

## Organisational Behaviour in New Zealand, 1987-92: A Review

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This paper updates Inkson's 1987 review of published research into organisational behaviour in New Zealand. Topics of the 111 studies published between 1986 and 1992 clustered around motivation and work attitudes, work stress, personnel selection and fairness, and leadership and management. The relevance of such topics to current issues and their match with the areas identified as appropriate of I/O research demonstrate the potential contribution of the discipline, but disparities between organisational problems, research and practice show that more progress is needed before this potential is fully achieved. Directions for further research and ways to enhance communication between researchers, practitioners and consumers are discussed.

The broad nature of organisational behaviour (OB) as an interdisciplinary area of study, its importance in the economic and educational systems of New Zealand, and the early history of the discipline in this country, as outlined in Inkson's (1987) earlier review, suggest that OB has the potential to make a major contribution to the well-being of New Zealand workers and organisations. The quantity of material covered in the 1987 review indicated that a considerable local data base was available to guide practitioners and managers, but Hines (1972) raised questions over the perceived relevance of the sub-discipline of industrial/organisational (I/O) psychology to organisational practice during that period. Hansson and O'Driscoll's paper in the present volume which shows New Zealand managers perceive I/O psychologists as having a useful contribution to make in resolving some practical problems faced by managers offers some confirmation for the potential of this subdiscipline, although Taylor, Mills and O'Driscoll's paper (in this volume) raises questions over the extent to which that potential has been achieved. Further information which summarises the recent local literature and links OB research topics to areas

identified by Hansson and O'Driscoll's sample of managers is needed to assess the likely contribution of OB research and I/O psychology to New Zealand workers and organisations.

The purpose of this review is to update Inkson's earlier paper by summarising the New Zealand OB literature which was published between 1986 and 1992 and to point out directions for further research. This review used the same criteria for including material as the earlier one — refereed publications reporting or summarising research conducted in New Zealand. The aim of the review is to focus on original research, and among the types of material which have not been included are articles in 'practitioner' magazines, and articles which reflect interests of the 'application edge' of organisational behaviour, such as ergonomics, educational administration, human resource management and industrial relations, except as the issues raised are relevant to areas under consideration. Articles known to have been accepted for publication as of 1/12/92 have been included, those still under consideration have not. The authors scrutinised University publication lists and other bibliographies, and wrote to many New Zealand researchers

known to be conducting work in organisational behaviour. Recent issues of relevant New Zealand journals and some of the more important international journals were also scanned. Nevertheless, there will inevitably be important works which have been omitted. The authors apologise for this, and ask that copies of any such publications be sent to them, for possible inclusion in any future reviews.

#### New Zealand Literature: 1986-1992

##### *Motivation and Attitudes to Work*

Motivation and work attitudes continue to be important areas for New Zealand I/O psychologists who have focused their efforts on three broad categories recently: review and empirical studies, the methodological and the applied.

At the review level, Shouksmith (1987) considered, in a cross-cultural context, the impact of such changing variables as social values and lack of employment on job values and behaviour; New Zealand studies were used substantially in illustration. In another internationally-focused paper, Toulson and Smith (1991) reviewed a variety of work attitude constructs and pointed to the semantic confusions rife in the area of attitudes to work, and the barriers to generalising research results across national boundaries. O'Driscoll (1989) reviewed the literature on the effects of job involvement and commitment to the organisation, and warned of the potentially detrimental effects of over-involvement and over-commitment to individual and organisational well-being. Finally, Brosnan (1991) drew on submissions to the Second New Zealand Sweating Commission to conclude that economic downturn and liberalisation of trading hours have reduced the quality of work life in the retail industry by causing deskilling, reduced career opportunities, lower job satisfaction and real pay levels, increased work pressure and concern over health and safety.

