Cultural Limits to Innovation in New Zealand

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Introduction

- Four models will be presented
  - Culture
  - National Identity
  - Innovation Identity
  - Cultural limits to Innovation
- The research goal was to identify the wider social context in which New Zealand innovation is situated. In this way some of NZ's strengths and weaknesses with respect to innovation can be identified.
- NZ is a mid-tier performer with respect to innovation
  - Global Innovation Index ranking-27
  - International Innovation Index ranking-26

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Methods

- Utilized a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to create a model of culture, national identity and innovation identity
    - Discourse analysis
    - Cultural consensus analysis
- Convenience sample of New Zealanders
    - Parents of high school students in Christchurch and Auckland
    - Schools were from the mid-tier income bracket (NZ decile 4-7)
    - 20 Parents each school
- Discourse obtained via face-to-face interviews or computer-assisted self interviews
- 50 Open-ended questions
    - Analyzed using NVIVO
- Likert Scales
    - Analyzed using Anthropac 4.0

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	Christchurch	Auckland
	N = 20	N = 20
Age		
20-29	-------	3
30-39	1	1
40-49	13	10
>50	6	6
Education		
University Degree	5	10
Some Uni	1	4
Tradeschool	3	3
High school	11	3
<High school	--------	---------
Total Income		
<49,999	1	1
50,000-99,999	9	9
>100,000	6	8
Ethnicity		
New Zealand European	19	18
Maori	0	1
Pacific Islander	1	0
Indian	0	1

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Results

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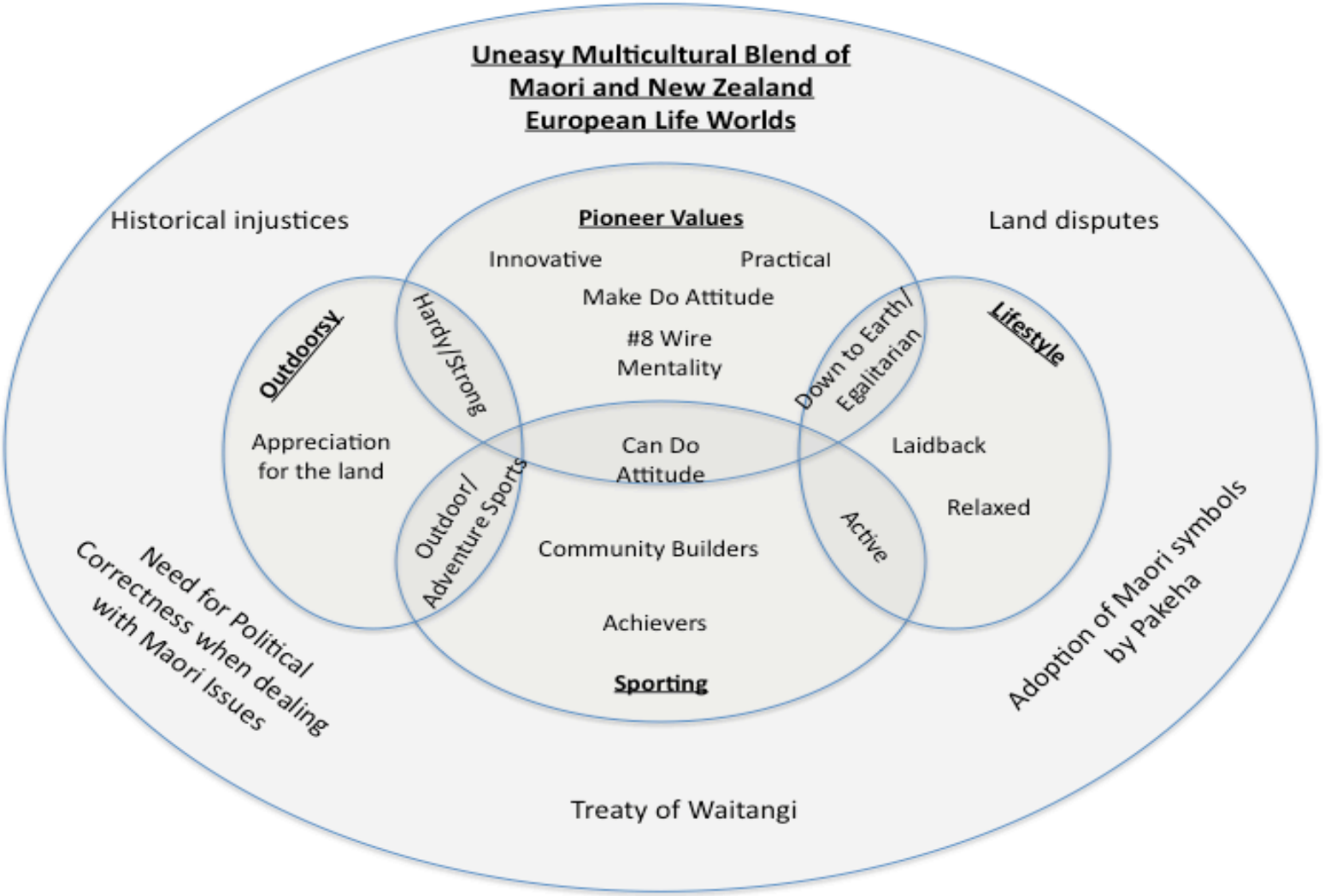

