you for urgent queries.*
>
> Ahmed, Nomilos

> *I can see my colleagues from more senior positions, they feel obliged to answer their phones, I can see they're stressed, so yeah I can recognize other people under stress and strain due to their role or status in the organisation, they feel obliged and responsible to answer everything and I can see that wearing away at them and how that affects the team and their home life.*
>
> Patrick, Nomilos

> *His* (manager's) *phone calls get diverted to his cell phone so I think he's pretty much contactable around the clock. I know that he sometimes replies to emails at 11:30 at night.*
>
> Pippin, Nomilos

These responses show that the pressure for these managers and senior workers to stay

connected is pervasive. Managers and supervisors are perceived to be worse off in terms of their well-being as they (seemingly) have to respond to everything. Employees at lower levels perceived that managers' agency is absent and this erodes their well-being with constant connectivity '*wearing away at them*'. This is also echoed in the following managerial response:

> *Sadly work kind of bleeds into life all the time so it's always present. The most frustrating thing is that interconnectivity with the global organisation and people's expectations that you* (as a manager) *will respond regardless of the time of day or night, there's a sense of expectation that if you don't respond then you're slacking off.*
>
> Aaron, manager, Connectigen

Aaron's response suggests that due to absent agency over his connectivity he also experiences lower subjective well-being. He is the only manager in the study to talk about highly negative emotions ('sadness' and 'frustration') linking to absent agency and increased (uncontrollable) connectivity. This might be because Aaron has not internalised the hyper-connectivity expectations and does not engage in addictive connectivity. These factors might reduce the perception of negative affect or negative well-being outcomes.

It seems that organisational culture (norms that exist in participant organisations) is one of the interpersonal factors that normalises hyper connectivity and erodes agency for these participants. This culture of constant connectivity is viewed as a negative phenomenon by these workers as it prevents them from being able to disconnect from work:

> *I think what it* (smartphone technology) *has done is kind of created a culture where you're always at work and I think that's a real problem because our job is kind of all-encompassing you know, you're busy as hell and it's really hard to step away from the job and I think the smartphone makes it harder because you can always do emails you*

know it's like 'I'll just have a look and check emails' so I think that makes it harder to step away from the job.

Ross, Kiwiprax

It's all part of the culture, that's the reason less women work in the union because of that 24/7 thing, there's no time for boyfriends, babies or anything else and I definitely think that technology is adding to that. So if you're a young male with no family and no children, no responsibilities, you're more inclined to get promoted within the union, you can dedicate the hours, whereas for a woman because of that culture of overwork and over commitment I think it becomes harder. It's all part of the culture which I don't necessarily see as healthy, there's a high level of burn out for organisers.

I believe it's cultural, it's ingrained cultural practice that that is how a union organiser always is, so busy, busy and if you're not displaying that behaviour you're not doing your job you're not working hard enough and I see it as a recognized culture within a union movement that we need to address. I see a lot when we're in meetings or when we have speakers, we would all be looking at our phones; it becomes the norm.

Kelly, Kiwiprax

Kelly indicates that some employees, herself included, feel powerless or like they have no agency to disconnect from work. Kelly's response implies that the Kiwiprax culture of constant connectivity disadvantages female employees in particular as they cannot have both '*commitment*' to work and *'time for boyfriends, babies or anything else'*. It may be that unlike young, childfree workers who can commit to long work hours, employees with child or elder care responsibilities may be unable to prioritise work and as a result miss out on benefits and promotions.

These responses show that cultural pressure for constant connectivity encourages work intensification for these participants. This reveals an irony as Ross and Kelly work

in a trade union whose whole purpose is to fight for and enable fair and healthy working conditions for other workers. The responses suggest that union workers are expected to fulfil their role at the detriment of their own well-being. This also implies that due to these interpersonal pressures and eroded connectivity agency, these workers are also experiencing reduced well-being through the negative affect and burnout. The response from Kelly also shows that she believes that the normalization of connectivity is happening at the cultural level specifically within her organisation, Kiwiprax. However, similar responses were found across all three participating organisations. Considering that these organisations are all from different industries and have different structures suggests that these connectivity norms are not confined to just one type of organisation or nature of work:

> *I think it's the culture as well, definitely a culture has developed where people are always on and I mean it's kind of standard for people to be on email late at night as well so I would say very hard to switch off.*
>
> Claire, manager, Connectigen

> Connectigen provides smartphones *because they want you to be also available outside of your* (work) *hours. Our motto, or what Connectigen stands for is 'anywhere, anytime'. I need to be responsive towards Connectigen but also towards the customers and I think the customers are even more important because if something goes wrong the first person to call will be me.*
>
> Kayla, Connectigen

These responses show that connectivity expectations have increased and these workers recognise that this is particularly true for remote and mobile work. Kayla implies that even the organisational motto creates the pressure to be continuously connected and that may mean that individuals who work for Connectigen must accept this norm as part of being a member of the organisation. These responses convey a sense of great pressure for all individuals to stay continuously connected to work.

So my phone is constant, if it goes an hour without a message it's a miracle. To be constantly available I feel huge pressure, I feel that this job has no off button. The constant nature of the phone, the constant presence, I do dream about throwing it out of the window. I'm becoming haunted by my phone, I hate hearing it ring, I hear the work phone ring and I'm like 'ah fuck'… If colleagues want me on the weekends they have no hesitation in texting me on my work phone on the weekend and then I don't see it and I feel guilty.

Kelly, Kiwiprax

In the earlier section on abundant agency, Kelly talks about the social connection connectivity enables and how she loves being connected to other people all the time, suggesting some positive subjective well-being outcomes. This would suggest that her experiences of agency influence whether the constant social connection brings her positive or negative affect. When she is feeling agentic about maintaining the social connection she experiences positive affect and improved subjective well-being. The above response however suggests that as soon as she stops feeling agentic, feels the phone's '*constant presence'* and the forced constant social connection, she experiences highly negative affect such as hate and guilt, meaning that she starts to experience eroded subjective well-being. This shows how for these workers agency can shift or move between abundance and absence, and be mirrored by certain subjective well-being outcomes, depending on the different interpersonal elements present at different times.

Agency absence summary

The three elements within absent agency show that when these workers experience a lack of control over their connectivity they seem to face negative well-being outcomes. Absent agency arises when workers experience feeling out of control, concertive control and fear of negative consequences, addiction, and an inability to prioritise family or non-work relationships. These experiences may lead to emotional distress, burnout, negative affect, dangerous or unhealthy behaviours and attitudes, all

contributing to a negative impact on subjective well-being, suggesting a link between absent agency and eroded subjective well-being.

Ambiguous agency

To this point, the findings of the study show that workers can experience either agency abundance or absence, depending on the intrapersonal, temporal and interpersonal factors. At times, however, the participants of this study seem to experience 'ambiguous agency'. I have coined the term 'ambiguous agency' and define this type of agency as an experience where there is no clarity about whether an individual does or does not have control over their connectivity. When participant experience ambiguous agency they might feel unsure or conflicted about their ability to control their connectivity amount, frequency and timing. Habitual checking of connective devices can also be interpreted as ambiguous agency since it can be both an automatic or non-conscious behaviour and contain aspects of intentionality (which is a part of agency). This type of agentic experience was highly pervasive, with all of my participants experiencing ambiguous agency for at least some part of their day.

This type of agency experience includes habitual behaviours, and can arise from experiences of conflicting beliefs and emotions, having blurred temporal boundaries and contradictory social expectations, observing contradictory modelled behaviours and experiences of surveillance. The following sections consider how these factors can create ambiguous agency experiences and increase uncertainty in worker connectivity agency and subjective well-being.

Intrapersonal elements

Findings suggest that the intrapersonal elements that contribute to experiences of ambiguous connectivity agency include engaging in habitual behaviours, lacking or avoiding reflexivity about connectivity behaviours, and having or encountering contradictory or conflicting beliefs and emotions.

In early agency literature (Giddens, 1984) it is argued that habitual behaviour is the opposite of intentionality. However Emirbayer and Mische (1998) and Wilkinson (2014)

argue that habits are still intentional behaviours and are therefore agentic. Following this logic, connectivity behaviours that are done out of habit can be considered as part of ambiguous agency. When talking about connectivity behaviours, participants commonly highlighted their connectivity habits:

> *I would like to remove some apps off it that are there to sort of disconnect myself further. So I have all of my notifications off now, I only engage with the phone if I actively do it rather than the phone telling me to look at things, so I'm trying to train it a little bit I guess and make it sort of on my terms. I know I habitually look at it all the time and that's what I'm trying to break. I tend to have it with me at all times.*
>
> Aaron, manager, Connectigen

> *I'd say in the morning first thing when I'm sitting down with coffee I would check my phone to see if there are any new emails that have come through or any messages or if I missed any phone calls during the night. Then basically rest of the day I'll be checking my emails. The most frustrating thing for me is that I tend to look at it unnecessary, you know it's there, I check it all the time, I feel like you should check it twice or thrice a day but because it's always there I always look at it.*
>
> Murray, Nomilos

> *Responding to messages straight away has changed my habits in a way because I see it as unwanted communication, sometimes I want quiet time and I cannot have that. But if we have a priority call and we miss the call from the call center we can always access it through the email and then it becomes very handy and I think 'oh this is so useful'… sometimes it's conflicting thoughts – do I really need to have that or not.*
>
> Ahmed, Nomilos

These responses show that for these workers smartphone usage has become a habit and that even though it can be frustrating it is difficult to change this behaviour. This

suggests that agency in this case is ambiguous or unclear. Aaron's response further suggests that he wants to gain agency by '*trying to train it a little bit*' and turning off notifications during meetings (he did turn them off during the interview) to gain control over his connectivity. This suggests that he does not feel fully agentic. The habitual checking appears to be a common occurrence among most participants, but one that creates negative emotions, as seen in both Murray's and Ahmed's responses which show self-reflection and unhappiness at their own behaviour. These connectivity habits may have developed as a result of organisational pressure to stay connected to work, or perhaps they were formed as a coping mechanism to deal with the large amount of sent and received emails and messages. The cause of these habits remain unclear, meaning that they may be hard to change or address. The responses suggest that habitual connectivity and ambiguous agency create negative affect (such as frustration and confliction), which may lower their subjective well-being.

Ambiguous agency can also occur when workers are not reflexive enough about their connectivity behaviour. This leads to contradictory perceptions, meaning that while workers might think they are in control, their behaviours (such as constant checking or always having their smartphone on their person) suggest otherwise. Once these participants start to think or reflect on their connectivity behaviours they become aware of the contradictions:

> *I knew it was getting too much, I sort of manage myself, so I'm not looking at it after work or on weekend or on holidays. So just when I come into work I do my work and I can leave home or personal life. But I do take my phone everywhere. I can easily manage it, I don't have to pick up every phone call every time and get back to them within 30 minutes. I use it a lot, it's with me all of the times. I can choose to answer when I see caller ID and I can see who is calling me and if it's a colleague I know to pick it up because it's a colleague ringing me, but my personal cell phone they can also contact me on that. That's how I manage it, if people really need to contact me they have my personal cell phone, but I carry it around with me everywhere.*

Patrick, Nomilos

Yes my phone is always on silent, I just don't like the ringtones, so every half an hour I check the phone and it's because I don't want the phone to control me and that's the only reason.

There have been moments. So if I send an email at 3 pm and switch off my phone I feel the need to check. So that keeps me quite occupied, especially office related stuff, if it's of value to me sometimes I don't have the patience to wait until the following day so I do break the rules by checking the phone.

Ahmed, Nomilos

These responses are also contradictory as, while Ahmed perceives that he has agency to control his connectivity in the first statement, the second statement about having unwanted communication and feeling compelled to check his phone every 30 minutes suggest that he might not actually be fully in control of his connectivity. He also admits to breaking 'the rules' (not being constantly connected) by checking his phone after hours. These contradictions have unclear implications for his well-being, however, breaking one's own rules can lead to feelings of self-control failure (Halfmann & Rieger, 2019), which is linked to negative affect and consequently reduces subjective well-being. The experiences of ambiguous agency are also seen in other participants' responses:

On one level yes I am more available if things phone in but on another because I've taken care of most things in the day I actually genuinely have more leisure time as a result of that when I do get home at night so it's paradoxical really, you might be available but you can choose to action that availability or not because you still have the choice to answer a call or not.

Margaret, manager, Kiwiprax

Margaret's response suggests she creates some control over her connectivity as she feels like she '*can choose to action that availability or not*'. However, she goes on to say:

> *I probably require things of myself that I tell other people not to do, like the turning it off on nights and weekends and those sorts of things so yeah I'm a bit ill-disciplined in that sense.*
>
> Margaret, manager, Kiwiprax

These responses show how new reflections of participants (as a result of being asked certain interview questions) lead to ambiguity and confusion in terms of connectivity agency. While these workers believe that they are in control and that they are happy with their amount of connectivity, their reflections show a lack of control at the same time. This ambiguous agency is particularly evident among managers who sacrifice their family time for work availability but paint it in a positive light – as can be seen in Margaret's response.

Contradictory beliefs about connectivity also create ambiguity. These participants realise that there are both benefits and drawbacks of continuous connectivity and as a result are conflicted about whether they should be accepting of or resistant of continuous connectivity:

> *The way I use my smartphone, because it's a system, the smartphone itself dictates how I interact almost, for example, I use outlook on the phone to do my calendar so I press the plus button, type the information, press date button so it's kind of conscripted.*
>
> *I think in terms of behaviour it has paired itself with my life very well, it's very interfering actually but it's also necessary, without it I think we wouldn't have communications.*
>
> Brett, Kiwiprax

Brett's response shows his confusion as he refers to connectivity as both necessary and positive and seems satisfied in his comment that it has 'paired with life very well'. Contrastingly he refers to it as interfering and then again as 'necessary'. Other respondents also display strong conflicting emotions towards connectivity norms ranging from highly positive to highly negative, suggesting that ambiguous agency is mirrored by ambiguous subjective well-being outcomes:

> *It's a love-hate relationship, sometimes I just think I'd rather be uncontactable but then I actually feel a level of anxiety. A good example, I was coming into work today, I couldn't find my phone, it's amazing it hasn't gone off, because it's such a crucial part of the work, but I was anxious, really anxious, and a real sense of relief when I actually found it, which is quite disturbing. It's become kind of almost indispensable in an unhealthy way.*
>
> Ross, Kiwiprax

> *I don't like it (smartphone) at all and it's like a love-hate relationship thing which I don't know if you get this coming out of research but I know I have to have it and I know I have to constantly check it and some stuff I find addictive like Instagram I absolutely love, I'm always on it but at the same time I have an aversion to having it because I just want some downtime.*
>
> Jess, Connectigen

> *I forgot it once and I must say it was actually a liberating day because I felt less tired or less stressed; on the other hand it's very useful as well so it's a chicken or the egg problem.*
>
> Kayla, Connectigen

> *My argument* (for constantly using the phone) *is that I feel more comfortable reading it because I don't want to be reactive when I'm back from leave so that's why I do it. I feel more comfortable reading it*

that's what I told my team leader that that's just me, if I moan about it it's my fault.

Lee, Nomilos

Agency becomes ambiguous when these participants experience conflicting emotions and contradictory feelings. The conflicting emotions seen in these responses show the uncertainty and confusion created by experiences of ambiguous agency. These responses show highly charged emotions such as love and hate, anxiety and relief, addiction and aversion, all seemingly experienced at the same time. For example, Ross states that he would rather be 'uncontactable' but at the same time experiences anxiety when he is disconnected. The conflict can also be seen in Jess' expression '*I don't like it … but have to have it*' and Kayla's reflection on feeling liberated when disconnected from work but also finding the connection useful. Lee's response also shows conflicting emotions. While he reflects on his lack of control as his own fault he also implies that he has to be continuously connected because it provides him comfort, even if it is at the cost of agency and control.

