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**AN EXPLORATION OF NEW ZEALAND WORK VALUE ORIENTATIONS, GENDER,
AND PERSONALITY TRAITS**

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in
Psychology at Massey University, Manawatu, New Zealand

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Abstract

The research objectives of this thesis were a) to explore gender differences in New Zealand work value orientations, and b) to explore the relationships between work value orientations and the Big Five personality traits. The purpose of these objectives was to identify if previous international findings on gender differences in work value orientations could be replicated in New Zealand (e.g., Elizur, 1994; Lips & Lawson, 2009; Weisgram et al., 2010) and to further clarify relationships between important behavioural and motivational influences (Parks & Guay, 2009). The thesis employed a correlational research design. The Values and Motives Inventory (VMI) was used as a measure of work values orientations. A respondent group of 1311 individuals had completed this assessment as part of selection and/or assessment purposes. Of these participants, 459 had also completed the Fifteen Factor Questionnaire Plus (15FQ+) as a measure of the Big Five personality traits. Findings suggested that females scored significantly higher than males on work values endorsing benevolence and supportive relationships with others. Conversely, males appeared to be more financially driven. These gender differences in work values orientations are discussed in terms of their implications for gendered roles and work interests in New Zealand. Findings suggested that the strongest work value-trait relationships occur between Affiliation and Extraversion, Affection and Extraversion, and Aesthetics and Openness. These, and other significant value-trait relationships, are discussed in terms of their implications for goal orientated behaviour, motivation, vocational choice, and the practice of assessment testing in New Zealand.

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