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Participants said:

- “There’s a #8 wire mentality. People had to cope a long way from home. They lacked resources and infrastructure and had to find a way to do what they had to do. I’m sure that mentality is still hanging around.” (Male, 51 years of age)
- “So there are all those things that have come out because of necessity and there not being equipment and that’s created innovation and that all comes back from being so far removed from the rest of the world.” (Female, 76 years of age)

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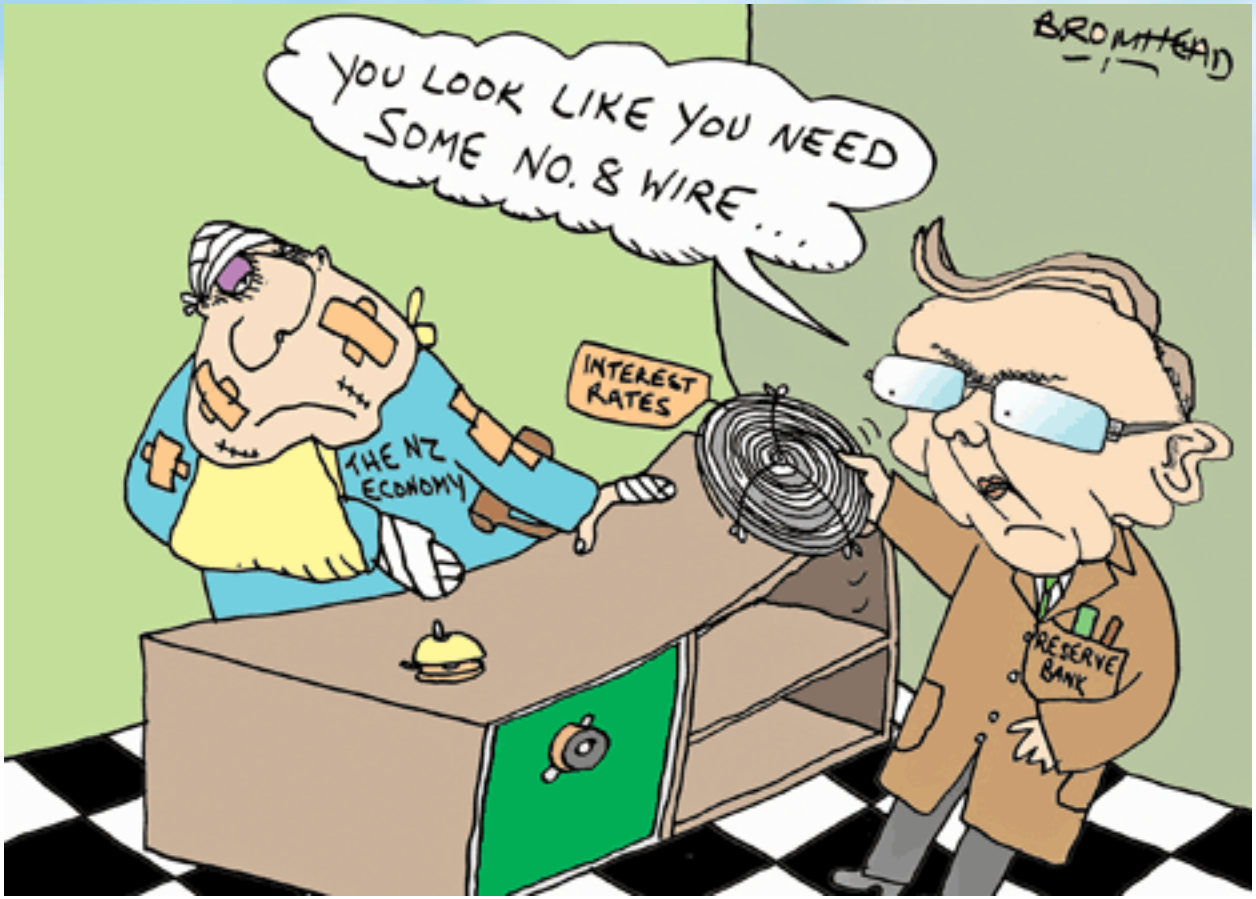