The concern over the place of work in an individual's total life space inherent in the preceding papers is also reflected in empirical studies of work attitudes. Gold and Webster's (1990) nation-wide survey of New Zealanders' values provides a useful source of information about employment status, work orientations, important aspects of the job, and job satisfaction, together with non-work attitudes such as life satisfaction and political and social

values; much of the information is broken down by age, gender or ethnicity. Brook and Brook (1989a) continued their valuable work on the application of Repertory Grid techniques to work-nonwork issues. Of interest was their finding that there was a third factor of work satisfaction in addition to the normal 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' dimensions, which was related to autonomy and freedom from stress and time constraints; and their conclusion that most people see work and nonwork as essentially separate spheres, and that these should be treated as complementary. In a further development of the study, Brook (1991) related work attitudes to self-esteem, concluding that self-identity plays an important role in mediating attitudes. Brook and Brook (1989b) also used the Repertory Grid to understand the meanings attributed to work and nonwork by New Zealand managers and Brook and Nichols (in press) showed that managers evaluated work and nonwork on similar dimensions.

A number of studies sought to refine and develop measurement and data analysis techniques for assessing work motivation and attitudes. Shouksmith (1989a) provided a construct validation of the Work Motivation scale used by Hesketh and Shouksmith (1986), and Shouksmith, Pajo and Jepsen (1990) developed a relatively short and simple eleven-dimension job satisfaction instrument with good psychometric properties. Paterson and O'Driscoll (1990) conducted a thorough investigation of Kanungo's (1982) Job Involvement measure, concluding that the scale had good reliability and validity, and was a useful potential predictor of job performance behaviours. A study by Poulton and Ng (1988) supported the concurrent validity of the Mirels and Garrett (1971) Protestant Work Ethic (PWE) scale by demonstrating that high PWE students spent more time on study and less on leisure activities than low PWE students. Paterson and O'Driscoll (1989) compared the psychometric properties of three work ethic instruments, concluding that the Australian Work Ethic Scale (Ho & Lloyd, 1984) offered a more useful measure of New Zealanders' work attitudes than the American and Canadian scales. Finally, Ng, Cram and Jenkins (1991) focused on data analysis by demonstrating the superiority of proportional hazards regression (a technique which incorporates job survival data with employment status) over multiple

regression in predicting personnel turnover in a large sample of nurses. This technique is outlined in Ng's contribution to this volume which describes the psychometric properties of a job satisfaction scale designed specifically for New Zealand nurses.

Two studies adopted a more applied approach by considering work attitudes in particular occupational groups. In an unusual use of a longitudinal design, O'Driscoll and Thomas (1987) considered job satisfaction of workers at large energy-related construction sites, concluding that stress and important changes in on-work life were significant determinants of job satisfaction. Shouksmith (1989b) related performance to attitudes in a small sample of bus drivers.

#### *Work Stress*

The recent international literature on work-related stress has been markedly enriched by the work of Philip Dewe of Massey University whose work was referred to in the previous review. Dewe's concern over methodological issues is reflected in his approach to research design which is characterised by the use of open-ended questionnaires or interviews to design questionnaires for specific occupational groups, followed by large-sample surveys involving multivariate analysis of stress antecedents, consequences and coping strategies in these occupations. The value of this approach was supported by Dewe's (1987a) study of stressors and coping strategies among Protestant ministers of religion which concluded that there were significant limitations in the use of general measures of stressors which did not take into account the specific characteristics of the occupations under study.

A major nation-wide survey of nursing stress led to the identification of five key potential sources of stress (Dewe, 1987b) and six major coping strategies which nurses use to cope with stress (Dewe, 1987c). Further investigation examined differences in the type and frequency of stressors according to ward type (Dewe, 1988) and assessed the relationship between stressor frequency and stress responses (Dewe, 1989a). Dewe's constant concern with the implications of his work for intervention strategies is further demonstrated in his research-based guide to the development of programs for stress management (Dewe, 1989b).