Such intense contradictory emotions create high levels of arousal and use up mental energy. This would suggest reduced well-being in the long term for workers who also commonly experience ambiguous agency. When workers experience ambiguous agency it can also be mirrored by contradictory or negative outcomes for subjective well-being because people tend to avoid uncertainty since it creates stress (as suggested by Ross' emphasis on feeling strong anxiety). This suggests that ambiguous agency in regards to connectivity to work is linked to lower subjective well-being.

Temporal elements

Ambiguous agency also arises from the presence of ambiguous temporal elements. Connective technologies and resulting erosion of temporal boundaries has led to the blurring of the work and non-work time boundary. This blurriness, along with increasing downtime work and contradictory time expectations, contributes to ambiguous agency experiences for workers.

Ambiguous agency experiences are likely to be more common when the temporal boundary between work and non-work becomes blurred. This is because while flexibility increases opportunities for people to choose when to work, at the same time the lack of temporal boundaries can create too much flexibility. This means workers are unable to figure out when work time finishes and non-work time starts and subsequently cannot plan their day or control their schedules:

> *Yeah so the problem is with flexibility I've been able to do work from home and come in late and not necessarily having to be in the office and stuff, it just really comes down to your work load and getting stuff done on time and so sometimes if I have had to do other things during the day then that means that I am working in the evening so it's really just balance but that also means that sometimes I'm still thinking about stuff and check my phone or whatever late into the night.*
>
> Kanisha, Connectigen

Kanisha further elaborates on the 'problem with flexibility' in her diary:

> *Some questions able to be answered quickly (good), still using in the evenings for some work-related activity, which I prefer not to do for family time.*
>
> Kanisha, Connectigen

This reflection directly contradicts the benefits of flexibility, as seen during abundant agency experiences and as suggested by literature (Wajcman, 2008). Increased flexibility and blurring of temporal boundaries also results in redefined concepts of home time and work time:

> *Most of those* (other managers) *would keep phones on and some of them have social media responsibilities and you can see that happening at any time of the day or night often more when they get home and put their kids to bed. They maybe make a few social media posts. Some supervisors would also be using the phone in that way not necessarily so*

much for calls just to keep that continual turnover of social media stories and monitoring them and that might be the thing that they do more in their so called home time.

Ronald, manager, Kiwiprax

*I think there is an expectation that I check my emails after hours because of my smartphone there's kind of that expectation that if I got something through at 8 pm I would generally respond by 10 pm and the only reason that's an expectation is because of the fact that I have a smartphone. If (*in the past) *I tried to contact them (*co-workers) *at 9pm they didn't reply then that's fine but now I'll be like 'Ryan, why have you not responded to me? I texted you at 9pm and it's now 10 and I still don't know where we're at for this particular thing' which is a completely unrealistic expectation because it's out of hours and everything but there is that pressure that I'm expecting him to respond or vice versa and they're expecting me.*

Jess, Connectigen

So that is the sad part of it, in my situation if it's just for work it's great but it's also bad because you're not really only using it during working time. For me, I refuse to have two phones on me so I just use my work phone, and maybe that's bad because if I had my own phone I'd just switch the work phone off. So there's no separation. The issue is now if an email comes through to me on a Saturday morning and I'm not at work and I look at it and think 'can this wait till Monday' and then I forward it onto someone else, which is kind of wrong and we should leave it till we're back at work.

Murray, Nomilos

These responses suggest that when temporal boundaries become blurred, and there is no separation between work and non-work times, individuals experience ambiguous

agency. Jess feels time pressure to be available after hours that she did not experience in the past. Jess' and Murray's responses also suggest that the source of pressure is unclear, ambiguous and all-encompassing. When pressure sources are ambiguous it becomes difficult for workers to stop or control it, and as a result feelings of agency are reduced or made ambiguous. Internal conflict about temporal expectations can be seen in Jess' response when she talks about the '*completely unrealistic expectation'*. This suggests that she understands that her expectation for co-workers to be continuously connected to work including after-hours is not feasible, however, she continues to hold this expectation and as a result feels conflicting emotions. Unclear separation of temporal domains and resulting ambiguous agency can create conflict for 'family time' and negative affect, such as sadness as seen in Murray's response. Work-family conflict and negative affect are linked to reduced satisfaction and subsequently reduced subjective well-being.

Working in down or 'dead' time can also be interpreted as ambiguous agency experience because it means that the individual is still working even when s/he perceives this work as a personal choice. Doing work activities during downtime is seen as problematic by some workers; however, they continue to engage in it:

> *I think the only thing I would say is there comes a time where you need some downtime so it's probably something that we all need to work on in business is when do we shut off, when do we shut off being present with families outside of business I think that's something that the line is very blurred these days and I heard, we were talking about work-life balance and I was talking with one of the directors and I said 'oh maybe this… ask this director because I'm not very good with work-life balance'.*
>
> Claire, manager, Connectigen

This response by Claire suggests that ambiguous agency and the resulting inability to manage one's work-life balance is a common problem. Judging by Claire's and Ronald's reflections, having ambiguous temporal boundaries and ambiguous agency is particularly common at the higher levels of the hierarchy, suggesting that managers

and senior workers may experience more issues in terms of their subjective well-being.

While some participants view downtime work negatively, others offer a contrasting perspective. These responses suggest that there is a need to fill dead time with work and that downtime is perceived to be bad:

> *What I tend to do is when I'm waiting I'll check my emails. I use it in between times to make contact, often when I'm in the car, a lot of the time that's the best time because it's dead time and I use that for making phone calls.*
>
> Ross, Kiwiprax

> *I can check my emails wherever I am so that includes downtime, so for example if I'm sitting in my car waiting for a meeting rather than you know just looking up into the air during work time I'm actually doing work, I can make calls to somebody at work or whatever it is, and getting things done in what would otherwise be downtime.*
>
> Tara, Kiwiprax

> *The smartphones are just so good for availability, it's good for dead time in meetings, I have a meeting this afternoon and I'll probably go over a little bit early because of the traffic I don't know what the parking will be like and in those 10 minutes there I'll be able to fill it in with emails with co-workers and colleagues. Also, if I'm sitting in a meeting with someone I would clear my emails on it.*
>
> Dean, manager, Nomilos

Ross and Tara's responses show how they use downtime between meetings or while in their cars to complete work tasks. Dean's response goes even further when he talks about clearing his emails during face-to-face meetings. This suggests that meetings are perceived as dead time which needs to be filled with work, even if this behaviour is perceived as anti-social (using devices during face-to-face interactions). While these

responses suggest that these individuals perceive agency and control over connectivity it can be argued that they are actually experiencing a lack of control – as they are still working instead of engaging in other activities. Using the smartphone during dead time shows that participants have become less tolerant in terms of waiting and their increasing use of smartphones during these times removes time for reflection or break, both of which are important for subjective well-being as they help to reduce negative affect and increase positive affect.

Interpersonal elements

Experiences of ambiguous agency can arise due to certain interpersonal elements. These elements include the conflicting social expectations and resulting avoidance behaviour, contradictory modelled behaviour and surveillance effects.

As seen in the literature, societal beliefs and attitudes are currently divided on how connective technologies should be used to derive benefits and avoid issues for interpersonal relationships. The two conflicting discourses argue whether disconnecting or connecting is most beneficial for individual well-being as well as for interpersonal relations (Harmon & Mazmanian's, 2013). Both of these discourses promote unrealistic expectations and create conflicting social expectations for workers where they feel pressured to be connected and to disconnect at the same time. These clashing expectations are also seen in the current study when workers talk about contradictory expectations of their managers, co-workers and organisations. The following responses highlight the at times contradictory messages that organisations send to their employees in terms of connectivity:

> *Connectigen are really, really passionate about work-life balance so they want you to have a social life, they want to look after you, they know that if you're working all the time then you're probably not going to be a good person, you're not going to be good at your job.*

Ryan, Connectigen

Because Connectigen is all about mobility of the experience and mobility of the workplace, which means you can work from wherever whenever, you do feel a little bit pressured at times to respond to emails at all different hours of the day. And you will often - because it's a multinational organisation - you will often get emails at, look, it's possible for you to get an email at every single hour of the day, because there's people working in every single part of the globe.

Aiden, Connectigen

Actually they encourage us to switch off our phone after work so we don't take work back to home. Sometimes I get reminded why I did not respond to a call or a text message. It's just if you don't respond it's a sign that you're not interested and that's not always true, but that's how people perceive it unless you give them a full reason they want to believe that you are intentionally avoiding and don't want to be involved in certain matters, it can sometimes lead to a lot of resentment.

Ahmed, Nomilos

I think definitely it does cause a bit of a blurred line between where the professional life ends and the personal life starts just because you have this insidious device that's now creeping in. So I think it definitely does have that negative impact on personal life like that and Nomilos is very big at saying work-life balance but they have these things in place that seeks to erode that balance.

Pippin, Nomilos

These conflicting messages create agentic ambiguity and contradictory pressures for workers. Ryan and Aiden's responses contradict each other when they talk about Connectigen's expectations regarding worker connectivity after hours. While the organisation is '*passionate about work-life balance*' at the same time workers *'feel a*

little bit pressured … to respond to emails at all different hours of the day'. In Nomilos (which typically has a traditional 9-5 working day), Ahmed and Pippin's responses highlight the conflicting work-life balance expectations that exist in the organisation. These conflicting messages create issues for worker affect and well-being. This is particularly visible in Ahmed's response where he talks about resentment arising from mixed messages and conflicting expectations. Pippin also displays a highly negative view of technology, seen by his mistrust and suspicion of the organisation and its 'messages'. His response implies that his organisation is trying to destroy balance and create constant work through smartphones, and subsequently destroy worker agency. Pippin goes on to suggest that while Nomilos appears to be promoting work-non work balance – '*Nomilos is very big at saying work-life balance*'. The organisational norms create conflict between professional and personal life by 'blurring' the separation, making work-non work balance unachievable. This response also conveys a feeling of intense dislike for the smartphone when Pippin calls it an '*insidious device*' that suggests subtle but destructive effects, in this case on individual agency to have work-non work balance. Other participants also note the unequal and ambiguous impact of constant connectivity on work and personal domains:

> *It's only recently I've started to worry about how it affects people relating to each other and some of the dangers of that (continuous connectivity), but that's not been within my work life, in that I feel generally more positive about it, but in my personal and family life I feel less positive.*
>
> Tara, Kiwiprax

Tara talks about feeling the pressure to continuously check her phone for any work related messages. She reflects on how continuous connectivity is positive for her work life but this is at the cost of her personal and family life, as implied by her statement '*but in my personal and family life I feel less positive'.* This might suggest that ambiguous connectivity agency is mirrored by ambiguous well-being outcomes, and while there might be benefits for certain aspects of life, there can also be detriments to other aspects of life, and these conflicting effects can occur simultaneously. Pippin

however only focuses on the negative aspects of connectivity:

> *Smartphones in general I think are a somewhat destructive force, I mean I don't want to sound like a Luddite or anything but I think people spend far too much time on them and you know constantly in contact with everyone I think that's a load of nonsense. People sometimes need to be able to do their own, I don't need to know what you're doing 24 hours a day, I don't need to be contacting you 24 hours a day so I personally think it can be fairly destructive.*
>
> Pippin, Nomilos

While Pippin does not want to maintain constant connectivity and views connective technology as a '*destructive force'*, he also does not want to appear like a *'Luddite',* suggesting that *disconnecting* is becoming normatively discouraged. Pippin's response suggests that he views norms for connectivity as destructive and therefore they have negative implications for well-being; however, he doesn't want to appear to resist the norms.

Due to these conflicting messages and pressures some participants feel like they must engage in avoidance behaviours in order to regain some of their agency:

> *We have some union members who are more high dependency users so they might call me with absolutely inane questions so I see their name come up on the screen and I have automatic messages and it's funny when I push the reply that says 'I'm at the cinema' when I'm actually never at the cinema.*
>
> Kelly, Kiwiprax

> **laughs* oh yes, I do find that when a number comes up I do I think about it* (answering) *and sometimes slowly reject it. Yes I would do that. I don't feel obliged to answering it every time it rings or answer text the moment it comes in, I would take my time with it. Sometimes I'll just let it ring even if I'm doing something like just now, but I'll check it* (later).

So yes sometimes (do ignore it)*, don't tell people *laughs*.*

Keith, Kiwiprax

Kelly shows active avoidance behaviours when she anticipates having to deal with '*inane questions*' from union members and makes light of her avoidance technique - the '*at the cinema*' automatic reply. While this can be seen as resistance, Kelly's pretence of non-interruptible activity rather than disconnecting completely suggests a 'quiet' form of resistance, avoiding potential negative repercussions that more direct resistance might produce. Keith also talks about avoiding connections but at the same time asks not to reveal his avoidance behaviour to other people, which conveys a belief that it might be a shameful reaction to connectivity norms. His response also suggests that if others were to find out about this behaviour he could face negative consequences. While these workers admit to avoiding connectivity at times they remain aware that they need to keep their phones on themselves (even if they do not answer immediately when contacted) in case a co-worker needs help, which suggests that rather than resisting connectivity outright some workers prefer to use avoidance techniques and feel agentic when doing so. This, however, can be interpreted as ambiguous agency since they still feel the need to hide their behaviour. Having to hide certain behaviours can reduce the feelings of agency and create negative affect (such as guilt) or mood, which may also have negative implications for subjective well-being.

Experiences of ambiguous agency are also more likely to happen when workers observe contradictory modelled behaviour, such as from their supervisors or managers:

So I feel quite sure that both Ronald and Margaret (managers) *would encourage us to put a time limit on our phone and to not answer it in the middle of the night, at the same time they also freely admit and freely answer their phone whenever you ring so though they might say one thing, again the culture is doing something quite opposite, it is contradictory behaviour, I think they would encourage me or any organiser to use their phone less but they never display that behaviour.*

Now my own behaviour is reflecting the behaviour of the culture of the organisation, my own behaviour has deteriorated since I got here.

Kelly, Kiwiprax

There are certain rules about usage as well: that we change the status in tracking software and respond to the emails. You cannot use for personal reasons, whether it's text, call or data. We tend to follow the team leader, whatever he says we do it. Just because we have a smartphone, the expectation that we always answer calls or check the email… it can create some tension between the manager and the staff.

Ahmed, Nomilos

He (team leader) *sometimes emails me in the weekend and I thought that he expects me to answer it and because I'm attached to the phone I usually answer it. So he was like 'why is he answering back'. There's a mutual understanding between me and my current team leader because he's always on the phone too.*

Lee, Nomilos

Kelly's response shows how the managerial behaviours, such as '*freely answering their phone whenever',* contradict with wanting their employees to feel more agentic and *'to use their phone less'*. Due to the display of these contradictory behaviours, workers can feel less agentic, which leads to '*deteriorated*' behaviour. Kelly's reflection on her own behaviour suggests that due to the mixed and ambiguous messages from her managers her control has also deteriorated. She believes that her own behaviour has changed to reflect managerial usage patterns and organisational culture and that this new behaviour is negative. Ahmed also notes negative interpersonal outcomes that arise due to contradictory managerial expectations and having to follow the manager's 'modelled' behaviour when he reflects on the created tension. Having to '*follow the team leader'* and '*always answer calls'* directly contradicts with Ahmed's earlier statement about Nomilos encouraging workers '*to switch off our phone after work'.*

Lee also reflects on the expectations that exist between him and his team leader. While he thinks they have a '*mutual understanding'*, the rest of his response shows that their expectations in terms of response after hours are mismatched with Lee assuming that because his team leader is always connected he should also be. These contradictory interpersonal expectations and modelled behaviours increase the experiences of ambiguous agency as workers become confused about how they should behave or start to imitate the modelled behaviour, which can also be mirrored by lower subjective well-being.

