

## INTRODUCTION

Tēnā koutou and welcome to the New Zealand Journal of Human Resources Management's special issue on The Future of Work. It has been a pleasure working on this special issue with the support of such a committed and motivated team of editorial staff. I firstly want to thank the two associate editors for this edition who ensured the timely and accurate processes were in place to meet our deadlines – Dr David Brougham and Dr Kate Blackwood both from Massey University. I would also like to thank Lisa Sharp (MAppPsy) who has been a dedicated and hardworking editorial assistant.

The future of work is a widely defined area and research spans many areas. The six papers in this special issue reflect the diversity of academic research in the area of the future of work and this diversity covers the range of theoretical approaches, occupations, methodologies and cultures. For example, how technology is changing the way we work, representation by women in leadership, changes in New Zealand's diverse population, and obesity discrimination are all important areas that need more attention moving forward. All papers clearly add nuance to issues surrounding the future of work. They all also highlight how the future of work raises a number of issues that are diverse and breadth in theory, issue and outcomes.

This special issue of the New Zealand Journal of Human Resources Management focuses on the growing research perspectives by leading and emerging New Zealand human resource scholars.

The first article, by Loeffen, tackles the issue of women in leadership and the need to ensure representation of women leaders in future workforces. Her article titled, 'Women in Senior Leadership: What it took to get to the top' identified ways to increase the number of women in senior leadership positions by adopting a positive inquiry approach to learn how women succeed in navigating their way to the top. Her sample, from already successful women in senior leadership roles within New Zealand firms, highlights the proactive approach and resources women leaders harness. The findings suggest that women draw on a number of personal and social resources to aid their ascent in leadership, and the article provides information for women seeking leadership positions as well as a series of recommendations helpful to both individual women leaders of the future and to Human Resource departments and practitioners.

The second article, by Herring, Roche and Masters, focusses on high performance in pressure situations and again focusses on organisational leaders. In the ever-changing business environment, the need for high performing leaders is critical for organisational success, however, fast changing environments can cause leaders to perform poorly, despite having high motivation and incentives for success. Drawing on 119 corporate leaders, this study assesses the role of mindfulness in pressure situations and introduces the notion of decision reinvestment, a psychological concept associated with performance failure under pressure due to rumination and control of actions, into organisational psychology literature. Results support research examining mindfulness and the positive role that mindfulness plays in performance, particularly at higher levels of organisational functioning. Analysis also suggests that mindfulness and reinvestment (rumination) function together. This suggests, somewhat counter intuitively, that in the organisational setting, and particularly for leaders under pressure, some level of reinvestment (particularly the rumination dimension) in decision making is beneficial, provided that mindfulness is also present. This new finding has been termed, 'mindful rumination'.

The third article, by Piercy and Steele, is a conceptual paper and examines the role and importance of social skills in the future of service sector roles, especially for those in precarious work. They argue that it is crucial for Human Resource practitioners to recruit on the basis of soft skills rather than only on technical skills. Moreover, they suggest that all staff, regardless of status – that is part-time, casual and temporary staff - have the opportunity to develop these skills. Finally, the benefit of these skills for the employee's own future of work, ensures they are maintaining transferable social

skills and thus remaining relevant in an employment relations environment in which precarity is a by-product of labour market flexibility.

The next cluster examines future issues in terms of culture, change and emerging perceptions of others. The fourth article, by Yao and Thorn, tackles the issue of cross cultural changes to the workforce and in particular, the Human Resource Management strategies and practices of Chinese multinationals and overseas assignments. This article focuses on the neglected area of employee perspectives; the researchers examined workers' perceived career success during an international assignment. This qualitative research examined international assignment experiences from an individual perspective, and suggests a cautious note of decreased perceived career success from an individual perspective. The study makes recommendations for organisations that are likely to be engaged in international assignments in the future of their work.

Haar and Staniland bring the future of work back home to *Aotearoa* and examine the career satisfaction of Māori employees. The study of 191 Māori employees explores psychological resilience as a predictor of career satisfaction. In addition, they explore the direct effects and moderating effects of workplace collectivism – which focuses on individual experiences around the collective in the workplace. They find that psychological resilience is a strong predictor of career satisfaction of Māori. They also report on interaction effects collectivism, in that it does interact significantly with psychological resilience. The interaction findings show that at low levels of psychological resilience, Māori employees who report high levels of collectivism, report higher levels of career satisfaction. The researchers suggest that this is due to the intensification effect of collectivism, and its cultural appropriateness for Māori. However, at high levels of psychological resilience, all groups report a steep increase in career satisfaction, with no significant difference between those with low or high collectivism. Consequently, the benefits of collectivism appear to be best for those with low psychological resilience. Overall, this paper improves our understanding of factors that shape the career satisfaction of indigenous employees (Māori), and how workplace factors that focus on the collective might be beneficial for some Māori employees of the future.

The final article titled 'Obesity Discrimination in Selection: NZ Millennials Reactions to Obese Job Candidates' by Allan, Edgar and O'Kane confronts the future issue of obesity in the workplace. It is widely acknowledged that obesity is a growing global health issue. This may give rise to a host of societal problems as some suggest obesity discrimination remains one of the last tolerable forms of bias. For the workplace, this situation, when combined with the considerable stigma and the lack of statutory protection afforded to obese individuals, means that discrimination for this group may well become a significant employment issue. The article explores this by examining the attitudes of Millennials towards obesity and exploring whether these attitudes translate into obesity discrimination when selecting job candidates. The results show that Millennials hold some discriminatory and negative stereotypical attitudes towards obese people, with these being further exacerbated amongst male participants. Fortunately, they find that these attitudes do not appear to influence how Millennials view candidate suitability for a post. The authors then discuss these findings, along with their implications for research and practice, and conclude by suggesting some directions for future inquiry.

Finally, organisations, and managers/Human Resource managers in particular, need to ensure that they prepare for the future of work, and that uptake of this research is translated into organisational practice. That is, there is a real need for the issues highlighted here to also be translated into organisational/managerial commitment in order for this research to be fully beneficial to New Zealanders. Innovative and informative information is presented in these six papers, and I hope that they will inform researchers and Human Resource managers alike.

I trust that you will find the articles challenging, interesting and informative. Ngā mihi nui.

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and  
Editorial

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