In a study of supervisors and administrators in a mail order company, Dewe (1989c) experimented with the use of qualitative as well as quantitative measures to determine individuals' perceptions of stressful experiences. Although O'Reilly (1991) has indicated the need for caution in using self-report measures in stress research, these results attest to the value of tapping individual descriptions of the reasons for work pressures being positive or negative.

Latterly, Dewe's work has moved beyond occupation-specific issues to wider considerations of stress mechanisms across occupations. In a consolidation of Dewe's various occupationally-based empirical studies, Dewe and Guest (1990) identified five "generic" strategies of coping with stress which emerged generally across the studies, and developed a checklist to identify them. The strategies were task-oriented behaviour, emotional release, distraction, passive rationalisation, and social support.

Dewe's (1991a, 1991b, 1992) most recent studies have focused on the individual's perception of stress and the meaning attributed to it. In a study of government employees, Dewe (1991a) asked participants to identify and describe stressful job situations to develop a list of "stressors" which could then be evaluated separately in terms of occurrence, frequency, duration, and demand placed on the person. A further empirical study examined the processes by which insurance company employees appraise and cope with stressful situations (Dewe, 1991b) and another more descriptive account of the appraisal and coping process concluded that "Individuals . . . can describe the meanings they give to events and how they cope with them" (Dewe, 1992, p161). Dewe's carefully conducted studies and continuing development and exploration of his research area bear ample testimony to the value for researchers of an ongoing pursuit of a major research area.

Geare (1987, 1989, 1990), against the tide of popular stereotypes of stress, argued that in many cases stress is beneficial, causing positive "stimulation" rather than harmful "strain" to the person involved. For example, about as many New Zealand managers in one study considered the level of stress in their jobs to be too low to achieve maximum performance as perceived it to be too high (Geare, 1987). Geare

(1990) used the same data to investigate relationships between stress, strain and stimulation, concluding that the research literature over-emphasises strain effects and underestimates stimulation effects: this has considerable implications for stress management strategies (Geare, 1989).

Links between uncertainty and stress were examined in three studies. Lysonski, Singer and Wilemon (1988) found that high levels of environmental uncertainty and boundary spanning activities can result in dysfunctional levels of role pressure, and that when role pressure was very high, job experience increased tension levels and the risk of burnout. A subsequent study of project managers (Lysonski, Nilakant & Wilemon, 1989) found that role conflict led to job tension but did not affect perceived performance and satisfaction, while role ambiguity had a negative effect on both. This study also suggested that high levels of job autonomy and need for achievement reduced role ambiguity. Finally, Lysonski and Woodside (1989) focused on industrial production supervisors to develop a causal model to link environmental uncertainty, boundary spanning activities and role conflict, and ambiguity to job satisfaction, job tension and performance.

Cross-national replications were reported in two studies. Shouksmith and Burrough (1988) found that New Zealand and Canadian air traffic controllers experienced similar levels and sources of stress, and concluded that stress is endemic in this occupation, while McCormick and Cooper's (1988) replication of a study of management stress found that New Zealand executives reported lower levels of stress symptoms than all but one of the ten countries studied by Cooper and Hensman (1985).

Three further studies have been conducted in this area. Long and Voges (1987) found strong similarities between male prison officers' perceptions of their job stress and the stress attributed to them by their wives. The effect of organisational variables on stress, 'burn-out' and performance in a social service agency were studied by O'Driscoll and Schubert (1988) who emphasised the importance of a supportive climate of trust in ameliorating stress and burnout phenomenon. Gilbertson and Fogelberg (1991) focused on Human Resource Managers and concluded that limited training and management experience, and role conflict

and ambiguity resulted in decreased job satisfaction, performance and organisational commitment, and increased turn-over, job tension and health problems.