Feelings of being watched and organisational or managerial surveillance also contribute to experiences of ambiguous agency and conflicting outcomes for subjective well-being. The following reflections show how visibility and surveillance can create agentic ambiguity:

> *I think being followed in a way wherever you go, the phone actually makes a map of where you're going and what you're doing, unconsciously it's sitting in the back of my head, makes me a little uncomfortable, I think if I'm in the office I don't need a tracking device and I won't mind if they actually remove the cell phones. All staff is actually tracked. They* (team leaders) *won't check it but if they want they have the option. Team leaders don't have the tracking software, so they can choose how to use it* (the phone).
>
> Ahmed, Nomilos

> *I think it* (the connectivity) *is important, especially in a situation with your safety, I think that is probably the most important part of it, when you need to get hold of somebody in case of an emergency. A lot of the time I need to go to people's properties and speak with them, there's a lot of confrontations sometimes, so in that situation when you might get beaten up, you need to contact someone urgently, so then it is necessary. So they* (Nomilos) *have developed an app and put it on the phone where they can track you, which is not a good thing in terms of…*

you know, not to say that you'd do anything wrong but it's like big brother is watching all the time, but on the flip side of that it might be a good thing if for any reason you are not able to find anybody and there's an emergency in which you cannot use your phone the manager or superior can check it and track you down. You have to use it within the scope of what you're supposed to be doing. So there is that expectation, I've been asked months ago why my phone usage was so much, they do track the amount of phone calls you are making.

Murray Nomilos

These responses show that worker smartphone usage at Nomilos is monitored and tracked with the use of a smartphone application that is installed on worker phones, suggesting that workers are under constant surveillance. This creates the feeling of absent or ambiguous agency and the workers are conflicted about engaging in their preferred connectivity behaviours. As seen in Ahmed and Murray's reflections, employees do not know if they are being tracked, suggesting that they do not actually know if or when their manager might check on them. Despite not being aware of whether they are actually tracked, Murray's last sentence of his response suggests that worker smartphone usage is monitored, suggesting that workers are actually under constant surveillance.

As stated by Ahmed, unlike employees at lower levels, managers are not tracked, suggesting that they are not under the same level of surveillance as employees and as Ahmed states '*can choose how to use'* their smartphones. This may mean different experiences of agency due to the tracking application between managerial and employee workers. Both Ahmed and Murray express strong discomfort at the thought of management being able to track employee connectivity behaviours. This can create experiences of absent agency. However, this is not necessarily linked to negative outcomes for subjective well-being because while surveillance reduces the feelings of agency (and creates discomfort from being watched) in the case of mobile workers it also creates the feelings of safety and comfort should they need help. This means that due to surveillance and the resulting ambiguous agency; these workers may end up

experiencing conflicting emotions of comfort and discomfort simultaneously, leading to equivocal subjective well-being.

Due to the ambiguous or unclear implications for subjective well-being, workers from Kiwiprax implement surveillance and tracking on themselves:

> *I even started a professional Facebook page about it and every interaction I have reinforces that yes I am actually here I am doing my job, and I take photos and people can see where I'm at, I try to keep the public informed about what I'm doing so they can see that they're getting their money but if that dropped, if it disappeared my members would go 'hmm what the hell is that guy doing', because often people see union organizers as lazy, kind of inefficient people but I've actually recently had a lot of positive feedback and saying oh well you work too much, but it's important for them to understand that because the people I report to if I didn't have this kind of access to communications and smartphones, the people I report to wouldn't probably see what I was doing but because they can see what I'm doing I get their consent to carry on being the actant or the person that I am.*
>
> Brett, Kiwiprax

> *When Facebook first came in and it was more of a social chat among friends we even had policy that Facebook was not to be used in work time, now it's a complete tool that we use and we encourage it to be used by our staff for their work. outside of the office make continual use of the smartphone and also as we are now in more social digital media space.*
>
> Ronald, manager, Kiwiprax

> *Most of us are on Facebook and we communicate deeply personal like moving house or what you're doing on the weekend, we all comment on each other's pages so it's become very intertwined and enmeshed in*

> *each other's lives, and they're also putting up photos of what they're doing with their grandkids. I consider the social media side of it also work because I have got members on my pages. I think there's only like two colleagues, two dinosaurs that aren't on social media.*
>
> Kelly, Kiwiprax

These responses show that while Brett and Kelly have set up surveillance on themselves (suggesting agency) through their continuous use of social media, they have done so to be accountable to their organisations and be continuously available for work, suggesting absence of agency due to interpersonal pressure to stay connected. Kelly's quip about '*two dinosaurs that aren't on social media*' also creates the implication that it is shameful and old-fashioned to not make oneself visible and available through social media. These responses link to the idea of panopticon (Foucault, 1979) where individuals internalise surveillance and engage in behaviours that increase surveillance on themselves further. This panopticon can also be seen in the above reflections. Although these workers might feel agentic because they choose to use social media, the fact that they are watched and encouraged to remain so (as seen in Ronald's response) suggests that they are experiencing ambiguous agency as they place themselves under surveillance. The implications of this ambiguous agency experience for these participants' subjective well-being are unclear; while these behaviours increase feelings of being accountable (which potentially increases satisfaction and positive affect), the created work extension and intensification may also be linked to highly negative well-being outcomes such as emotional exhaustion and stress.

Agency ambiguity summary

These findings show that workers can feel abundant agency or absent agency but can also experience ambiguous or conflicting agency and well-being. Ambiguous agency experiences arise when workers engage in habitual behaviours, hold or observe contradictory beliefs, experience blurred work-non work time, and observe and mimic contradictory connectivity behaviours. Agency also becomes ambiguous when workers

have to hide avoidance behaviour and when they feel like they are being watched. These factors are mirrored by unclear outcomes for subjective well-being as individuals experience conflicting strong affect, ambiguity, resentment and satisfaction all at the same time.

Summary of findings

My research shows that these participants can experience three different types of agency, which I have termed 'abundant', 'absent' and ambiguous'. When these workers are feeling in control of their connectivity, are able to work flexibly, and have perceived social support, they experience abundant agency. Absent agency arises when these workers feel out of control, feel pressured through concertive control, engage in addictive connectivity behaviours, and perceive an inability to prioritise family or non-work relationships. Workers an also experience ambiguous agency when they engage in habitual behaviours, hold contradictory beliefs or feel conflicting emotions, experience blurred time boundaries, observe contradictory connectivity behaviours and feel like they are under surveillance. As workers can experience shifts in agency, their subjective well-being mirrors these shifts to produce different outcomes and experiences.

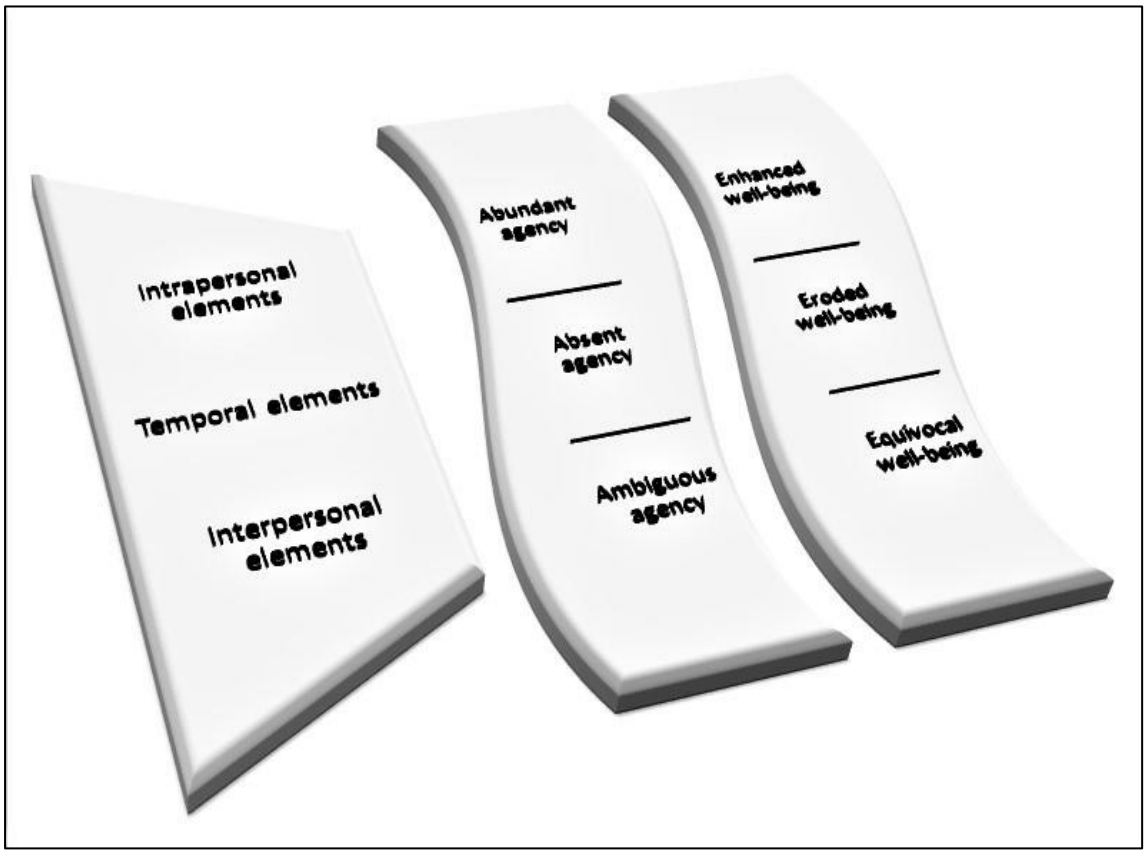
As shown throughout the three elements, experiences of abundant agency are linked to positive outcomes for workers' subjective well-being. These experiences and the ability to maintain a positive social connection result in greater satisfaction and positive affect. The three elements within absent agency show that when workers experience a lack of control over their connectivity they also experience negative well-being outcomes. These experiences can lead to emotional distress, negative affect, and unhealthy behaviours. During experiences of ambiguous agency the outcomes for subjective well-being remain unclear. The next chapter discusses these findings and how they contribute to prior research on agency and subjective well-being in connected organisation.

CHAPTER FIVE: Discussion of findings

The findings in this research show that the workers in these connected organisations experience shifts in agency. This means that they do not simply feel agentic or like they have no agency but can shift between three types of agency. I have called these types of agency abundant, absent and ambiguous. Because experiences of agency are closely linked to subjective well-being, the shifts between agency experiences can be mirrored by shifts in well-being. This chapter interprets these findings in light of past empirical and conceptual knowledge, and discusses the new insights this study offers for research on worker agency and well-being in connected organisations.

The chapter has two main sections: *shifting agency* and *shifting well-being*, in order to address the key findings and their meanings. In 'shifting agency' I discuss my three newly defined experiences of agency and how the intrapersonal, temporal and interpersonal elements interact with one another and the impact of these upon these workers. This section also highlights how specific elements become more significant for different agency experiences. The second half of the discussion, 'shifting well-being', considers how the shifts or movements between agency experiences are linked to subjective well-being outcomes. The findings show that when these participants experience a specific type of agency they are likely to experience specific well-being outcomes. For these workers, experiences of abundant agency are more likely to be mirrored by improvements in subjective well-being, while experiences of absent agency are linked to a decline in subjective well-being. When these participants experience ambiguous agency they also experience ambiguous and sometimes conflicting outcomes for their well-being. From these findings I have coined terms for the three 'experiences' of subjective well-being – 'enhanced', 'eroded' and 'equivocal', to capture the movements of subjective well-being as they occur alongside the shifts between the three types of agentic experiences of connectivity. The following figure shows how the three elements influence agentic shifts and mirrored movements in subjective well-being.

Figure 6. Elements and shifts



The figure shows how intrapersonal, temporal and interpersonal elements influence connective agency and create three different types of agency experiences. These experiences can overlap and shift, as indicated by the curved box in the middle of the figure. The three types of agency are mirrored by three different outcomes for subjective well-being, shown as another miroring curved box in the figure. These shifts in connective agency and subjective well-being are the main focus of my discussion.

Shifting agency

Worker agency in connected organisations has recently received increased attention from organisational behaviour researchers (Kolb et al., 2015; Mazmanian, 2013; Symon & Pritchard, 2015). However, these studies mostly focus on the duality of agency, which implies that workers either have agency over their connectivity or they do not (Hewson, 2010). Other studies also propose that individuals can be categorised as different 'types' of technology users (Geiger et al., 2016; Maccormick et al., 2012; Matusik & Mickel, 2011), or that workers can be grouped according to their work-family boundary management strategies (Duxbury et al., 2014). These studies suggest that each worker displays and maintains a certain pattern of connectivity behaviour and either has, or does not have agency to carry out that behaviour. The findings in my study, however, suggest that the studied workers (regardless of user type) in connected organisations can and do move between different experiences of agency. This means that agency might not best be viewed as a static, unchanging duality, but rather as a shifting or fluid experience that can quickly change depending on the various internal and external factors. The findings of my study may be different from findings in the 'user typology' studies because organisations are becoming more connected and workers are finding themselves in increasingly fluid temporal and social contexts, and these factors further increase the fluidity of agency. This current study suggests that shifting agency is a significant factor in connectivity behaviour and contributes to current conceptions of worker agency and connectivity.

My findings suggest that connectivity is particularly important to consider when exploring agency experiences of workers. As suggested by Emirbayer and Mische (1998) and Hewson (2010), agency is influenced by intrapersonal factors such as intentionality, power, habits and rationality, temporal factors such as past and present events, and social or interpersonal factors such as peer-pressure, social support and social movements. These factors come together to enable or constrain personal agency and individuals adjust their agentic orientation depending on their social and temporal contexts (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). This can also be seen in the findings of this study where the three elements become key factors in different experiences of

agency. As shown in the findings chapter, intrapersonal elements (including self-efficacy which is a key factor in agency and control as suggested by Bandura, 2006) reduce or constrain the influences of temporal and interpersonal elements to enable experiences of abundant agency. However, interpersonal elements such as concertive control seem to have the most influence in absent agency experiences, as suggested by my participants. When there are contradictions and conflict in intrapersonal, temporal and interpersonal elements, these workers seem to experience ambiguous agency, an agentic experience which has not yet been explored by past studies. The following subsections discuss the three types of agency experiences found in this study and emphasise the fluidity of agency, which constitutes the main contribution of my research.

Abundance

People are not passive onlookers on their life (Bandura, 2006). Personal agency includes doing things, exerting power or controlling things (Hewson, 2010). When smartphone are given to workers and they feel like they have control over using it in ways they choose to, my findings suggest that they experience abundant agency in terms of their connectivity to work. Similar to past studies (Kolb, 2008), this means that these workers can choose how much and when to connect to their work through the devices. My study finds that people experience 'abundant agency' in terms of their connectivity when specific intrapersonal, temporal and social elements are present. This study shows the importance of intrapersonal factors in particular for the experiences of abundant agency.

As seen in literature, personal agency consists of a number of intrapersonal factors such as intentionality, self-regulations, self-efficacy and self-reflectiveness (Bandura, 2001). Self-efficacy, the belief that one's actions can lead to desired results or outcomes, is crucial for agency because it can be self-hindering or self-enhancing (Bandura, 2001). These components of agency are also apparent in the participant responses of this study. For these participants, the key factor in having a sense of control or agency is self-efficacy. When this is present workers in this study feel able to intentionally connect or disconnect. This means that during experiences of abundant

agency, the workers in this study experience enhanced self-efficacy, feel like they are in control of their connectivity and implement strict boundaries about how and when to disconnect from work. This can be seen as self-regulating behaviour. When these workers are able to self-regulate their connectivity to work and disconnect when they wanted to, they experience abundant agency.