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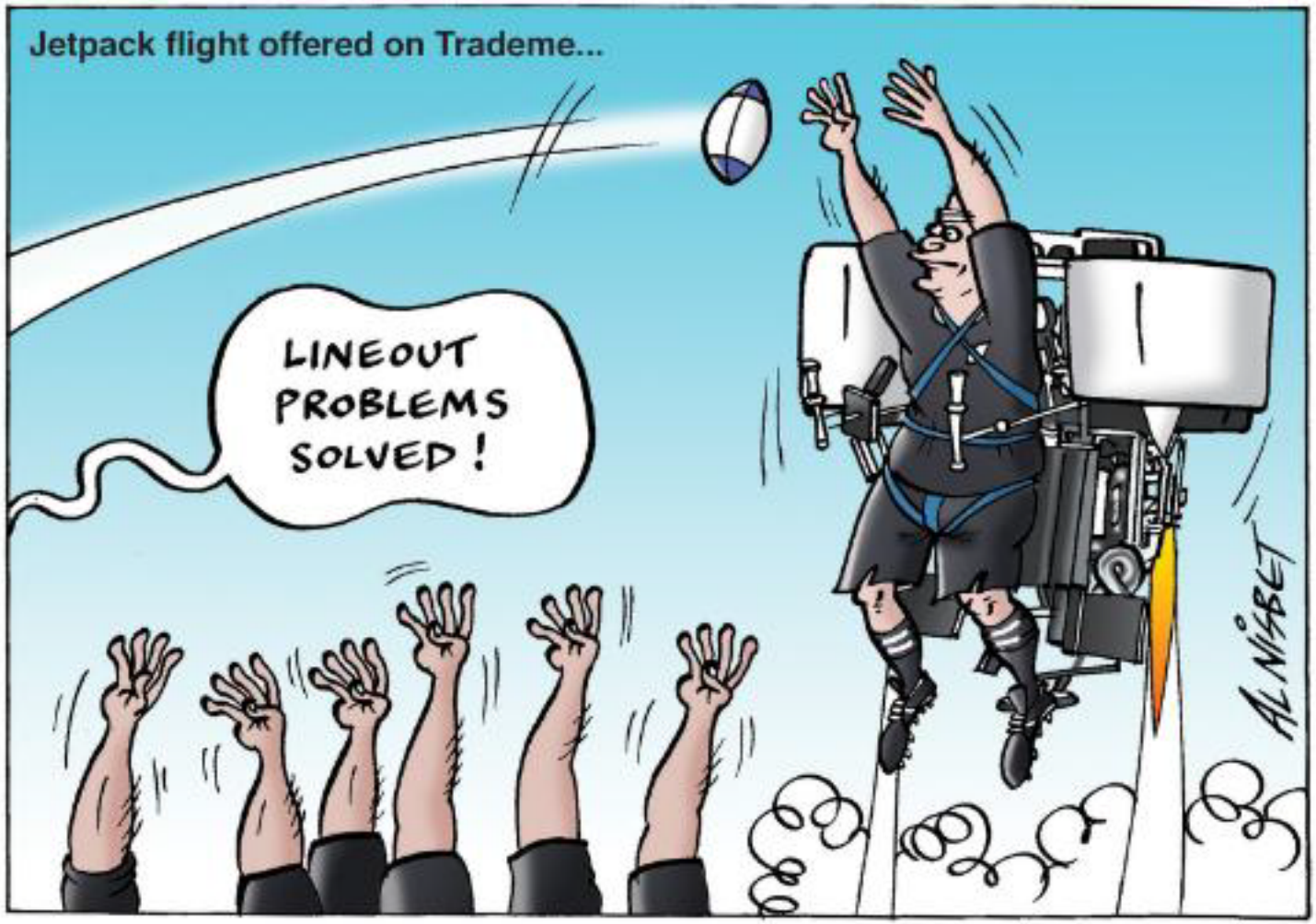

