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**INVESTIGATING NEW ZEALAND WORKERS'
WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE EXPATRIATES WITH
INFORMATION AND SOCIAL SUPPORT IN THE NEW
ZEALAND WORKPLACE**

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

in Psychology

at Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand

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2011

ABSTRACT

New Zealand organisations are required to ‘import’ expatriates to fill skills shortages in the labour market caused by ‘brain drain’. A major contributor towards retaining expatriates in their New Zealand jobs for as long as possible is the amount of help, such as information and social support, expatriates receive from their local co-workers. The present study set out to explore New Zealand workers’ willingness to provide information and social support to expatriates, and subsequently understand New Zealand workers’ psychological motivations for providing help to expatriates in New Zealand workplaces. Specifically, the present study tested the *similarity* of expatriates’ countries-of-origin to New Zealand, the *social dominance* of expatriates’ countries-of-origin and the *threat* that expatriates pose to finite work-related resources as psychological motivators for providing or withholding help to expatriates. Fifty-six Subject Matter Experts who had approximately 13 years experience with observing relationships in New Zealand workplaces completed an online scenario-based questionnaire. The questionnaire presented seven fictitious expatriates from Britain, Australia, Canada, South Africa, USA, Japan and India, and asked participants to estimate the typical helping preferences of New Zealand workers towards the above expatriates. Kendall’s Tau rank correlation coefficients (τ) indicated that, as suggested by the present sample of Subject Matter Experts, New Zealand workers’ willingness to provide information was related to their willingness to provide social support for expatriates from Australia, Canada, South Africa and USA; but not for expatriates from Britain, Japan and India. Overall, as rated by the present sample of Subject Matter Experts, Sign tests indicated that New Zealand workers were *most* willing to help a) British and Australian expatriates, then b) Canadian, South African and American expatriates, and lastly, c) Japanese and Indian expatriates. Kendall’s tau rank correlation coefficients (τ) indicated that the above pattern of preferences for helping was largely influenced by *similarity* and *threat* of expatriates; specifically, New Zealand workers, as rated by Subject Matter Experts, were *more* willing to help *more similar* and *more threatening* expatriates. In the present study, *social dominance* of expatriates’ countries-of-origin was not rated as a significant predictor of New Zealand workers’ willingness to help expatriates. The discussion presents various implications for stakeholders involved with expatriate transfers to New Zealand.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to Elva Evelyn van Rooyen (“Gran”)
1930 - 2010

Looking back on the past year, I feel that my thesis is evidence of the journey (and sometimes rollercoaster) that I have travelled. However, I may never have left the start line without the constant support and guidance from my supervisor, Professor Stuart Carr, and co-supervisor, Dr. Steven Humphries. I would like to express my sincerest gratitude and thanks for their exceptional effort, talent and expertise that they have so willingly made accessible to me throughout this year. My greatest thanks also goes out to the members of IONet and Human Resource Institute of New Zealand (HRINZ) who participated in this research. I am also indebted to Building Research Capabilities in the Social Sciences (BRCSS) Network for the financial support that was received this year.

I would also like to thank my peers, friends and family for their unwavering support. Specifically, I owe my greatest thanks my parents, Derek and Denise, who have supported me in everyway possible throughout my studies. My sisters, Mandy and Jess, have both been a constant source of inspiration as I have watched them revel in the challenges presented to them on their own journeys. Finally, I would like to thank my partner, Mark, who has encouraged me every step of the way.

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