When people feel in control of their connectivity they can be said to have 'free will', where workers feel that they can control their connectivity in order to not get overwhelmed (Kolb et al., 2012). The experiences of abundant agency in my study also showed this intentionality. The findings show that when experiencing abundant connectivity agency, these workers feel like they can use their smartphones only as they want or intend to. This included using smartphones only for basic functions like calling or text messaging while avoiding using the functions that encourage continuous connectivity (such as emailing and social media). The responses from this study show that when individuals feel like they are in control of their own connectivity level, even when this means going against other's expectations or when organisations implement technology against employees' wishes, they still have personal agency on how to use it. This means that intrapersonal factors such as intentionality and self-regulation enable these workers to experience abundant agency while the influence from interpersonal factors such as organisational expectations is reduced. These findings contribute to research on connectivity agency as they show the importance of intrapersonal factors needed for feeling in control and experiencing connective agency.

When people disconnect it is their agentic decision to stop or break the constant connectivity or take a break from devices (Russo et al., 2019). These disconnection decisions can either be planned in advance (switching off at specific hours) or unplanned (not answering a call to avoid interrupting task at hand). This suggests (and can be seen in my findings) that intrapersonal factors such as intentionality and self-efficacy enable workers to have some control over temporal factors. My findings show that at some times, these workers feel like they can control temporal boundaries and implement time rules. When workers experience favourable intrapersonal factors and a sense of control they are able to implement temporal boundaries regardless of

whether they work in a 9 to 5 organisation or one that operates 24/7. This suggests that intrapersonal elements are important for abundant agency experiences and intrapersonal elements have more influence on individual behaviour than temporal elements. This can be seen in the findings where workers from organisations with less defined temporal boundaries are still able to implement strict time rules on their connectivity. For these participants having personal control over temporal boundaries increases feelings of control. Having temporal flexibility also creates abundant agency experiences as being able to work anytime anywhere creates the perception of increased agency. Similar to past studies that found a link between flexible working arrangements and increased feelings of agency and autonomy (Mazmanian, 2013; Middleton, 2007; Schlachter et al., 2017), the respondents from this current study also associate being able to complete work wherever and whenever with greater connectivity agency.

Self-regulation of connectivity can be seen in the findings where workers, when feeling agentic, would leave their smartphones at work specifically in order to disconnect. Similarly, in Russo and colleagues' (2019) study, participants regulated their connectivity in order to achieve positive outcomes at work and to prevent losses at work and non-work domains. These motivations are also apparent in my findings where workers chose to switch off their smartphones in order to focus on other tasks or to spend time with their family without getting interrupted by work-related smartphone communication. Findings suggest self-regulation creates experiences of 'abundant agency', the term I have coined to conceptualise this emerging agentic condition.

Self-reflectiveness, or the ability to reflect on the self and to adjust action if necessary (Bandura, 2001), is also an important factor in experiences of abundant agency. Participants in my study were able to reflect on their own behaviour and connectivity preferences and act in accordance to them. Through self-reflection, workers feel like they can control their connectivity level by engaging in behaviours such as using two separate phones, one for work and another for personal aspects of life. By using two devices to keep work and home life domains separate, participants were able to detach (switch off) from work. As suggested by Kolb and colleagues

(2015), people have different preferences for how connected they want to be to work. In this study, some participants want to switch off or disconnect, while others prefer to remove temporal limits in order to synchronise with contemporary work times and have more fluidity in their working schedules. Experiencing abundant agency can also enable workers (who wish to do so) to maintain continuous connectivity to work. As seen in my findings, having the technology, such as smartphones, that enables continuous connection helped these workers (when they had high levels of self-efficacy and sense of agency) to achieve the desired connectivity amount. These findings extend research on connectivity agency and connectivity amount preferences by showing that these workers have different 'requisite' connectivities but whether they experience this 'requisite' level depends on whether they are experiencing abundant agency.

As work can become an important part of a person's identity (Porter & Kakabadse, 2006; Towers et al., 2006), connectivity can help to maintain or support this perception of being a good worker through increased feelings of control over where and when an individual works (Tower et al., 2006). Due to more workplaces offering flexible and mobile work it is becoming more vital to stay continuously connected to work (Symon & Pritchard, 2015). My study showed similar findings with some workers wanting to be contactable and responsive and taking pride in being continuously available through their smartphones. They also attributed their ability to fulfil expectations for connected workers to feeling agentic. By appearing available, they conveyed commitment and competence and that they are responsible and committed employees, which created experiences of abundant agency.

Technology use and connective behaviours are also negotiated and influenced by social factors and individuals do not fully determine their technology use. Instead, this is negotiated through socio-material practices (Symon & Pritchard, 2015). This means that although in my study the experiences of abundant agency were mostly dependent on intrapersonal elements, the interpersonal elements still have an impact. Abundant agency is experienced when social elements interact with individual connectivity behaviours. For example, respondents felt like they were experiencing abundant agency when they were able to disconnect from work (or non-work) and be present in

the social context. Workers talked about not having connection to work when spending time with family and being encouraged to do so by their managers or organisations. My findings showed that when individuals are able to disconnect from work to be with their family they felt abundant agency. The idea that organisations supported this disconnection (from work) and work-life balance further contributed to experiences of abundant agency. This suggests that social support is an important factor in personal connectivity control and may even create experiences of abundant agency when intrapersonal elements such as self-efficacy are not present. Social (interpersonal) elements also play a much bigger role in absent agency experiences.

Absence

People anticipate outcomes by observing the consequences of events and actions in the world around them (Bandura, 2001). Agency is also socially embedded; in most contexts individuals cannot have full control over what happens to them due to the presence of other people (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2013; Bandura, 2006). Agency suggests that people can use technology how they want, however this can be constrained by influences such as social networks which can have an impact on individual agency when defining connectivity levels (Boudreau & Robey, 2005). My study shows that when these workers experience absent agency, it is mostly due to strong pressure from interpersonal elements.

Social norms create strong pressure for continuous connectivity (Mazmanian, 2013; Hall et al., 2014; Warren, 2003). Going against the norm usually results in negative judgement from others (Hall et al., 2014). In terms of current smartphone usage, there are emerging norms to be constantly connected, accessible, responsive and flexible (Mazmanian, 2013). In my study, absent agency resulted in participants being continuously connected as a result of social norms, expectations, pressures and concertive control (from co-workers, managers and organisations) and there appears to be additional pressure from a culture of overwork. The pressure is so strong that it seems to erode personal agency over connectivity to work for these participants. The analysis of my findings shows that despite the 'flexible' working arrangements and perceptions of organisational promotion of work and non-work balance, some of these

managers and employees can experience little or no agency over their connectivity. The norms of constant connectivity seem to be pervasive, powerful and detrimental to agentic control over devices and personal priorities. In terms of connective agency, my study shows that the role of personal agency is increasingly diminishing while social influences force workers to forfeit work-life balance or non-work domain prioritisation. The findings extend the concept of connective agency by showing that societal factors are becoming more influential than intrapersonal elements and reduce worker agency. These workers start to feel that it is more important to fulfil the constant connectivity norms rather than to exercise their 'free will' and disconnect or to follow personal preferences in terms of how connected they are to work. This implies that social norms and pressures reduce workers' self-efficacy or self-belief in being able to control their own connectivity. These societal and organisational pressures are also apparent in the findings where participants did not want others to find out about their negative views about constant connectivity as they did not want to appear to be going against the social norms of constant connectivity.

Symon and Pritchard (2015) argue that it is not connective states but different agencies (individual, material and social) that produce connectivity. These socio-material configurations also include power relations that are also re-performed through identity performances. Power relations determine that the responsive worker is valued while the disconnected one is socially excluded (Symon & Pritchard, 2015). Due to the perceived organisational and managerial expectations to be continually responsive, participants in the current study feel that they must be continuously connected, and this is apparent in findings where these workers experienced the absence of agency. In this study, the organisational provision of smartphones is perceived as a deliberate organisational action pressuring workers to stay connected. This suggests that new expectations are arising from supplying technology that enables workers' (near) continuous connection. Participants identify that the pressure to always be working, the pressure to stay connected and to work after hours comes from organisations and managers rather than from customers. Some managers in the study admitted to using contemporary working norms as an excuse to create pressure on employees to work continuously. Managers, however, feel the same pressure to

stay connected, perhaps due to concertive control through peer-surveillance (Barker, 1993). The findings of this research show that it is not just the employees who experience absent agency. Due to the growing social expectations for being constantly available, managers are also (if not even more so) experiencing pressure, suggesting a reverse-panopticon phenomenon where managers become surveillance targets for their employees.

Previous studies found that organisational culture is one of the key interpersonal factors that normalises hyper connectivity and erodes worker agency (Cavazotte et al., 2014; Mazmanian & Erickson, 2014). This culture of constant connectivity is viewed as a negative phenomenon by workers in the current study as it prevents them from being able to disconnect from work. While some participants' responses suggest they believe that this culture only exists in their organisations (such as ones that operate 24 hours a day), similar responses were found from participants from all three participating organisations. Considering that these organisations all operate in different industries and have different structures suggests that these connectivity norms are not confined to just one type of organisation or industry. The responses show that connectivity expectations increased and workers identify that this is particularly true for remote and mobile work. Even organisational mottos, such as Connectigen's '*anywhere, anytime',* can create the pressure to be continuously connected and that may mean that individuals who work for that organisation must accept this norm as part of being a member of the organisation. My research shows that when workers feel like they have to live with constant connectivity and become personally responsible for managing this, with no assistance or support from their organisation, they experience absent agency in terms of their connectivity.

Cavazotte and colleagues (2014) investigated how employees use company-provided smartphones and found that individuals intensify their commitment to work by making themselves continuously available for work and as a result of this over-commitment, they become unable to disconnect from work demands. At the same time, they attribute the increased smartphone usage to their own, personal choice, while downplaying the external pressure coming from their organisation to intensify their commitment and connectivity (Cavazotte et al., 2014). A similar dynamic was

observed in my findings, where workers internalised their organisation's hyper-connectivity expectations. This internalisation was apparent in my participants' responses where they state that it is not the pressure from their organisation, but instead the pressure they put on themselves to be constantly checking and responding to work emails and 'emergencies'. Furthermore, my findings showed that during absent agency experiences these workers were justifying their hyper-connectivity to work and clients as something that they deliberately set up themselves and not the result of organisational pressure to stay connected. However, because this pressure is likely to stem from the internalised organisational expectations for hyper-connectivity, these behaviours can be interpreted as non-agentic. The internalisation of connectivity pressures and norms can reduce workers' self-efficacy. Feelings of low self-efficacy (which reduces the perceptions of agency and control) create the perception that one is unable to do what one intends. This lack of control was interpreted from most of the study participants, including those who experience abundant agency at other times, and it suggests that there is significant movement between experiences of agency.

Experiences of social exclusion have many negative impacts on individuals such as reduced individual sense of belonging, self-esteem and feeling of control (Malik & Obhi, 2019). This suggests a link between social exclusion and perceived control and sense of agency. However, Malik and Obhi (2019) call for further investigations on the link between social exclusion and the sense of agency. My study findings answer this call by showing that in order to avoid social exclusion these workers reduce behaviours that would contravene social norms and as a result have less control over their connectivity and greater experiences of absent agency. Some participants fear the possibility of social exclusion and as a result become highly active on social media in order to feel constantly included and informed. For some, the norm of being constantly connected through social media becomes internalised to such a degree that they start to view non-users in an exclusionary way. This can be particularly seen in a participant's patronising expression about colleagues who do not use social media being 'dinosaurs'.

When workers feel a lack of control or low self-efficacy about their connectivity, they can experience the sensation of being controlled by external factors that prevent

them from being able to disconnect from work or manage the boundary between their work and personal life domains (Duxbury et al., 2014). For some of my participants the smartphone has become the external factor that exerts control over their behaviours and connectivity. This smartphone control was apparent when my participants discuss being 'at the smartphone's mercy' or having their life 'dominated' by their smartphones. The feelings of being controlled by their smartphones also led to some workers feeling trapped or unable to prioritise their family and personal responsibilities over their work demands. Furthermore, addiction to smartphones or connectivity seems to be linked to more frequent experiences of absent agency. Responses from this study suggest that engaging in addictive tendencies, for example checking emails multiple times throughout the night or when driving, is a major factor in connectivity agency. Participants who think they are addicted or display addictive tendencies are more likely to feel like they are lacking personal agency to act in a way they wish to.

Connected organisations are defined by a lack of temporal boundaries (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019) and increased intolerance for waiting, meaning that personal agency can diminish. With the lack of temporal limits in organisations, some workers in my study feel like there is no excuse not to be constantly connected. This lack of control contributes to experiences of absent agency. Participants even reported there being no such thing as wasted time (for example the 'free time' experienced while commuting) as this is now filled in with work. The responses from my study show a continuous connectivity culture and that it is now normal or standard for employees to be working during personal and non-work time. This may also mean that due to continuous availability, the concepts of work and non-work times and what is considered to be appropriate in terms of business contact hours are being redefined. This can further create experiences of absent agency.

Ambiguousness

Unlike past studies which focus on the duality of agency, my study uncovered that the participants in these connected organisations at times experience a third state - ambiguous agency. In this state there is no clarity on whether an individual has or does

not have control over their connectivity. I have categorised this as 'ambiguous agency'. This means that agentic experiences are not simply present or absent but that these workers can experience all three types of agency experiences throughout their working day and into their time at home.

Individuals can engage in a wide variety of behaviours when using their smartphones and can even develop new habits (Oulasvirta et al., 2012). Connectivity behaviours that are done out of habit can be considered as part of 'ambiguous agency'. As habits are usually automatic and not reflected-upon behaviours, it suggests that ambiguous agency can also occur due to workers being not reflective of their connectivity behaviour (self-reflection is an important part of agency as stated by Bandura, 2006). My study showed that these workers are increasingly using their smartphones in a routinised, automatic way. This suggests that for these workers smartphone usage has become a habit, and that even though it can be frustrating, it is difficult to change, implying that this agency is ambiguous. These connectivity habits have developed from an unclear cause (perhaps from personal choice or organisational pressure), meaning that they may be hard to change or resist.

Ambiguous agency experiences are influenced by ambiguous temporal elements. Connective technologies and resulting erosion of temporal boundaries has blurred the work and non-work time boundaries. This blurriness and contradictory time expectations, contributes to ambiguous agency experiences for workers. Ambiguous agency experiences are likely to be more common when the temporal boundary between work and non-work becomes blurred. This is because while flexibility increases opportunities for people to choose when to work, at the same time the lack of temporal boundaries can create too much flexibility (Wajcman, 2008). Flexible working hours also results in a looser concept of standard working time (Rose, 2014). This can improve productivity and adaptability by allowing workers to choose when to complete work and when to take breaks, but it can also increase workloads and decrease perceptions about being able to disconnect from work during non-work times and in non-work places (Rose, 2014). My findings show that sometimes these workers are unable to figure out when work time finishes and non-work time starts and they struggle to plan their day or control their schedules. This can create, in participants'

words, a ‘problem with flexibility’. Increased flexibility and blurring of temporal boundaries also results in redefined concepts of home time and work time, making these ideas confusing and harder for these workers to manage or control, resulting in ambiguous agency experiences.

A minor contribution of the study is the idea that the social aspect of temporal intermittency no longer exists. While in the recent past, connectivity was constrained by social conventions of working hours as well as the socially unacceptable contact during night or holiday time (Kolb, 2008), the ability of smartphones to stay continuously switched on has enabled new norms to develop where people are choosing (or are forced) to ignore the social aspect of temporal intermittency by responding to, and contacting others, irrespective of time. With temporal intermittency (mostly) gone, it becomes solely up to human agency to control connectivity levels.