#### *Personnel Selection and Fairness*

A welcome feature of the 1987-92 literature is the publication of a number of significant New Zealand studies of the most traditional of all the fields of study of I/O Psychology — personnel selection. It is well-known to New Zealand I/O psychologists that selection practices in this country are typically intuitive and haphazard, with little basis in the concepts of prediction, validity and equity around which I/O psychologists have for many years been constructing an improved, if imperfect practice. It is therefore unsurprising, but still disturbing, to read a study by Dakin and Armstrong (1989), in which *negative* (although non-significant) correlations were found between New Zealand personnel consultants' use of various hypothesized predictors of success in managerial jobs (e.g. cognitive tests, academic achievement, interviews) and the 'true' validity of these techniques as indicated by meta-analysis. For example, cognitive ability tests, which are among those having the best predictive validity across job types for both selection and promotion decisions (Hunter & Hunter, 1984), were ranked tenth out of eleven predictors on both estimated validity and frequency of use by the estimants. Taylor and colleagues' contribution to this volume suggests that there has been little change in practitioners' choices of personnel selection methods recently.

Three empirical studies of specific selection devices have been reported. George and Smith (1988, 1990) conducted two studies of self-assessment as a selection device in applied settings. One study found little evidence for the predictive validity of self-assessments in a sample of seasonal workers, although an age differential effect indicated that self-assessments by older workers might be potentially more useful than those by younger workers (George & Smith, 1988). Similarly, a second study using Assessment Centre participants showed no correlation between self-assessments and subsequent job performance, but did indicate the 'dampening' effect of Assessment Centre procedures on participants' self-assessments (George & Smith, 1990). Smith and George (1987) also appraised

selection methodologies utilising the Weighted Application Form (WAF) to ascertain the most discriminating set of variables in predicting the success of nursing students, and Smith, Smith and George (1988) developed and tested a computerised program to classify applicants on the basis of the WAF.

In addition to the empirical research cited above, George (1989) reviewed some of the New Zealand 'Technical Report' literature on selection, and provided a concise introduction to professional selection theory and practice. More recently, Smith and George (1992) reviewed the international literature assessing the various personnel selection devices and recommended a 'point-to-point' approach, in which job analysis is used to ensure congruence between the selection method and the job, to enhance the predictive validity of all types of personnel selection methods. A review paper by Dakin (1990) argues that managers' preferences for interviews rather than some of the more valid selection methods reflects their need to consider the recruitment and socialisation phases of the organisation joining process, in addition to the predictive aspect. He points out that interviews can be useful in developing a contract between the individual and organisation, and suggests that research on a social contracting approach to personnel selection would be useful. Given the economic cost to any society of faulty selection decisions (Hunter & Hunter, 1984), there appears to be enormous scope for New Zealand psychologists to assist organisations to improve practice to their considerable benefit in this area. As Toulson and Smith (1990) point out, the use of techniques such as utility analysis to express the benefits of valid selection methods in terms of financial advantages for the organisation may enhance communication between managers and psychologists and encourage the application of more useful selection procedures.

University of Canterbury psychologist, Ming Singer has taken a more theoretical approach to selection, focusing on selectors' decision-making and the influence of factors such as age, ethnicity and information availability on selection decisions. In a series of elegant experiments, Singer documented the importance of unconscious biases. The results of one experiment showed significant ethnicity effects in the interview, but not in the resumé situation, and indicated that "under the interview mode

the interviewer's attention was primarily drawn to the applicant, whereas under the resumé mode their attention was primarily focused on the position" (Singer, 1988, p423). In a second study, ethnicity and job status were found to be important influences on selection decision ratings, but accent was not (Singer & Eder, 1989) and a third study examined the effects of exposing decision-makers to material favourable to older workers to investigate age discrimination (Singer & Sewell, 1989). A final study compared the relative weight in selection decisions given by managers and by students to experience and to qualifications respectively; not surprisingly, students gave more weight to qualifications while managers weighted experience more heavily (Singer & Bruhns, 1991). Although these beautifully constructed studies raise issues of external validity through their use of simulated selection situations and students as decision-makers, they also demonstrate the efficacy of experimental settings to help us understand the dynamics of selection decision-making and develop good theories.

