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**PERCEPTIONS, PRACTICES, AND PRODUCTIVITY:  
AN ASSESSMENT OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
IN NEW ZEALAND**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to assess the contribution and role of personnel management through an empirical examination of some of the major variables in the organisation, and how the personnel function affects them. Contemporary organisation theory suggests a contingency approach to the influence of the organisation on the personnel function, and recognises the multivariate nature of organisations, in as much their resultant productivity will depend on the relationship between the employees' (attitudes) and the way they are managed (practices). The practice of personnel management is therefore the selection of the most appropriate practices for outcomes which will produce the greatest productivity.

A research model was developed to explore these relationships, using employee attitude and personnel practice as the independent variables, and productivity as the dependent variable. Buchholz's Beliefs About Work Scale and the Litwin and Stringer Organisational Climate Scale were used as measures of employee attitude, and were administered to a sample of 2,111 members of the New Zealand work force from 40 work organisations. Measures of personnel practice were developed from structured interviews with each of the 40 organisations, and a set of productivity data was requested from each organisation.

It was concluded that while psychological measures of employee attitude can be obtained satisfactorily using scales that have been developed in previous studies, and that measures of personnel practice can be developed, the same cannot be said for productivity. The paucity of the productivity information is indicative of the current status of personnel management in New Zealand, with implications for both psychology and personnel management. These implications are discussed in this thesis.

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