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THE SMALL SCALE HIGH VALUE
MANUFACTURER IN NEW ZEALAND

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the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Geography
at Massey University.

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ABSTRACT

The interest in the development and restructuring of the New Zealand economy with increasing emphasis upon industrial development has seen the emergence of what has been termed the 'Small Scale High Value' concept. The dichotomy of firms which are small scale and producing high unit value products would seem appropriate to the New Zealand economy which is characterised by smallness.

Two major considerations are involved. First there is the conceptual problem of small scale firms. This necessitates the evaluation of the small scale concept and the recognition of the main characteristics and advantages of small scale operations. This evaluation builds a conceptual framework within which small scale firms in New Zealand can be assessed and their contribution and potential contribution to the New Zealand economy placed in perspective. This raises the second major focus, that of an empirical study identifying and examining small scale firms within the New Zealand context. The need is to ascertain the contribution of the Small Scale High Value firms to the New Zealand economy and the extent to which government or industrial policy should be directed to their assistance.

A number of authors have promoted Small Scale High Value firms as worthy of special attention due to their characteristics and advantages being suitable to the structural development and growth of the national economy. These special features or characteristics associated with Small Scale High Value firms include: flexibility and versatility, good labour relations, export orientation, technology orientation, inventiveness and innovation as well as being footloose. The combination of these 'special' qualities is seen to provide the small scale firms with comparative advantages. Discussion centres upon establishing the validity or otherwise of these qualities.

Small Scale firms have also been applied to an urban hierarchy framework focusing on their spatial

location within New Zealand and the implication these hold for Industrial and Regional development policy.

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