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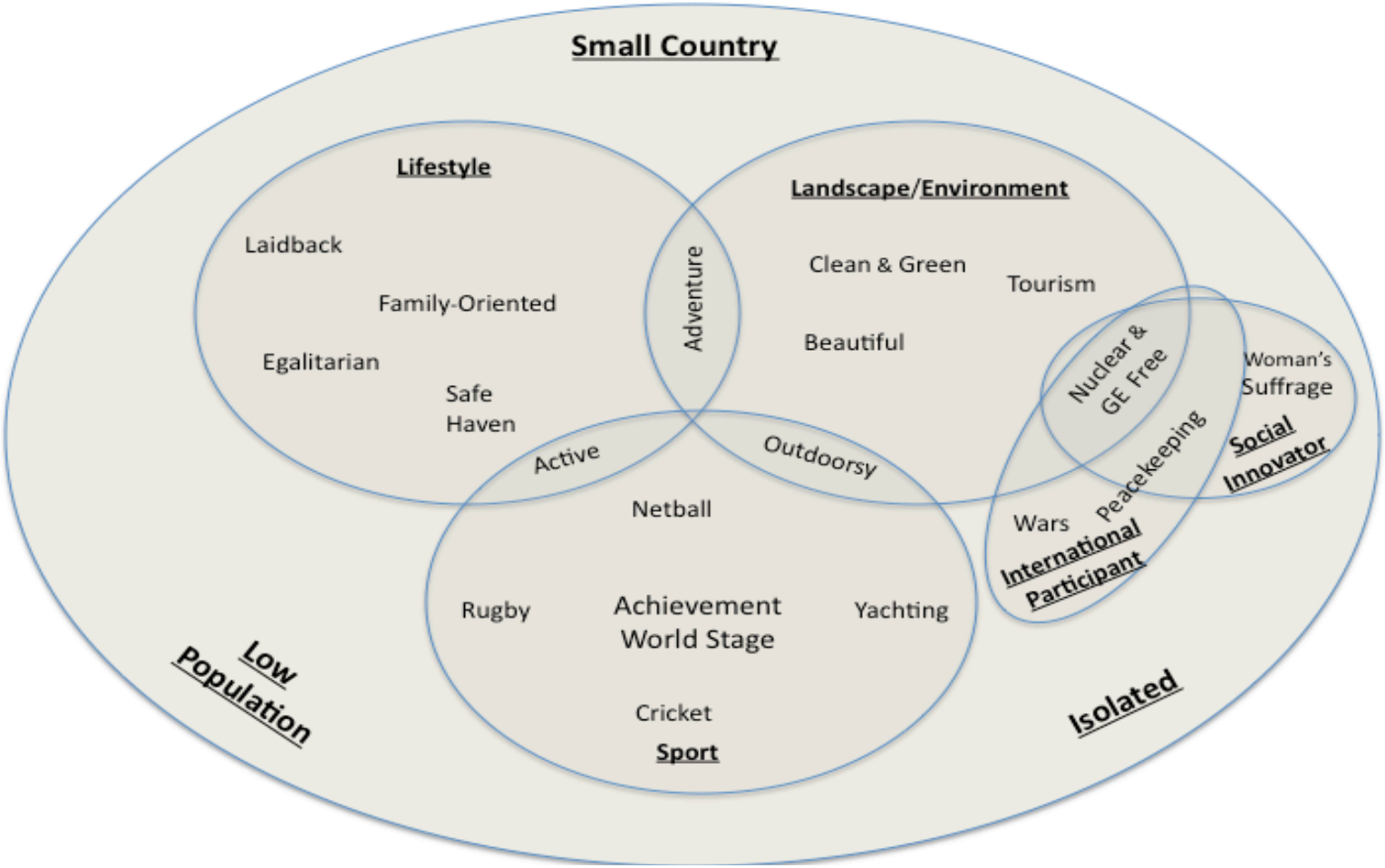
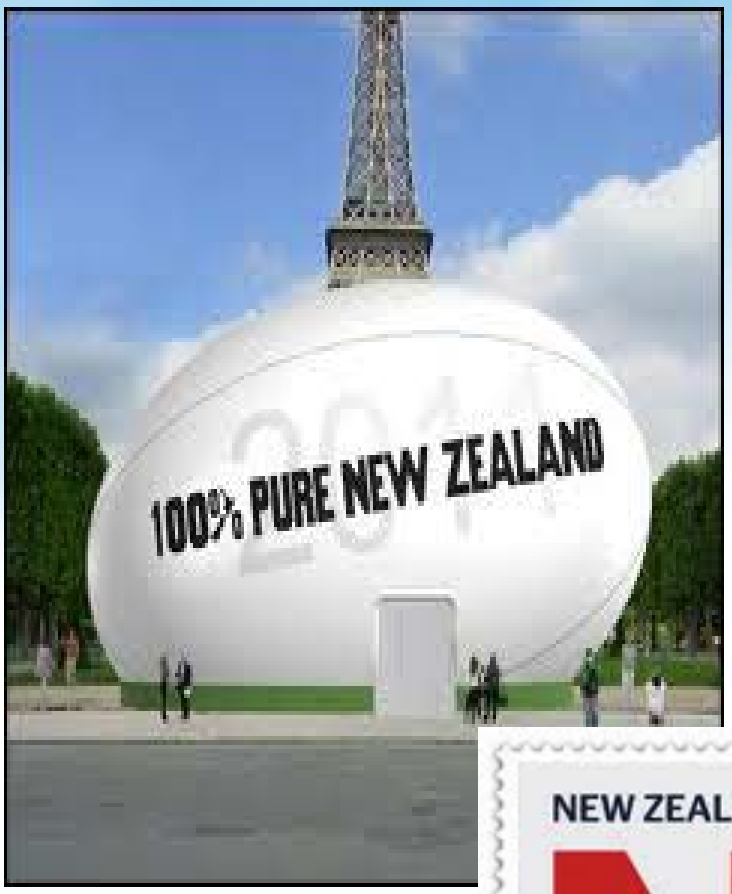