More recently, the focus of Singer's work has shifted to the issue of perceived fairness of selection decisions, particularly those resulting from preferential hiring. In a paper reporting two non-experimental studies, Singer (1990a) used theories of procedural justice as a basis to identify the key components of 'fair' selection procedures, and assess gender differences in the factors considered to be important determinants of fairness. Factors which are considered important in assessing selection decision fairness, and the importance of academic qualifications as a job-relevant criterion are discussed further by Singer, Singer and Bruhns (1991). A further study (Singer & Singer, 1991) describes two experiments which showed that male and female respondents perceived both sex-based and ethnicity-based preferential hiring as unfair, and that perceptions of unfairness increased with differences in merit between the candidates, or with the provision of justifications. The issue of preferential hiring is discussed from the perspective of relative deprivation theory in an extension to this study (Singer, 1991b) which found that perceived fairness was influenced by personal involvement of the judges. The theoretical bases of her work on preferential hiring and personnel selection are discussed further in Singer's contribution to this volume. The questions

Singer raises about the perceived fairness of preferential selection are echoed in relation to pay equity in a study by Bond and Kemp (1991) which found that similar numbers of male- and female-dominated occupations were classified as underpaid.

#### *Leadership and Management*

Concern for a better understanding of leadership and effective management is reflected in a number of studies which deal with issues such as leadership style and aspirations, training and management development, and performance appraisal. Inkson and Henshall (1990) reviewed the value of the transformational versus transactional models of leadership style proposed by Bass (1985) as an alternative to traditional approaches to leadership. Singer and Beardsley (1990) found that employees and managers attributed more importance to dispositional factors, such as the leadership practices described by the Bass model, than to situational factors such as task structure and position power. This study also showed that leaders believed they practised elements of transformational leadership more than their subordinates believed they did. In a cross-cultural study aimed at assessing some assumptions underpinning Bass's model, Singer and Singer (1990) raised doubts over whether mechanistic organisations necessarily foster the development of transactional leadership styles. However, they confirmed that Taiwanese company leaders displayed both types of leadership with equal frequency, and that both the Taiwanese and New Zealand samples of subordinates preferred transformational to transactional styles in their leaders. Finally, Bass, Waldman, Avolio and Bebb (1987) found that the degree of transformational leadership behaviour at one management level tended to be shown at the next lower level and recommended a 'top down' approach to transformational leadership training.

O'Driscoll, Humphries and Larsen (1991) related managers' and subordinates' perceptions of managerial activities to managerial performance. Results showing that the perceived effectiveness of work sections was related to specific behaviours demonstrated the importance of examining the impact of different managerial activities on different organisational functions. Robinson and Absolum (1990) investigated the effect of

leadership style on a professional development program for teachers, concluding that the program had limited impact due to the 'closed' leadership style and the failure of the program to encourage reflection and evaluation. The rationale underpinning the action research approach and the importance of open communication emphasised in this study are explained further in Robinson's (1989a) discussion of the nature and conduct of critical dialogue.

Leadership aspirations were investigated in four studies which used a questionnaire based on expectancy, self efficacy and attribution theories. Using a sample of adolescents, Singer (1990b) found significant gender differences in leadership valence, and age differences in leadership self efficacy and attributions. Further studies showed significant associations of valence, self efficacy expectancies and internal attributions to leadership aspirations among male university students (Singer, 1989a), and gender differences in leadership aspirations and self efficacy among final year university students (Singer, 1989b). However, a study of professionals and middle managers found that leadership aspirations were significantly linked with length of service but not with gender, and that leadership aspirations were differentially predicted from independent variables by short-service and long-service groups (Singer, 1991a).