Thanks to smartphone devices, workers can use their ‘downtime’ (travelling, waiting rooms) to complete work tasks (Rose, 2014). This suggests having control over their time and making good use of otherwise ‘wasted’ time. Working in down or ‘dead’ time can be interpreted as ambiguous agency experience because it means that the individual is still working even when s/he perceives this work as personal choice. Doing work activities during downtime is seen as problematic by some workers in my study, however, they continue to engage in it. Other participants’ responses suggest that there is a need to fill dead-time with work (such as catching up on emails) and that downtime should not be wasted on relaxation. These responses suggest that these workers perceive some agency and control over their connectivity, however, they are still working instead of engaging in other activities, which suggests that they are unable to disconnect from work during downtime, highlighting the ambiguous elements of connective agency.

Gorski’s (2017) phenomenological study on how, when and why mid-level and senior managers use their smartphones found that managers do not feel guilt about sending emails to workers after hours because emails are perceived as something that does not require immediate attention. However, managers still expected a fast

response from their subordinates, and most workers feel pressured to respond to their managers after hours (Gorski, 2017). This can create issues for agency. Experiences of ambiguous agency are more likely to happen when these workers observe contradictory modelled behaviour, such as from their supervisors or managers. Due to the display of contradictory behaviours, workers in my study feel less agentic. The contradictory interpersonal expectations and modelled behaviours increase the experiences of ambiguous agency as these workers state that they are confused about how they should behave, so they start to imitate the modelled behaviour.

Modern society can be seen as a Panopticon (Foucault, 1979); as the visibility of all aspects of life increases individuals become more controlled through the 'invisible gaze', greater visibility enables organisations to track (increase surveillance over) workers throughout their lives (Martin, 2013). Leclercq-Vandelannoitte and colleagues (2014) state that mobile technologies such as smartphones create a portable Panopticon and act as a constant 'invisible gaze' on users. This means their privacy and agency are reduced. For my participants, surveillance contributes to their experiences of ambiguous agency. When these workers perceive that they are under surveillance it creates the feeling of absent or ambiguous agency as their autonomy to engage in preferred connectivity behaviours erodes. My participants do not know if they are being tracked (through the installed smartphone software), suggesting that they do not actually know if or when their manager might check on them. Managers, however, noted that they are not tracked, suggesting that they do not feel the same level of surveillance as their subordinates. This means that tracking (or lack thereof) may create different experiences of agency between managers and subordinates. Despite these differences, managers are more likely to place themselves under surveillance (by the organisation, employees and customers) through active engagement with social media on their smartphone devices.

While connective technology enables flexibility and freedom, it also creates coercive autonomy as professionals internalise restricting norms of connectivity (Leclercq-Vandelannoitte et al., 2014). As people carry mobile devices everywhere they become voluntary participants in their own surveillance. Surveillance becomes internalised and leads to self-disciplining due to expectations that bad behaviour is

visible and will be punished (Leclercq-Vandelannoitte et al., 2014). Due to the perceived organisational and client pressure for visibility, some of the workers in my study talked about using social media on their smartphone devices to be more accountable, available and visible to their clients, colleagues and organisations. Because anyone can see anyone's social media activity, in essence, these workers are implementing surveillance and tracking on themselves. This is particularly apparent for trade union (Kiwiprax) workers in the study where most participants have set up surveillance on themselves (suggesting agency) through their continuous use of social media such as Facebook. Although these workers might feel agentic because they choose to use social media, the fact that they are watched by their organisations, managers and clients, and are further encouraged to remain visible and active on social media by their organisations, suggests that they are experiencing ambiguous agency as they place themselves under surveillance. Ambiguous agency experiences, similarly to abundant and absent agency, create certain implications for worker well-being. As my findings show, each type of agency is mirrored by specific subjective well-being outcomes. These outcomes and their implications for worker well-being in connected organisations are discussed next.

Shifting well-being

A novel contribution of my research is that when these workers experience shifting agency in terms of their connectivity, this can be mirrored different subjective well-being outcomes. This means that depending on the type of agency experience, these workers also experience different subjective well-being outcomes within short periods of time and can move between different experiences of well-being, mirroring the shifts between the three experiences of agency. The remainder of the discussion is divided into three subsections, each focusing on particular type of subjective well-being. I have coined the terms 'enhanced well-being', 'erosion of well-being' and 'equivocal well-being' (a state synonymous with ambiguity) to capture the movements of subjective well-being as these participants experience different types of connectivity agency. The findings of this study suggest that some experiences of agency can be mirrored by specific forms of subjective well-being. While abundant agency is linked to positive

affect, by reducing or removing negative affect and creating higher satisfaction, absent agency appears to be linked to lower subjective well-being by creating negative affect and reducing satisfaction. I also propose and discuss the idea that, as with ambiguous agency experiences, worker well-being outcomes can also be ambiguous, or as I term them 'equivocal'. These three types of subjective well-being, how they mirror the shifting agency experiences, and the implications of these novel findings for well-being literature are discussed in the following sections.

Enhanced well-being

The pursuit of positive emotions through connectivity is becoming a more commonplace as mobile ICT devices are increasingly incorporated into daily routines and become a constant companion in an individual's emotional life (Turkle, 2007). These technologies also create another, easily accessible medium for maintaining positive connections with others (Wehmeyer, 2008). This is especially true for devices that are constantly present during important life events (Beer, 2012) such as smartphones. Vincent (2011) has conducted a number of studies on emotional attachment to smartphones. Although people do not tend to think of their smartphones in emotional terms, they still feel a range of emotions about their connectivity experiences. People need to be socially connected and this is enabled by smartphones because they enable a constant connection or 'emotional tethering' (Vincent, 2005). When my participants experience abundant agency and can control their usage and connectivity to work they seem to avoid conflict between work and non-work domains. Connectivity agency can also enable these workers to use their smartphones in ways that increase positive emotions and help them to avoid negative emotions, which seems to improve their subjective well-being. The responses in my study suggest that these workers engage in emotional tethering when they experience abundant agency through their continuous connectivity to work and non-work networks. This was perceived as a positive outcome for well-being as respondents in my study highlighted the psychological benefits of staying informed and connected.

Continuous connectivity to others is seen as a (positive) part of life for most people as they have a need for autonomy and relatedness, as suggested by earlier studies

(Halfmann & Rieger, 2019). Halfmann and Rieger (2019) find that connectivity enables people to appear present and available, which creates feelings of relatedness and a sense of constant connectivity to others. A positively perceived social element for my study participants was the ability to control or use connectivity to maintain social connections to others, including colleagues and team members. This suggests that these workers are now continuously connected to one another and disconnection is perceived negatively. Participant responses suggest that connectivity fills in the social 'void' and social connectivity is perceived as a positive contribution to well-being, which is enhanced by feeling in control of connectivity. Workers in this study perceived higher agency when they can fill in the time that is considered empty with social interaction. Abundant agency experiences also showed that these workers perceive higher agency when they are able to maintain continuous connection as it fills the time outside of work hours, reduces feelings of loneliness and provides a '*family*' feeling.

As past studies highlighted (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2016; Smith et al., 2000), social networks and support are key to individual happiness and life satisfaction, and are linked to increased feelings of agency. Smith and colleagues (2000) further assert that in order to experience higher well-being, individuals need social support. This suggests that workers in my study who are experiencing connectivity agency and social support (that is enabled by and supports connectivity) are likely to feel that their well-being is also enhanced. There is a lack of studies examining the constructs of social support and well-being. To my knowledge, few to no workplace studies examine this link. My study shows that when workers perceive social support and agency in terms of their connectivity, they feel that they have better well-being outcomes. This is because greater personal control is linked to better emotional health and well-being; social support is linked to positive mental health outcomes and lower distress perhaps because emotionally supportive relationships increase feelings of interpersonal agency and personal control. This implies that experiences of abundant agency enabled by supportive relationships can increase emotional health for these workers.

Helliwell (2019) also discusses the key variables for happiness or subjective well-being. The two main factors are: availability of social support (or social networks) and having a sense of freedom to make life decisions (or the sense of agency), even when

income and life expectancy factors are taken into account. Social support plays the biggest role in life satisfaction - one of the main components of subjective well-being - particularly in working age people; this includes having a good relationship with co-workers and supervisors and a sense of belonging to a community (Helliwell, 2019). Social support is considered to be the most important factor for health and longevity (Helliwell, 2019). This suggests positive outcomes for worker well-being for current participants when they experience abundant agency and feel able to maintain their social connections in work and non-work life domains.

Literature shows that flexible working creates positive outcomes for workers with children especially because the flexibility offered through connectivity means that they can stay at home to look after their children and work from home (Martin, 2018). Workers with perceived control over working hours or with flexible working hours also tend to report the highest work satisfaction (Martin, 2018). Due to mobile ICT enabling these multidimensional practices of time (Wajcman, 2008) many people expect and perceive increased flexibility. Feeling agentic in terms of flexible working hours, being able to control one's own connectivity level by purposefully switching off or using two separate phones for work and personal aspects of life also enhanced the subjective well-being of my study participants. When those factors were present, participants talked about feeling positive emotions such as comfort and 'liberation'. These positive emotions enhance subjective well-being and participants' reflected on them positively. These findings contribute to research on connectivity and well-being (which is mostly dominated by findings of negative impacts) through offering a more positive view by showing that when these workers have connectivity agency they can create positive outcomes for their well-being.

Flexible working also enables individuals to choose when they work and when they switch off to engage in other (for example family) activities. As highlighted by Mazmanian and colleagues (2005), 'absent presence', or disengagement from immediate surroundings, such as when interacting with a colleague or a family member, is becoming a major issue and can create negative emotions and cause interpersonal conflict, reducing subjective well-being. Flexible working and abundant agency experiences help my study participants to 'be present' during their family or

work time. By experiencing agency and disconnecting from work during family time the workers in this study can avoid 'absent presence' issues and maintain their emotional well-being. This suggests that for these participants, feeling agentic to engage in flexible work (according to their own personal preferences and schedules) helps to improve subjective well-being. This contributes to research on outcomes of flexible working arrangements (which mostly focuses on productivity and performance outcomes) by showing how flexible arrangements influence my study participants' well-being during different agentic experiences.

Another way that abundant agency experiences can be linked to increased subjective well-being for these workers is by enabling them to fulfil their notion of a 'committed worker'. This means that when experiencing agency and sense of control, participants with personality traits such as conscientiousness, or workers who identify themselves as 'work extenders' (Towers et al., 2006), can choose to be constantly contactable. Some responses from my study suggested that these participants are able to be 'work extenders' and fulfil their 'connected worker' commitments, when they experience abundant agency. By being able to prioritise their work commitments over other commitments, these participants may increase their satisfaction with their work and non-work domains, enhancing their subjective well-being. The responses from the workers in my study convey a sense of pride in their continuous connectivity to work, suggesting that these participants, who choose to remain connected and feel the agency to do so, can experience positive affect as a result. The increase in subjective well-being can perhaps be explained by the idea that these workers are more likely to experience highly positive emotions due to feeling agentic to engage in meaningful work. Feeling agentic over their own connectivity (whether to disconnect or maintain the connection) and subsequently experiencing higher subjective well-being is closely linked to temporal boundaries and rules that exist in workplaces and society. In my study, work extenders who feel good about being constantly available for work demands seem to experience higher subjective well-being outcomes.

Erosion of well-being

Workers in my study implied and reported positive affect and noted increased satisfaction with work and life when experiencing abundant agency, suggesting a close link between these experiences. Times of absent agency prompted reflections on the negative well-being outcomes. Some responses painted the smartphone device and the constant connectivity in particularly negative ways, calling it 'evil' and 'insidious'. These reflections suggest that when agency is reduced, these workers also experience strong negative emotions due to being unable to disconnect and unable to achieve psychological detachment from work.

My findings highlighted how having low self-efficacy or lacking a sense of control connected to the state of absent agency causes a forced (constant) connectivity to work which creates negative outcomes for both intrapersonal and interpersonal well-being. Habitual checking of the smartphone or feeling controlled by the device in particular appears to be a common occurrence that creates negative emotions. This is apparent in responses which show self-reflection and unhappiness at participants' own behaviour. The responses suggest that habitual connectivity and absent agency create negative affect, such as frustration and confliction, which is linked to decreased subjective well-being for these participants.

Extensive use of smartphones reinforces the constant connection and increased availability expectations without individually giving a socially-acceptable way to disconnect (Mazmanian et al., 2005). The use of dead-time and multitasking can lead to family and colleague resentment, as well as making it difficult to disengage from work. Being constantly connected is also not optimal for everyone. Kolb and colleagues (2012) and Mazmanian and colleagues (2005) show that individuals can have different connectivity needs and require different levels of connectivity. My findings suggest that being unable to control connectivity may result in some ill health and may potentially damage family relationships. Although prior studies argue that it is impossible to stay constantly connected to work due to personal agency, all of the current study's participants, including employees and managers, perceive that they are 'too connected' to work and associate this with the company-provided smartphones.

They feel unable to disconnect and stop the negative impact on their well-being when they experience absent agency. This contradicts earlier studies arguing that connective agency and the ability to control how one's own connectivity influences well-being resides mainly with workers themselves.

Some participant responses also suggested that workers are forced to prioritise work over non-work activities and they experience negative emotions from too much connection. The conflicting work-life balance expectations that exist in these participants' organisations create issues for worker affect and well-being. Some responses even implied that organisations are trying to destroy employee work-life balance as they create constant work through technology. Despite these reflections, some participant responses indicate that if they try (or are forced) to disconnect they also experience negative emotions due to the fear of missing out which creates anxiety. As stress and anxiety are highly negative emotions, these findings suggest that worker well-being is eroded when these workers have no agency over their connectivity amount or feel like they cannot prioritise their other aspects of life. Responses suggested that this lack of agency and eroded well-being are particularly problematic for female workers, who feel forced to prioritise work over family responsibilities if they wanted to receive the same benefits as their male counterparts. Prior studies show that women workers have to manage their work commitments while fulfilling their family and domestic responsibilities, creating the potential for work-family conflict or work intensification (Crowe & Middleton, 2012), both of which would decrease satisfaction and increase negative affect.

Similar well-being outcomes are also prevalent for employees at managerial or senior levels. Past studies show how organisationally provided smartphones become perceived as a signal that managers should be constantly (technologically) available to their employees (Obushenkova et al., 2018). This has the potential to erode managerial or supervisory worker well-being as lack of agency and forced hyper connectivity to work can create negative performance and health outcomes such as technostress, burnout, absenteeism and work-life conflict (Yadav et al., 2014). My findings suggest that forced prioritisation of work connectivity and the subsequent lack of agency to disconnect is more prevalent for managers and supervisors. Senior workers are

perceived to be worse off in terms of their well-being, as they (seemingly) have to respond to everything due to their increased responsibilities. Employees at lower levels identified absent agency and eroded well-being for managers. Some of the managers in the study also talked about highly negative emotions (such as sadness and frustration) arising from absent agency and increased (uncontrollable) connectivity. This finding contributes to a new perspective on the effects of agency and well-being outcomes for managers in connected organisations by suggesting that senior workers may be more susceptible to erosion of their well-being as it mirrors the reduced agency of their own connectivity.