Small Country
Lifestyle
Laidback
Family-Oriented
Egalitarian
Safe Haven
Adventure
Landscape/Environment
Clean & Green
Tourism
Beautiful
Nuclear & GE Free
Woman's Suffrage
Social Innovator
Peacekeeping
Wars
International Participant
Active
Outdoorsy
Netball
Rugby
Achievement World Stage
Yachting
Cricket
Sport
Low Population
Isolated



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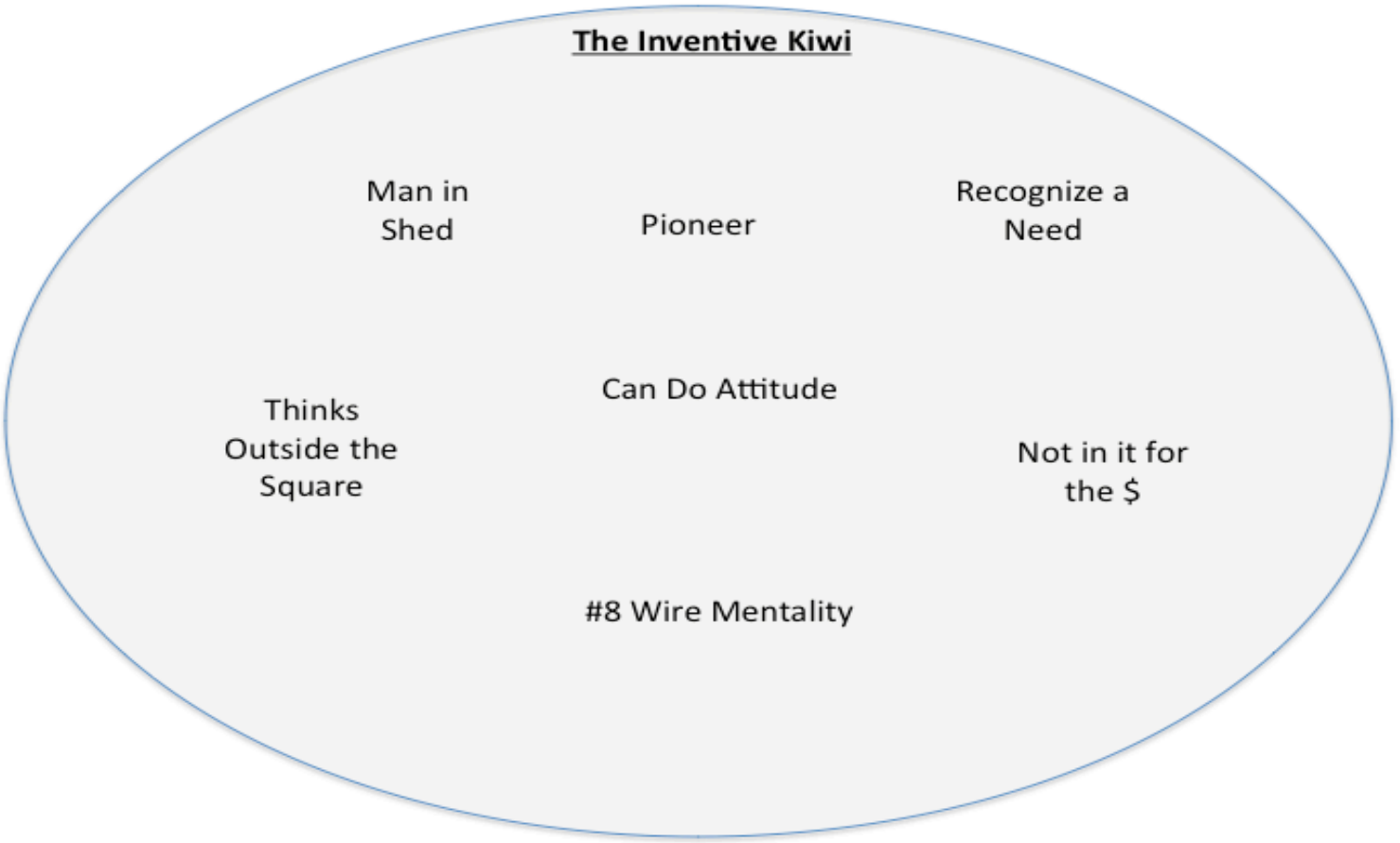

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Participants said:

- “I think the main factor driving someone to innovate is seeing a need. Either a personal need or a business need. To see the possibility of it being innovative.” (Female, 51 years of age)
- “For me to invent something would be for the benefit of others and sometimes , in some people, that is more satisfying than the money.” (Male, 68 years of age)