Among the papers examining training, management development and performance appraisal are the empirically-based critiques of current training practices in New Zealand by McMorland (1990) and O'Driscoll and Taylor (1992). The importance of informal learning experiences was emphasised by O'Driscoll, Humphries and Larsen (in press) who examined managers' attributions about their skill development; by Larsen, O'Driscoll and Humphries (1991) who adopted a socio-technical systems perspective; and by Dakin and Hamilton (1990) who provided a questionnaire to help people moving from a specialist to a general management role to identify their own potential development needs. The importance of performance appraisal to training and development, reward allocation and organisational performance is also noted by Boxall and Sisley (1990) who drew on their field research and consultancy experience to



illustrate, while Taylor and O'Driscoll's (in press) survey offers a more comprehensive and rigorous description of performance appraisal practice in New Zealand organisations. The gap between research and practice identified in many of these studies is addressed in a separate paper (Paterson & Inkson, in preparation).

#### *Other Research*

A number of papers should be mentioned which do not fit into any of the above categories. At the macro-organisational level, Sandelands and Stablein (1987) reviewed the concept of 'organisational mind', the idea that organisations are mental entities capable of rational thought, and found value in the use of the concept as a heuristic device to assist understanding of organisational decision-making and design. O'Driscoll and Evans (1988) examined some forces affecting organisational climate in psychiatric organisations, and Robinson (1989b) advocated a system-wide, preventative approach, rather than an individual, remedial approach to the design of organisational change programs in her critique of a reading recovery program. Inkson (1989) used Gareth Morgan's (1986) application of metaphor in organisational analysis to explore the special characteristics of educational organisations, and Patterson (1989) explored different models from organisation theory to seek a characterisation of Universities as organisations. Finally, Clifford, Nilakant and Hamilton (1991) examined the process of management succession in developing small businesses, and Gilbertson and Knight (1992) reported a series of case studies of innovation in New Zealand organisations which demonstrate the benefits of including a behavioural perspective in managerial research.

Four papers focused on two relatively novel areas for OB researchers: career counselling and negotiation. Brook (1992) explored the applicability of Repertory Grid techniques to career counselling work, and Elkin (1990) illustrated his consideration of changes in the concept of career with case study material from a number of New Zealand organisations. In some careful experimental research which simulated organisational conditions to identify factors which influence negotiation outcomes, Olekalns (1991) examined relationships between role and market forces, and Olekalns

and Frey (in press) investigated the influence of negotiator frame (focus on potential gains versus losses) and power.

O'Driscoll and Eubanks (in press) compared New Zealand and USA Organisational Development practitioners' perceptions of their own competencies with ratings made by their clients and recommended ongoing monitoring of clients' reactions during the consultation process to increase the probability of a successful intervention. The concern over professional issues reflected in this paper is also apparent in Couchman's (1991) discussion of the role of social science research in promoting a more people-oriented economy, and in Hansson and O'Driscoll's contribution to this volume which identifies gaps between client requirements and research and practice in I/O psychology.

#### *Textbooks*

No new 'general' textbooks of organisational behaviour have appeared since McLennan, Inkson, Dakin, Dewe and Elkin's *People and Enterprises* (1987). This is despite Inkson's (1988) rejection of homogeneous 'mass market' American texts as the main source of student information in organisational behaviour, and his appeal for indigenous materials. However, Sligo's (1991) *Organisational behaviour: case studies and commentaries* and other more specialised books offer useful supplements to existing local and overseas texts. McLennan (1990) edited an international book of readings on the management of change, and himself wrote many of the pieces which appear in it. Sligo (1990a) has produced a very worthwhile book of readings, by New Zealand authors, in business communication, and a New Zealand handbook of conflict management (Sligo, 1990b). Boxall (1990) focused on the growing field of human resource management with some readings outlining excellent New Zealand applied research. Deeks and Boxall's (1989) textbook on New Zealand labour relations also includes material on organisational behaviour relevant to issues of employment relations, as do texts by Hamilton and English (1990) and Higham and Williams (1990) on small business management.