While mobile technology enables efficient collaboration and communication that can help control work demands, at the same time it can become an 'electronic leash' leaving no means to escape from work (Diaz et al., 2011). Mazmanian, Orlikowski and Yates (2013) conducted a study showing that knowledge professionals consciously maintain a constant connection to their work, resulting in an increased sense of control. However, this also created the 'autonomy paradox' where higher levels of autonomy created increased company expectations and pressure for after-hours work (Mazmanian et al., 2013). This type of work can create strong resentment from workers. When experiencing absent agency, the participants in my study talked about having highly negative emotions including 'horror, stress and anxiety'. Despite experiencing these negative emotions, participants implied that they felt compelled to accept continuous connectivity because it is their professional responsibility to be connected and available to customers and clients. As highlighted by participants, smartphone provision by organisations actually encourages continuous connectivity use, rather than balanced or healthy use. The responses showed that cultural pressure for constant connectivity also encourages work intensification. This reveals an irony for the Trade Union (Kiwiprax) in particular, since Trade Unions fight for and enable fair and healthy working conditions for other workers. The responses suggest that Kiwiprax workers are expected to fulfil their role at the detriment of their own well-being. Participant responses showed resentment about the absence of agency and associated it with reduced well-being. Resentment is both a negative emotion and reduces satisfaction within the relationship where it occurs.

When work cuts into non-work time it can create conflict and lead to reduced well-being. When workers cannot psychologically detach after hours and are preoccupied with work issues their recovery is hindered (Sonnentag et al., 2014). Another implication from participants' responses is that perhaps due to the removal of temporal and time zone boundaries, workers at all hierarchical levels are becoming less tolerant of waiting and expect the immediate response that smartphone connectivity enables. Participants in this study talked about the increasing speed of communication and reduced agency to maintain personal time boundaries (for example not responding at night time). These responses suggest that at times workers experience an absence of agency as they feel like they have to reply to messages and emails immediately. This creates issues for these participants because they feel unable to psychologically detach from work, meaning that they have no recovery time. Lack of recovery from work further reduces subjective well-being.

Halfmann and Rieger's (2019) study showed that interaction partners tend to negatively evaluate users who violate social norms. Due to this some people feel compelled to engage in impulsive responding behaviours. Impulsive replying that goes against the actor's values or long term goals creates feelings of self-control failure (Halfmann & Rieger, 2019). In my study, some participants engage in impulsive replying in order to avoid negative outcomes such as social exclusion, which can further create negative emotions and reduce relational satisfaction. Because these workers feel the pressure to be available, and as a result of this pressure engage in (sometimes) unwanted impulsive replying, they may be at a higher risk of developing feelings of self-control failure. This failure creates negative affect (for example guilt and sadness) and erodes subjective well-being for these participants. My research also found that when workers feel unable to disconnect from their social networks (at times when they wish to disconnect) this lack of agency can erode subjective well-being. While a number of my study participants talked about the benefits and positive affect resulting from abundant agency and being able to maintain a continuous social connection, when the same participants do not experience agency to disconnect, the forced social connection creates highly negative affective states, including 'hate' and

'guilt', in respondents' own words. Through these mechanisms, social pressure creates agency absence, which is negatively linked to vitality, positive affect and well-being.

Continuous use of smartphones and other devices can also lead to psychological dependency and addictive behaviours (Russo et al., 2019). Organisations support and reward workaholism (working long hours) which creates the culture of workaholism (Porter & Kakabadse, 2006). Technology and connectivity enable excessive work, meaning that work addiction and technology can become mutually reinforcing (Porter & Kakabadse, 2006). Addictive behaviours and continuous connectivity create physical risks (using while driving), disrupt sleep patterns, reduce quality of interpersonal interactions, reduce performance and decrease life satisfaction (Kneidinger-Müller, 2019). The responses from my study also show addictive behaviours – the constant checking during all hours of the day or night, while in social contexts and even in dangerous and illegal contexts such as using the smartphone while driving. For these workers, checking the phone seems to reinforce the behaviour (through instant response or feedback), which further fuels addictive behaviours and leads to eroded control and absent agency over connectivity. Some participant responses suggest that these workers perceive constant checking as unhealthy and reflect on the negative consequences of these behaviours for their well-being. Despite their reflections, these workers still engage in addictive connectivity because the continuous and near-instant feedback received through connective devices rewards their addictive tendencies such as constant checking and messaging. This behaviour (and the resulting erosion of agency) also 'punishes' these workers as it creates work intensification and increases the risk of burnout, while reducing subjective well-being.

Equivocal well-being

Schlachter and colleagues (2017) discuss two contrasting perspectives on consequences of continuous connection to work, known as the 'empowerment/enslavement' paradox. Scholars argue that workers perceive empowerment through increased flexibility and control, which enables work-life balance, leading to increased satisfaction and well-being, and reduced conflict (Mazmanian 2013; Middleton 2007; Schlachter et al., 2017). However, they are at the

same time ‘enslaved’ as they become continuously tethered to their organisations, creating work intensification, blurring work-life boundaries, reducing recovery times and reducing well-being (Schlachter et al., 2017). My study findings show that while it can be possible to predict how abundant and absent agency experiences are linked to specific subjective well-being outcomes, the implications from experiences of ambiguous agency are unclear and at times contradictory. My findings further suggest that when workers experience both abundant and absent agency at the same time it can be mirrored by contradictory or negative outcomes for subjective well-being because people tend to avoid uncertainty since it creates stress. Participants emphasised that they feel strong anxiety when they have contradictory feelings or beliefs about their connectivity or when they feel conflicted about their connectivity behaviours. This suggests that ambiguous agency in regards to connectivity to work is mostly associated with lower subjective well-being.

Workers often rationalise their ICT use as useful and necessary while downplaying negative effects or stating that these negative effects are a good trade-off for autonomy and flexibility (Schlachter et al., 2017). Some workers also suggest that their excessive usage is necessary for professional advancement and image (Schlachter et al., 2017). A related and important factor in ambiguous agency experiences and the mirrored worker well-being experiences is the actual versus perceived agency. Whether a worker perceives that they have agency (even if there is no actual agency) can greatly influence worker’s affect and satisfaction. My findings show that although ambiguousness and conflicting thoughts are more likely to link to lower subjective well-being, this might not be the case for those who do not seem to be aware of their contradictory behaviours. Responses show how workers may be unaware of their contradictory behaviours and perceive that they are in control and that they are happy with their amount of connectivity, which can actually be too high or too constant. The mismatch between actual and perceived agency is particularly evident among managers who sacrifice their family time for work availability but paint it in positive light. Having ambiguous temporal boundaries and ambiguous agency is particularly common at the higher levels of the hierarchy, suggesting that these managers and senior workers may experience more instances of equivocal or contradictory subjective

well-being outcomes.

My research finds that ambiguous agency also arises when temporal boundaries between work and non-work domains become blurred. Past literature shows that when workers experience a lack of autonomy in terms of their work hours or have long working hours, they are more likely to have negative affect and experience work-family imbalance and conflict (Tammelin, Koivunen, & Saari, 2017). Tammelin and colleagues (2017) also find that flexible working arrangements typically exist to benefit the organisation and not the employees, meaning that these arrangements can create adverse effects for employee family (non-work) life aspects. When work hours are unpredictable and fragmented, workers are also more likely to experience stress. Work-family conflict can result in many negative outcomes for well-being such as increased stress, increased absenteeism and various negative health outcomes (Tammelin et al., 2017). These implications are apparent in some of my findings, where participants talk about the 'problem with flexibility' or the times when they experience the benefits of being able to work anywhere and at any time while simultaneously experiencing work/non-work conflict. Unclear separation of temporal domains and resulting ambiguous agency can create conflict for 'family time' and increase negative affect. My findings suggest that flexible connectivity and the resulting ambiguous agency are mirrored by equivocal subjective well-being, where these workers feel both satisfaction from being able to work flexibly and dissatisfaction and negative affect from being interrupted from work or non-work activities.

Crowe and Middleton's (2012) study shows how workers can exert agency by mixing the work and non-work domains in a controlled fashion. The workers chose when to let work come into their personal lives. However, even though work demands were addressed during non-work time deliberately, the presence of technology increased the demands of the 'parallel shifts', where women workers were expected to fulfil their (increasing) work and non-work responsibilities (Crowe & Middleton, 2012). Some participants in my study also reflected on how connectivity influenced their work and non-work domains and work-life balance. When experiencing ambiguous agency, my participants feel conflicted about their work-life balance. Some of these workers reflect on how continuous connectivity is positive for their work life

(by enabling fast communication and transfer of information), but this is happening at the cost of these workers' personal and family lives. This might suggest that ambiguous connectivity agency is linked to ambiguous well-being outcomes for the work-life balance of the workers in my study. This suggests that while there might be benefits for some life domains, such as increased satisfaction with work, there can also be detriments for other life domains, such as family conflict or resentment, and these conflicting experiences can occur simultaneously.

Equivocal well-being outcomes also become apparent in ambiguous agency experiences where these participants use their smartphones to complete work during 'down' or 'dead' time. Using the smartphone during 'dead' time suggests that these participants have become less tolerant in terms of waiting and increasingly use their smartphones during these times. Working during down or dead time might make these workers feel more productive, suggesting positive affect and increased satisfaction. However, this type of work also removes time for reflection or break, both of which are important for subjective well-being as they enable psychological detachment - an important cognitive process for maintaining mental health. This suggests that ambiguous agency, through work extension and intensification (work aspects that have been found to create negative health outcomes), may also link to highly negative well-being outcomes such as burnout and stress.

During experiences of ambiguous agency, my study participants reflected on and reported experiencing conflicting emotions. Butts and colleagues (2015) find that people can experience various emotional responses and work/non-work conflict during technologically mediated communication. Unsurprisingly, experiences of negative emotions are more likely to create negative outcomes such as work-life conflict (Butts et al., 2015). My findings show how experiences of ambiguous connectivity agency result in highly charged emotions such as love and hate, comfort and stress, compulsion and aversion. These workers' responses also imply that these highly contrasting emotions can be experienced simultaneously. Such intense contradictory emotions can create high levels of arousal and use up mental energy, increasing the risk for emotional exhaustion and burnout (Zapf, 2002). This would suggest that these workers who regularly experience ambiguous agency are more

likely to also experience reduced well-being with the passage of time (as exhaustion and burnout take time to develop). These findings make a novel contribution to the emerging research area of connectivity emotions by showing the interaction between worker agency, affect and connectivity. These findings contribute to research exploring the effects of technology use and connectivity on emotions by considering the role of worker agency in these processes and the possible implications for health. These findings highlight an important area for future research. My study shows that worker emotions and affective well-being are important nascent research topics in connected organisations, as they have a direct influence on organisational behaviour and relationships. While the findings on emotions and subjective well-being are a novel contribution to agency and connectivity research, much more remains to be explored on how these concepts interact with one another.

The final point of discussion in regards to equivocal well-being is the effect of surveillance and the resulting perceived absence of agency on worker affect and satisfaction. Because workers (in my study) do not know if or when they are being tracked, they feel ambiguous agency and experience negative affect from the reduced sense of autonomy. Helliwell (2019) found that autonomy (a concept closely linked to agency) is an important factor in subjective well-being and happiness. However, for my study's participants this ambiguousness does not necessarily link to negative outcomes for their subjective well-being. This is because, while surveillance reduces the feelings of agency and creates discomfort from being watched, in the case of mobile workers, being tracked also creates a sense of safety and comfort in case they need assistance in a dangerous or difficult situation when they are engaging in fieldwork. This means that surveillance and the resulting ambiguous agency may contribute to experiences of conflicting emotions of comfort and discomfort simultaneously, leading to equivocal subjective well-being. Another noteworthy finding in my study is that some of the participants set up surveillance on themselves through social media, which reinforces the state of ambiguous agency for these workers. The implications of ambiguous agency created through surveillance for these participants' subjective well-being are contradictory. While placing oneself under further surveillance by organisations and customers may increase feelings of being an accountable and committed worker,

which can increase satisfaction and positive affect, the increased surveillance creates work extension and intensification, which can result in highly negative well-being outcomes such as emotional exhaustion and stress.

These findings mean that the links between ambiguous agency experiences and worker subjective well-being remain unclear and inconsistent, or as I term them – 'equivocal'. This concept is an emerging contribution from my research to the field of subjective well-being in connected organisations and could constitute an important area for future research. A final point to note is that some of my participants did not reflect on their connectivity agency or how it can influence their well-being prior to participating in my study. With their new reflections, however, they may be able to take actions towards reducing the occurrence of absent and ambiguous agency and consequently reduce eroded and equivocal well-being outcomes.

Summary

This chapter discussed the findings of my study in light of past empirical and conceptual knowledge, and discussed the new insights this study offers for research on worker agency and well-being in connected organisations. The discussion suggests that these workers in their connected organisations can experience shifts between three types of agency (rather than a duality as proposed by previous literature by Hewson, 2010, Kolb and colleagues, 2015 and Mazmanian, 2013) and that while intrapersonal elements were key for abundant agency experiences, the interpersonal elements tended to dominate during experiences of absent agency. The discussion presented new ideas regarding ambiguous agency which have not been identified or explored in depth by past studies and shows how contradictions and conflict within the interpersonal, temporal and intrapersonal elements create confusion for workers at employee and managerial levels alike.

The chapter discussed the links between the agentic shifts and subjective well-being of participants and proposed that there is similar, 'mirrored' movement in well-being, arguing the possibility of experiencing enhanced, eroded and equivocal subjective well-being all at the same time. As shown in the findings, experiences of abundant

agency are linked to positive outcomes for participants' subjective well-being through the creation of positive affect and increased satisfaction. Conversely, experiences of absent agency seem to be associated with highly negative affect, greater resentment (the opposite of satisfaction) and eroded well-being for these workers. The concept of equivocal well-being, in particular, offered new insights about how workers in connected organisations experience agency, which can be highly ambiguous, and how it is mirrored by their subjective well-being outcomes, suggesting that the associations and links are not always clear or consistent and may shift. The implications of these findings for research and practice and future research directions are outlined in the next and concluding chapter.

CHAPTER SIX: Conclusion

This concluding chapter provides a brief summary of the key findings from my research study. It also discusses a number of theoretical contributions to research in the fields of agency, connectivity and well-being. The chapter then identifies potential limitations of the conducted research and proposes a number of avenues for future research. The thesis ends with some final reflections on connectivity, agency, well-being and their shifting nature, as illuminated by this study.

Key findings

Past research on connectivity has found that it can change individual and organisational expectations and obligations regarding different aspects of work (Duxbury & Smart, 2011; Jaakson & Kallaste, 2010), especially if the employing organisation provides this technology (Bittman et al., 2009). This means that personal agency (Bandura, 2001) in terms of how and when one carries out work tasks can be impacted. My research shows that some workers can experience three different types of connective agency, which I have termed 'abundant', 'absent' and ambiguous', when it comes to their connectivity to work. These shifts can happen due to various intrapersonal, temporal and interpersonal elements, as personal agency is highly influenced by temporal and social contexts (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998).

Findings show that when workers are feeling in control of their connectivity, are able to work flexibly, and have perceived social support, they experience abundant agency. My study also showed that certain intrapersonal elements, such as high self-efficacy, are key factors for experiencing abundant agency. In this study, absent agency arises when workers feel out of control, feel pressured through concertive control, engage in addictive connectivity behaviours, and perceive an inability to prioritise family or non-work relationships. My findings suggest that certain interpersonal elements, such as concertive control, seem to have the most influence in absent agency experiences. When workers engage in habitual behaviours, hold contradictory beliefs or feel conflicting emotions, experience blurred time boundaries, observe

contradictory connectivity behaviours and feel like they are under surveillance, they can experience ambiguous agency. As workers can experience shifts in agency, their subjective well-being mirrors these shifts to produce different outcomes, and ranges from enhancement, erosion and equivocacy.