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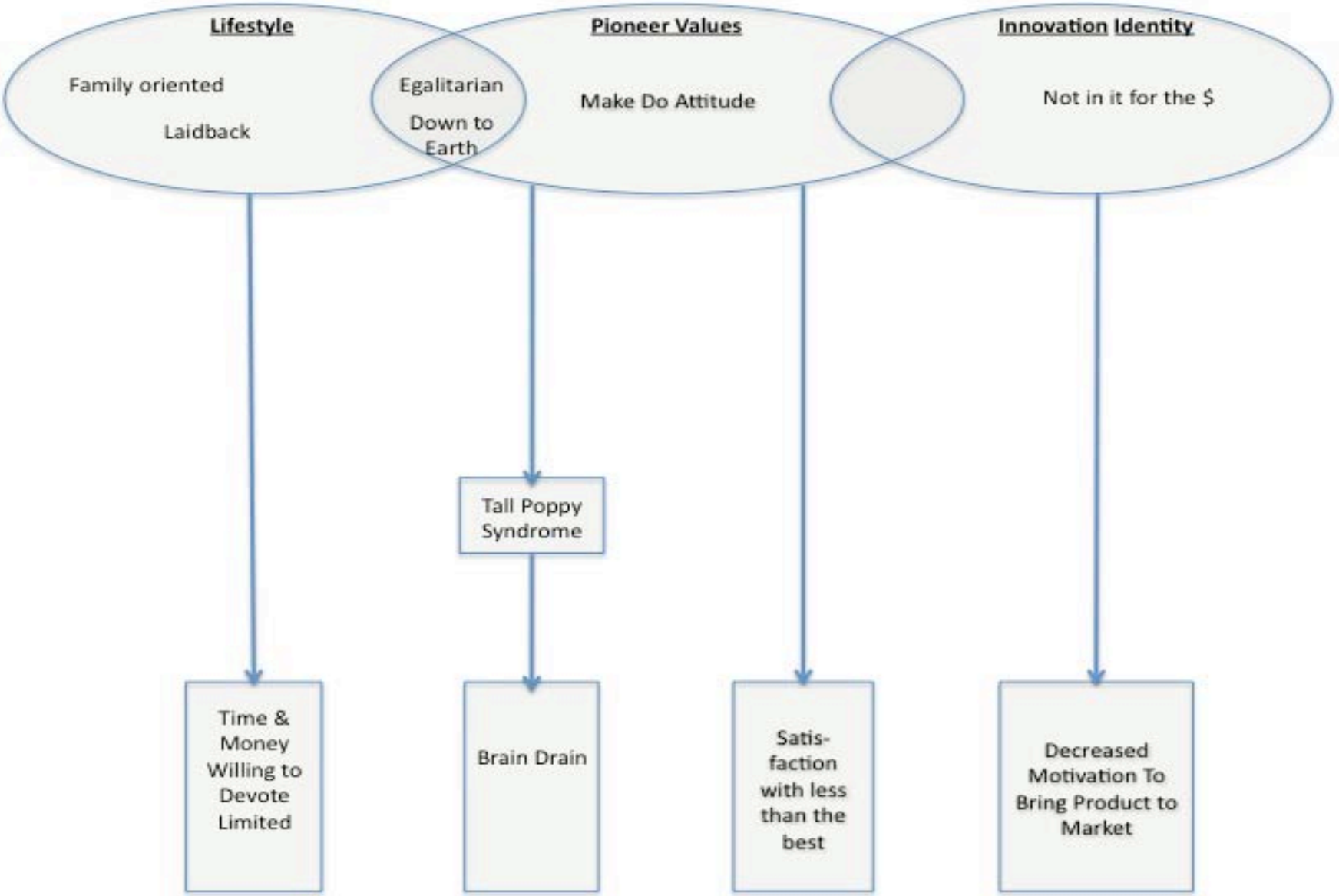
Lifestyle
Family oriented
Laidback
Egalitarian
Down to Earth
Pioneer Values
Make Do Attitude
Innovation Identity
Not in it for the $
Tall Poppy Syndrome
Time & Money Willing to Devote Limited
Brain Drain
Satis-faction with less than the best
Decreased Motivation To Bring Product to Market

Conclusions

- User innovation is a very strong part of New Zealand culture going all the way back to its pioneer history. User innovation is New Zealand's innovation identity. This differs from other countries where large companies tend to be part of a nation's innovation identity.
- Pioneer values (the same values that make NZ good at user innovation) may be limiting New Zealand's international performance with respect to innovation.
- New Zealanders do not consider innovation to be something that sets them apart on the world stage.
- Cultural deficits to innovation can be overcome via public policy

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