A number of 'general' management textbooks have appeared which include organisational behaviour along with topics such as planning, business environment, personnel

Table 1: *Research Topic Areas by Review Periods*

Area	Number of References			
	1969-74	1975-80	1981-86	1987-92
Motivation	13	12	20	18
Stress	0	2	12	24
Selection	1	2	3	19
Leadership	2	3	9	14
Training	0	1	9	7
Minorities	2	18	10	*
Industrial Conflict	4	9	1	0
Other	5	11	26	30
Total	27	58	87	111

\* See Singer on fairness.

management, and operations management (Geare, Turner, Moore, Elkin, Batley & Fay 1987; Thomson, 1989; Gilbert, Jones, Vitalis & Walker, 1992). Batley (1989) has produced a specialist text on management for professionals, and Inkson (1990) a book on the management of clubs and societies.

#### *Unpublished Research*

While this review does not seek to include research which has not been published in refereed journals or their equivalent, the authors are aware of many worthwhile efforts which have taken the form of theses, conference papers and reports for specific organisations. It is a great pity that many researchers fail to transform the material in working documents to fully published form. For example, in the period covered by this review the first author has supervised or examined seven successful doctoral theses in the broad area of organisational behaviour: by Siegert (1988) on unemployment and stress; George (1988) on self-assessment in selection; Rohrer (1989) on organisational commitment; Brown (1991) on decision-making; Toulson (1991) on personnel management, attitudes and productivity; Cammock (1992) on managerial effectiveness; and Robinson (1992) on chief executive stress. To date, only that of George, as far as we know, has been published in professional journals (George & Smith, 1988; 1990). Similarly, psychologists employed by the New Zealand Defence Forces conduct a considerable quantity of organisational research which is seldom published, even if the findings are not confidential. It is hoped that some of the

investigations reported in theses, conference presentations, working papers and organisational reports will appear in more publicly accessible arenas.

#### Discussion

A comparison of the number of papers and textbooks published during each of four six-year periods covered by the previous and current reviews reveals a steady increase from 27 in the earliest period to 111 in the most recent (see Table 1). The preponderance of journal publications from members of management departments has disappeared; whereas Inkson (1987) found that approximately 60% of the articles in his review came from business and management and only 15% from psychology departments, in the 1986-92 literature, management (40) and psychology (41) staff produced similar numbers of papers. However, all 14 textbooks published during the latest period reflect a management perspective. Psychologists could initiate similar moves to provide a source of indigenous material for their students. The reviewers note a commendable trend for management and psychology academics to co-operate in conducting research. Since all of the motivation and work attitude studies were conducted by members of Waikato and Massey Universities, this trend could be extended by establishing a collaborative, trans-University Work Psychology Research Centre.

Table 1 shows a substantial increase in the number of studies into stress and leadership from 1981 on, and a major increase in interest in selection and equity issues from about 1987. In



contrast, studies of motivation and work attitudes have remained relatively static since 1974, and the study of cross-cultural issues and industrial conflict, two 'boom' research areas in the 1970s, have virtually disappeared. Such trends in part reflect the emergence of particular researchers with the skills and interest to contribute to the international literature in specific areas (e.g. Dewe on stress, Singer on selection equity), but they may also represent issues where developments take place because of natural synergies between external events, managerial concerns, and researchers' interests and skills: stress research for stressful times, selection research for a period when there are many applicants for each job, equity research following equity legislation, and so on.

There is a good correspondence between the research foci identified in this paper and the areas to which the managers studied by Hansson and O'Driscoll (in this volume) felt that I/O psychologists had a contribution to make. Stress, staffing and leadership were three of the five most frequently identified areas in Hansson and O'Driscoll's study, and three of the four most popular research topics in the current period. However, the frequency with which interpersonal relations and communication, two common sources of stress, were cited as important problems within New Zealand organisations suggests that researchers could pay more attention to these and other problem areas.