Past studies reveal a link between agency (or a sense of control) and well-being outcomes (Mullan & Wajcman, 2019; Russo et al., 2019). As shown in my findings, experiences of abundant agency are linked to positive outcomes for workers' subjective well-being. These experiences and the ability to maintain a positive social connection result in greater satisfaction and positive affect and attitudes. The three elements within absent agency show that when workers experience a lack of control over their connectivity they also face negative well-being outcomes. These experiences can lead to emotional distress, burnout, negative affect and dangerous or unhealthy behaviours and attitudes, all leading to eroded subjective well-being. During experiences of ambiguous agency the outcomes for subjective well-being remain unclear and can be contradictory in nature. The links between the shifting connective agency and subjective well-being outcomes are novel findings and create some interesting dynamics for future exploration.

Theoretical contributions to research

This study makes a number of contributions to theory and research. The following three sections discuss key contributions to the fields of worker agency within connected organisations, worker subjective well-being, and connectivity and technological behaviours.

Contributions to research on agency in work and organisations

The most significant contribution of my study is the conceptualisation of worker agency as shifting between different experiences. This suggests that workers can experience not only 'abundant' (high amount) or absent (low amount or no) agency, but can also experience a third state of agency – 'ambiguous' agency, an agentic experience which has not yet been explored by past studies. Unlike past studies, my

study finds that workers in connected organisations can at times experience ambiguous agency, where there is no clarity on whether an individual has or does not have control over their connectivity. This means that agency should not be seen as a duality, where a worker either has agency or does not (Bandura, 2006), but as a typology of different agentic experiences.

Past studies show that intrapersonal factors and temporal and social contexts have a profound effect on agency (Bandura, 2006; Derks et al., 2015; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Hewson, 2010). My study extends this research by showing that certain elements play a larger role in experiences of different types of connectivity agency. This study finds that intrapersonal elements are a key factor for the state of abundant agency and that intrapersonal elements can reduce the influences of temporal and interpersonal elements. The findings further contribute to the concept of connective agency by showing that social influences are creating constraints on personal agency. Normative pressure and concertive controls mean that employees tend to comply with perceived interpersonal expectations rather than exercising 'free will' or following personal preference in terms of connectivity levels. This reduces or removes their agency and control over their own connectivity. This implies that the social norms and pressures reduce workers' self-efficacy or self-belief that they can control their own connectivity. Findings also show that these participants did not want others to find out about their negative views about constant connectivity or appear to be going against the social norms.

Another contribution arising from my research is the link between agency experiences and requisite connectivity, defined as the most appropriate level of connectivity for individuals to perform effectively (Kolb, Collins & Lind, 2008). My findings show that having the technology that enables continuous connection helped some workers (when they had high levels of self-efficacy and sense of agency) to achieve the desired connectivity amount. These findings extend research on connectivity agency and connectivity amount preferences by showing that some workers have different 'requisite' connectivities. While some workers want to disconnect, others wish to maintain continuous connectivity to work. However, whether these workers experience their personal 'requisite' level of connectivity

depends on whether they are experiencing abundant agency, the absence of agency, or are in an ambiguous state regarding their own connectivity.

Finally, I propose that 'shifting agency' means that agentic experiences are not simply present or absent but that workers can experience all three types of agency throughout their working day and into their time at home. This contributes to research on worker agency by suggesting that agency should not be seen as static, as my study shows that the same participants experience various types of agency in different contexts. These findings extend current conceptualisations of agency in terms of other organisational phenomena, not just connectivity. In other words, my findings suggest that workers can experience shifting agency across all aspects of their organisational or work lives. Thus, I propose that the 'shifting agency typology' created from my findings could be applied to studies exploring other kinds of organisational behaviours.

Contributions to subjective well-being research

An emerging contribution of my research is that when workers experience shifts in their connectivity agency, they can also experience different subjective well-being outcomes, or 'shifting well-being'. These findings mean that depending on the type of agency experience, these workers experience different subjective well-being outcomes within short periods of time and can move between different experiences of well-being, mirroring the shifts between the three experiences of agency.

After analysing my findings I adopted the terms 'enhanced well-being', 'erosion of well-being' and 'equivocal well-being' to capture the movements of subjective well-being and answer my research question. The findings of my study suggest that some experiences of agency can influence specific forms or aspects of subjective well-being. While abundant agency can create positive affect, reduce or remove negative affect and create higher satisfaction, absent agency appears to lower subjective well-being by creating negative affect and reducing satisfaction. I also propose that when experiencing ambiguous agency, workers can also face well-being outcomes that are ambiguous or conflicting as they mirror this agency experience. Equivocal well-being has not yet been explored in prior research on connectivity or agency. My findings,

however, suggest that the association between ambiguous agency experiences and worker subjective well-being are unclear, inconsistent and at times incongruous. These findings, therefore, contribute to the research field of worker subjective well-being by showing that people can experience highly contradictory emotions, moods, satisfaction amounts and well-being outcomes. These ideas and concepts need further investigation and research to understand what kind of outcomes ambiguous agency and equivocal well-being might have on workers in the long term.

My research also showed that some of the managers in the study experience highly negative emotions (such as sadness and frustration) mirroring absent agency experiences and increased (uncontrollable) connectivity. This finding contributes to research focusing on the effects of agency and subjective well-being outcomes for managers in connected organisations by suggesting that senior workers may be more susceptible to erosion of their well-being due to reduced agency regarding their own connectivity. Although prior studies argue that it is impossible to stay constantly connected to work due to personal agency, all of the current study's participants, including employees and managers, perceive that they are 'too connected' to work and associate this with the company-provided smartphones. They feel unable to disconnect and stop the negative impact on their well-being when they experience this absence of agency. This contradicts earlier studies arguing that connective agency and the ability to control how one's own connectivity influences well-being resides mainly with workers themselves. This contributes to research on outcomes of flexible working arrangements (which mostly focuses on productivity and performance outcomes) by showing how flexible arrangements influence study participants' well-being during different agentic experiences.

The findings also make a contribution to the emerging research area of connectivity emotions, by depicting the interaction between worker agency, affect and connectivity. These findings contribute to research exploring the effects of technology use and connectivity on emotions by considering the role of worker agency in these processes and the possible implications for health. Some of my participants talked about experiencing highly positive emotions when engaging in what other people might perceive as hyper-connectivity. This suggests that for some people, continuous

connectivity enhances subjective well-being. These findings contribute to research on connectivity and well-being (which is mostly dominated by findings of negative impacts) through offering a more positive view by showing that when these workers have connectivity agency they can create positive outcomes for their well-being. Worker emotions and affective well-being are important nascent research topics in connected organisations, as they have a direct influence on organisational behaviour and relationships.

Contributions to connectivity research

The study also contributes to the research area of connectivity norms and technological behaviours. This emerging research area is becoming significant because smart mobile ICT devices are becoming ever-present in daily life and have the ability to influence how individuals behave with and relate to each other (Beer, 2012; Mazmanian, 2013; Wehmeyer, 2008). While much research has been done on how people use these technologies, little research exists on why people engage in certain behaviours, how they perceive their agency over smartphone usage and connectivity levels and why and how some individuals refuse to use these technologies.

The specific contribution to the theoretical concepts of connectivity and connective agency is that my study helps to redefine and extend the concept of connectivity by showing that what is considered to be a normal (or requisite) amount of connectivity (Kolb, 2008) has changed. All of the responses in my study imply that near-constant connectivity is now considered to be the 'normal' state and anything less than that would now be considered hypo-connectivity (as according to Kolb's definition). This study suggests that it could be becoming impossible to have a state of hypo-connectivity (or too little connectivity). Workers do not seem to achieve agentic choice over disconnection and only seem to disconnect if a major disaster prevents technology from functioning properly. Conversely, hyper-connectivity seems to be normal and normalised.

Another contribution to the field of connectivity is the idea that the social aspect of temporal intermittency no longer exists. While in the recent past, connectivity was

constrained by social conventions of working hours as well as the social unacceptability of contact during night or holiday time (Kolb, 2008; Towers et al., 2006), the ability of technology to stay continuously operational has created new norms where workers are choosing (or are forced) to ignore the social aspect of temporal intermittency by responding to work demands irrespective of time. With temporal intermittency (mostly) gone, human agency becomes the most significant influence upon connectivity levels.

A final contribution to the research fields of connectivity and connective behaviours is that the responses were gathered from three very different organisations (private, public and governmental) and from workers at the employee and managerial levels. The majority of hyper-connectivity and connective agency research focuses on white-collar professionals at managerial levels (Gorski, 2017; Mazmanian et al., 2013; Mullan & Wajcman, 2019). My study adds to this research by showing that the ubiquitous nature of mobile technology, social norms and pressure for constant connectivity exist seemingly everywhere, irrespective of the nature of work, the type of industry or organisation, or the hierarchical position within the workplace. This has important implications for practice.

Implications for practice

In terms of practice, it is important for organizations that provide smartphones to their employees to understand how this can influence individual behaviour as well as how manager-employee and co-worker relationships can be affected. These processes need to be taken into consideration by employers and managers because organizational behaviours and workplace relationships can greatly influence individual performance and well-being (Almost, Wolff, Mildon, Price, Godfrey, Robinson, Ross-White & Mercado-Mallari l., 2015; Morrison & Cooper-Thomas, 2013).

Work productivity can also be reduced because constant connectivity creates the potential for constant interruptions, even if merely checking one's device, which reduces concentration on the task at hand (Grauers & Wall, 2012). My findings suggest that when workers experience ambiguous or absent agency they are more likely to

have reduced concentration because they would not feel agentic enough to ignore or avoid interruptions that are enabled by connectivity.

Organisational expectations can also clash with family expectations (Kreiner et al., 2009) and personal downtime. Therefore workers who receive a smartphone from their organisation and feel a lack of agency over their connectivity levels may be more likely to neglect family expectations and needs, which can cause work-life conflict (Fenner & Renn, 2010). Work-life conflict can lead to a number of negative outcomes for both the individual and the organization and may include an increased intent to quit, stress, absenteeism and depression (Diaz et al., 2011).

For the workers in my study, the norms to be continuously connected to work and the resulting erosion of agency means that they have to prioritise engagement in work over other life domains, especially those aspiring to or already in managerial/senior positions. The implications of this are that women, who still overwhelmingly leave the workforce to care for children (Loeschner, 2018) and use flexible working arrangements (such as teleworking) for family responsibilities (Kim, 2018), may not have the agency to choose between work and non-work aspects of life but may have to enact a hybrid of both as they juggle caring responsibilities with the invasion of work, via technology, into family time. This implies that organizations need clear policies on smartphone usage and connectivity after hours and should consider factors other than constant availability when assigning organizational rewards such as promotions and bonuses.

Perhaps due to the lack of policies or guidelines about connectivity, especially connectivity after assigned work hours, some workers in my study were more likely to experience absent or ambiguous agency more frequently. This suggests that organisations need to be mindful of these connective norms and pressures. To reduce the negative well-being effects that mirror absent or ambiguous agency, organisations could develop specific guidelines or rules about employee connectivity after work hours and clearly convey their expectations. This could be done through managers and senior staff, as they are often seen as organisational agents and employees can mimic their behaviours, and managers should also be mindful of this effect. Organisations

wanting to encourage better digital health and well-being and to help their workers improve their work-life balance could implement 'digital holidays' (Kolb, 2015), where workers are regularly encouraged to disconnect from all of their devices for a set period of time in order to recover from continuous connectivity.

Prior to participating in my study, some of the participants did not reflect on their connectivity agency or how it is linked to their well-being. With their new reflections, however, they may be able to take actions towards reducing the occurrence of absent and ambiguous agency and consequently reduce eroded and equivocal well-being outcomes. People are also often unaware of how their smartphone attitudes and behaviours influence their workload and well-being (Mazmanian et al., 2005). Therefore, another potential practical contribution of this study could be that individual participants have had an opportunity to reflect on their own smartphone expectations, attitudes and behaviours, and become more mindful of how these processes can influence their health, mood, relationships at work and in life in general.

Limitations and future research

All of the discussed findings must be considered with limitations in mind. The number of participants and the interpretive aspects of both the analysis and the study participants' perceptions mean that the findings are not generalisable to all employees and managers who receive company smartphones. They might also not apply to workers from small-to-medium-sized-enterprises or innovative start-ups, or from organisations that are not located in New Zealand. However, these findings have offered a rich, nuanced, multi-voiced construction of some significant aspects of connective agency experiences that contribute to an updated, revised conceptualisation of connective agency, the connectivity concept and the emerging well-being implications for connected workers. The richness of participant accounts from interviews and diaries also allowed for a more in-depth discussion and enabled me to focus on individual perspectives, which is crucial for explorative studies. The goal of the study was not to generalise but rather to explore the 'connected worker' perspectives to make a theoretical contribution to the field of research concerned with connective agency.

Further insights might have been gained through the use of a longer diary study or collecting data in more organisations. Focusing on one organisation could have also provided more in-depth results. However, practical and access issues limited the amount of time I could spend on the diary studies and the number of organisations I could collect data from. Despite these potential limitations, examining a range of organisations from different industries and analysing the similarities and differences in connective agency and subjective well-being experiences was the main objective for the research. Therefore, my interpretive approach and two data collection methods seemed well suited to answer the research question. Future research could explore connectivity agency and well-being using a longer term diary design or conducting diary studies at different times of the year. For example, diary studies could be conducted in two stages (two times in one year), with a six months period in-between data collection stages. This would allow for comparison of connectivity and agency experiences, and their implications for well-being across time.

Due to the homogeneity of the ethnic and cultural demographics of my participants, the findings and the final framework may not necessarily apply to people from other, non-New Zealand backgrounds. Future studies should therefore explore the identified concepts of ambiguous agency and equivocal well-being to see how they apply in different contexts, for workers identifying with different cultures or from various ethnicities, as previous studies suggest that cultural identity is an important influence on connectivity behaviours and expectations (Kim & Obushenkova, 2019), and the associated subjective well-being outcomes (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2019; Tov & Diener, 2009). It would also be interesting to look at solo parents or workers with elder care responsibilities as they can have very different work-life priorities and role pressures (Halinski, Duxbury & Stevenson, 2020), and may experience connective agency and its effects on well-being differently to workers with spousal support or without care responsibilities. Finally, future research could also invoke a feminist lens to specifically focus on gendered aspects of connective states, well-being, organisational advancement and normative pressure.

Shifting subjectivities

I started this thesis with the notion of shifting subjectivities, referring to a central philosophical concept of subjectivity and proposing that some of its aspects are in constant motion. Throughout my thesis I have presented how movements within different subjective aspects (which include individual consciousness, agency, personal perspectives, realities and truths) and external factors of time, space and social contexts create different experiences of worker agency in terms of their connectivity to work. These shifts are consequently mirrored by different experiences of subjective well-being for workers in connected organisations. As connected organisations become the norm, and connectivity becomes increasingly ubiquitous, it is now more important than ever to be mindful of the shifting subjectivities and their profound effects on work and life.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Invitation to participate in research

Dear [name],

On behalf of the University of Auckland researchers Elena Obushenkova (PhD candidate), Barbara Plester (PhD) and Nigel Haworth (Prof) you are cordially invited to participate in a research study titled "The influence of smartphone norms and behaviours on key workplace relationships". Your organization has determined this research project to be appropriate for your participation.

This research aims to develop insight into how organizationally provided smartphone attitudes and behaviours influence manager-employee and co-worker relationships. It seeks to explore how individual smartphone expectations, norms and behaviours influence interpersonal experiences within manager-employee and co-worker relationships. The participants are invited to participate in a face-to-face interview of approximately 40 minutes duration and a once-a-day diary study which will run for seven (7) consecutive days. At the end of the diary study you are invited to a short follow-up interview which should take no longer than 10 minutes and can be conducted over the phone or Skype. I have also attached a Participation Information Sheet for further details and a consent form for you to sign if you decide to participate. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You do not have to provide a reason for choosing not to participate.