Additional directions for future research are suggested by changes in research topics between the current and earlier reviews, particularly within the broad area of motivation and attitudes. The increased attention paid to measurement issues and work in relation to nonwork life appears to be timely and worthy of further pursuit in view of the extent of governmental restructuring, the importance of evaluating organisational change interventions, and the current levels of job insecurity, redundancy and unemployment. However, the current lack of interest in the multicultural nature of the New Zealand workforce is regrettable. Given the over-representation of Maoris among the low paid, unskilled and unemployed, it seems appropriate for Maori researchers to follow Singer's example in placing more emphasis on this aspect. Similarly, Olekaln's work on negotiation out-

comes could be extended to help avoid any negative effects arising from the 1991 Employment Contracts Act, and evaluations of government-sponsored work schemes and programs to retrain the unemployed should be useful in ensuring that the New Zealand workforce is equipped with the skills which will be necessary in the future.

### Conclusion

The quantity of research published during the latest review period demonstrates an increase in the locally-based material which is available to New Zealand I/O psychologists, OB practitioners and managers interested in enhancing worker well-being and organisational effectiveness. Although some gaps were identified, the papers reviewed here generally explored topics which reflect concern over pressing current issues and corresponded with the areas identified by Hansson and O'Driscoll's sample of New Zealand managers as those with which I/O psychologists could assist. These matches suggest that OB and I/O psychology are making some contribution to organisational well-being in this country, while the disparities between organisational problems and I/O contributions point out additional areas for further research.

However, the disparities identified by Hansson and O'Driscoll and the gap between research and practice revealed by Taylor and colleagues (in this volume) and other literature reviewed here demonstrate that considerably more progress is needed for the full potential of OB and I/O psychology to be achieved. These disparities raise questions over the way organisational research is communicated to practitioners and consumers which could help explain the slow development of OB and I/O psychology in this country. Factors which contribute to poor communication undoubtedly include the tendency for many researchers to focus on theoretical issues which have no immediate application in organisational settings, to fail to publish material in easily accessible media, or to publish in international, rather than local journals, and in academic journals rather than media normally read by practitioners. While international publications are useful in setting New Zealand organisational research in an international context, this practice causes difficulties for academics, practitioners and consumers seeking local

material. Establishing a network to link academics and practitioners and focus attention on implementation issues based on the best overseas and local research would encourage the development of quality practice. In addition, publishing practitioner-oriented research summaries in local professional journals could increase managerial awareness of the potential role of OB and I/O psychology in enhancing worker wellbeing and organisational effectiveness.

The communication gap could be compounded by an evident change in preferred methodologies between the previous and current reviews. In 1987 it was reported that research in New Zealand up to that time had been

*"focused on the reality of work rather than the abstraction of theory, and an enlivening curiosity to understand the features of our own New Zealand environment and behaviour . . . more descriptive than conceptual, more qualitative than quantitative, more sensitive to differences of person and occupation than sweeping in scope"* (Inkson, 1987, p22).

This is resoundingly *not* the case in the research reviewed here, which is generally characterised by its grounding in important international debates in the area of theory, by concern with trans-national issues in organisational behaviour, by methodological sophistication, and by rigorous design and careful quantification. Perhaps these changes reflect, within the narrow field of organisational behaviour, wider changes in New Zealand society, in the growing recognition of our need to survive in an international environment, and to be judged by the professional standards and norms of an international professional and academic community. While this increasing sophistication is welcome, it is hoped that over-zealous attention to international orthodoxy in research will not stifle more creative and idiosyncratic approaches, or divert our attention from pressing New Zealand-specific issues in areas such as national work ethic, effects of restructuring, and the development of responsive organisational forms and cultures. Continued attention to such issues is essential if OB and I/O psychology are to achieve their full potential to contribute to the well-being of New Zealand workers, organisations and society.

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