This project aims to inform practitioners, future researchers and managers about the potential influences of technology on key workplace relationships. A benefit to participants of this study will be the summary report they will receive and the opportunity to enter a draw to win one (1) of ten (10) NZ$100 Prezzy cards as a gift for completing the study. Also, long–term benefits may arise for the organisation as the results could be used to inform policy makers and improve the usage smartphones to create better workplace relationships within the organisation.

I believe your experiences and perceptions would provide valuable insights for this project and I would be very grateful for your participation. Please let me know if you are available to participate, if you have any questions regarding this project and when would be the best time to set up the interview.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks,

Kind Regards,

Elena Obushenkova

PhD Candidate

Phone: 021 117 0685

Email: lobu002@aucklanduni.ac.nz

Approved by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on 14 March 2016 for three years, Reference Number 016805

Appendix 2. Participant information sheet

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
NEW ZEALAND

Department of Management and International Business

Room 437, Level 4
Owen G Glen Building
12 Grafton Road,
Auckland, New Zealand
Phone: +64 9 923 5762

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019

Project title: The influence of smartphone norms and behaviours on key workplace relationships.

The Researchers: Elena Obushenkova, Dr Barbara Plester and Professor Nigel Haworth

Research Introduction

My name is Elena Obushenkova, I am a Doctoral student in the Department of Management and International Business, at the University of Auckland. I am conducting research into how the attitudes towards and the use of smartphones influence the relationships between individual employees, their managers and co-workers because of the growing use of such technologies and increasing utilisation of telework.

Research description and invitation

This research aims to develop insight into how organisationally provided smartphone norms and behaviours influence manager-employee and co-worker relationships. It seeks to explore how individual smartphone expectations, norms and behaviours influence interpersonal experiences within these relationships. The focus will be on employees whose jobs are semi-mobile (jobs that comprise at least 50% fieldwork or mobile work) as individuals in these kind of jobs are likely to have specific smartphone expectations and behaviours. This project aims to inform practitioners, future researchers and managers about the potential influences of technology on key

workplace relationships. Obtaining data from individuals with first-hand experience is therefore particularly important for these purposes. I am inviting employees and their managers from [company name] to participate in a face-to-face interview, a diary study and a short follow-up interview, and your involvement will be essential in helping to understand how smartphone norms and behaviours influence workplace relationships.

Research procedures

You are invited to participate in a face-to-face interview of approximately 40 minutes duration, followed by a once-a-day diary study which will run for seven (7) consecutive days. At the end of the diary study you are invited to a short follow-up interview which should take no longer than 10 minutes. The interviews will be conducted at a place and time most convenient to you. Follow-up interviews can be conducted over Skype or phone call. The first interview will cover your current work role and responsibilities, your expectations and behaviours towards smartphones and your perception on how these smartphones have influenced your work and work relationships. For the diary study, you can choose whether to complete it electronically on a set-up confidential webpage (where responses will be visible only to the researcher) which will be sent out every evening for seven consecutive days or in a paperback diary (diary (provided and collected at the end of the study by the researcher). If you choose the paperback diary, you can choose to receive email reminders every evening for the duration on the diary study. The diary questions will cover individual smartphone behaviours and usage and should not take longer than 10 minutes per entry to complete.

Data storage/retention/destruction/future use

The interviews will be recorded on a digital audio recorder, and you may choose to have the recorder turned off at any time without giving a reason. The interview will be transcribed by the researcher or by a professional transcription service which has signed a confidentiality agreement. The recording will be erased after transcription. The diary entries will be kept in electronic files on a university password-protected computer. The interview transcripts and paperback diary entries will be kept in a

locked file in The University of Auckland Business School and destroyed after six years. Any hard copy will be sent to a professional confidential document destruction agency. A summary of the results will be provided to you and data will be presented in an aggregate manner to ensure that no individual person can be identified. Data from the current research project will be kept for at least six years and may be used for future research projects by Elena Obushenkova, Dr. Barbara Plester and Prof. Nigel Haworth. Data might be used in academic publications or presentations. In all cases, potential identifiable information from any of the participants will not be published anywhere or shared.

Right to withdraw

Your participation is, of course, voluntary. Although the HR manager has identified you as a potential participant, should you decide not to participate, or withdraw from the study, the HR manager has assured us that this will not affect your employment status. As your participation is voluntary, you may terminate your participation and withdraw your data at any time without giving a reason within 14 days after the follow-up interview.

Confidentiality

Your confidentiality is guaranteed. All responses will only be accessible by the researcher. To protect your confidentiality and considering that some responses may be critical of the organisation, your organisation will not have access to your responses. No information will be reported in a way that identifies you as a source, and will only be used for academic research purposes. There will be no reference made to any individual participants within any publications to protect confidentiality.

Incidental findings

It is possible that during the interview incidental findings might emerge. If this occurs the interviewer will inform the interview participant about these findings and exclude them from the research results. The interviewer will also recommend employment

relations consultation services should you require them. Incidental findings will also be kept in complete privacy and confidentiality.

Potential benefits of taking part in the research

You may be interested in taking part in the research project and gaining insight into some aspects of it such as data collection. If you wish to be emailed a summary report of the result, you will have the opportunity to do this, and will need to provide your email address.

Long–term benefits may arise for the organisation as the results could be used to inform policy makers and improve the usage of smartphones to create better workplace relationships within the organisation.

Prezzy card draw for participation

You have the opportunity to win one (1) of ten (10) NZ$100 Prezzy cards as a gift for taking part in this research. In order to contact you if you are the draw winner, please provide your email address in consent form. This information will be stored separately from the survey data, in a locked filing cabinet (paper surveys) or separate electronic folder (computer-based surveys) and destroyed after the draw has been made and all prizes distributed, and all research reports sent out. The draw will be made once we have all complete responses, anticipated to be approximately at the end of 2016. Winners will be contacted using the provided email address. For any winner who does not reply to claim their prize within a fortnight, that person will forfeit the prize and the draw will be made again.

Other

Permission for employees to participate in interviews during work hours has been granted by the organisation.

I very much hope that you will agree to participate in this research project and thank you for your cooperation.

Contact Details for the Researcher, Supervisor and Head of Department

Researcher
Elena Obushenkova

PhD Candidate

Phone: 021 117 0685
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Supervisors

Dr Barbara Plester
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Head of Department

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For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact:

The Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 ext. 83711. Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz.

Approved by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on 14 March 2016 for three years, Reference Number 016805

Appendix 3. Interview schedule

Starting questions

1. Age, Gender, Job title/role, tenure, ethnicity, level of education
2. Tell me about your roles and responsibilities. How do you learn about these?
3. What is the reporting structure at your work?
4. Who do you communicate with on a daily basis at/from work?

User-device relationships

1. How do you use your company-provided smartphone? Do you have a particular daily routine when using your smartphone? Please describe.
2. In general, how do you think smartphones should be used (by you and others)? (availability, responsiveness, on the move usage, weekend/holiday use, public use, usage during face-to-face interactions)
3. Do you ever not use you smartphone (in what situation/life aspect/event)? Why?
4. When using your smartphone, do you use any avoidance tactics (e.g. pretending that you have not received a message or email, did not hear a call, or forgetting it)?
5. Has your smartphone usage changed (increase/decrease) since receiving the phone? Why?
6. How do you feel about your smartphone? How attached are you to this phone?
7. What kind of emotions (if any) does your smartphone evoke in you?
8. Do you receive other devices from work? Would you have liked to receive a different device? If yes, why?
9. What is the most useful thing about your smartphone?
10. What is the most frustrating thing about your smartphone?
11. In general, what kind of smartphone behaviours do you perceive as anti-social/inappropriate or going against your expectations?

Influence on roles

1. How do you think your work role has been influenced by having a company smartphone? (Follow up: would it be different if you did not have a smartphone? Would it be different if you were in a different position e.g. more/less senior?)
2. Why do you think your work provides smartphones?
3. What do you think are your manager's/employees' expectations for your smartphone usage? How do you know about these? Do you comply with these? When (if) you did not comply were there any consequences (good or bad)?
4. How do you think your manager/employees should use their smartphones? (in terms of contact, response, during off-work hours)

5. What do you think are your co-workers' expectations for your smartphone usage? How do you know about these? Do you comply with these? When (if) you did not comply were there any consequences (good or bad)?
6. How do you think your co-workers should use their smartphones?
7. What kind of smartphone behaviours, if any, do you think your manager/employees should not engage in (would be inappropriate)? What about your co-workers?

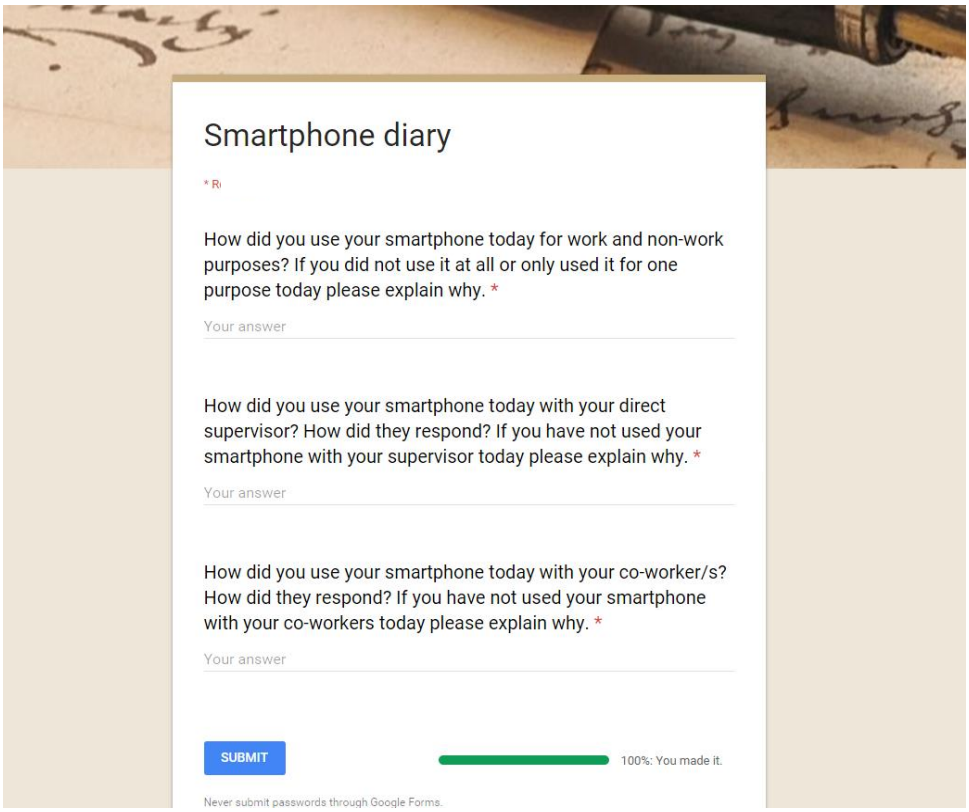
Relationships at work and smartphone influence

1. How would you describe your relationship with your direct supervisor/subordinates (in terms of quality, formality, closeness, reciprocity/mutuality, contact frequency and duration)?
2. How would you describe your relationships with different co-workers (in terms of quality, formality, closeness, reciprocity/mutuality, contact frequency and duration)?
3. How do you use your smartphone with your manager/employees on a typical day at the office? What about with your co-workers? And out of the office (non-work time)? (Follow up: informal communication)
4. Do you use your smartphone to maintain the relationship with your manager/employees? And with your co-workers?
5. Do you use your smartphone when interacting with your manager face-to-face? If no, why? Does your manager use his/her smartphone when interacting with you face-to-face? If yes, how does that make you feel/how do you react?
6. Do you use your smartphone when interacting with your co-workers face-to-face? If no, why? Do your co-workers use their smartphones when interacting with you face-to-face? If yes, how does that make you feel/how do you react?
7. How do you think smartphone expectations and usage influence your relationship/s with your manager/employees (in terms of relationship quality, formality, closeness, communication, power differences)?
8. How do you think smartphone expectations and usage influence your relationships with your co-workers (in terms of relationship quality, formality, closeness, communication)?
9. Has smartphone usage led to any improvements (e.g. positive emotions) or issues (conflict/negative emotions) in your relationship/s with manager/employees? And with you co-workers? (for example non-use such as ignoring or not responding, or over-use such as emailing or messaging constantly) Please explain.
1. Overall, do you think smartphones enable or inhibit communication and relationships with others at work? Why/how? And communication and relationships in general?

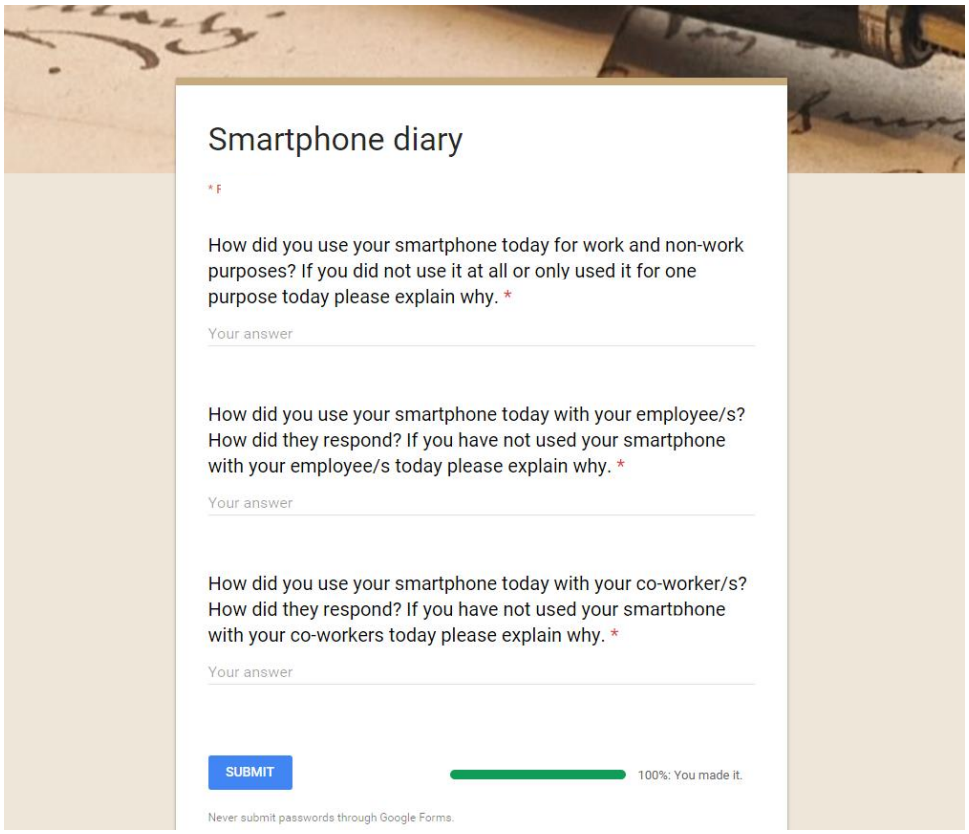
- Before we finish, can you think of anything else you would like to add?

Appendix 4. Electronic diary layout on Google docs forms

For employees.



For managers.



Appendix 5. Follow-up member checking interview schedule

Starting questions:

1. First of all, did you have any questions or extra insights about the diary study that you participated in?
2. For the week when you participated in the diary study, would you say it was a typical week (nothing out of the ordinary happened)?

Follow up on participant's diary responses:

- Why they used their smartphones in certain ways during the diary study week.
- How their smartphone usage made them feel.
- How their manager's/employees' and co-workers' responses made them feel.
- Whether there were any consequences (good or bad) of their smartphone usage.
- Anything else they would like to add.