
Summaries

Quality of work of women and man: differences and trends in the period 1977-1986

A. Bloemhoff en P.G.W. Smulders

This article describes differences between women and men in the quality of work as well as trends in the period 1977-1986. In 1977, 1980, 1983 and 1986 the Netherlands' Central Bureau of Statistics carried out a Quality of Life Survey, in which a large representative sample of the Dutch working population answered a questionnaire on person- and job-characteristics. After a description of the data-collection method, the following results are presented. Compared to men, women turn out to have a less favourable opinion about aspects of their job-content, income and promotion-prospects. On the other hand, women seem to have less inconvenient working-conditions compared to men. During the periode 1977-1986 for both women and men several aspects of the quality of work have changed: for men the fit between education/training and their actual job has worsened but their work in 1986 is less dangerous than in 1977; women carry out more physical hard work; both women and men more often work at a great pace and in part-time jobs than eleven years earlier.

Employees involvement in in-company environmental care

Kees Le Blanche

Now that part of Dutch government environmental policy is shifting towards in-company environmental care, a new subject for workers participation emerges. This article deals with the stated reasons why workers should be involved, the means available for their involvement and the extent to which effective partici-

pation is to be expected.

Arguments why workers should be involved in environmental care are given from two angles, emphasizing either environmental or labour interest. Although these interests – if correctly perceived at all – may well run parallel at macro level, at micro or company level contradictions may occur, which in their turn can cause workers involvement to be counterproductive.

Advocates of workers participation assume the presence of sufficient legal means for participation. It is argued that this is only partly the case. Moreover, involvement in the environmental issue will have to be actively achieved, no matter how abundant the legal means may be. In conclusion we can say that more practical research into this topic is needed, to further establish the possibilities and bounds of workers participation where the issue of in-company environmental care is concerned.

Middlemanagement and organizational change in a large organization

J. Brinkman, E.A. Mante, N. Schoemaker

The focus on quality and services in organizations draws, as a logical consequence, attention to middlemanagement. To maintain the quality of products and services on a high level, middlemanagement is essential. In this respect this group occupies an unique position, both in its functioning and in its problems. In this group, problems of higher management, of occupational tasks and of the implementation of organization policy concur. A structural difficult position, because of its contrariety.

In this article the hazards of middlemanagement in a large organization in change, are described by illuminating six issues that confront this

group: cultural change, different requirements and specifications, communication, automation, quality and education and resistance to change. To assure managers will be able to cope with the difficulties which confront them, support is necessary. The analysis, based on empirical research data, focuses on the conditions that should be met to give middlemanagement the support they need.

Personnel management between theory and practice: recruiting part-time busdrivers

J.R.L. Dekkers, E. Kamerbeek

This paper describes a model for conceptualizing personnel problems in organizations. Central in this model are the concepts 'business strategy' and 'social policy'. The business strategy of an organization depends on the external environment of that organization and on the strengths and weaknesses of its internal structure. Business strategies are seldom fully rational and consciously planned. On the contrary, in this area, bounded rationality is prominent. Business strategies, however, do influence social policy in organizations. Moreover, there is a mutual influence between the two elements. Social policy can help to attain the goals of business strategies, but it can also hinder it. In this paper, the model is applied to a distinct personnel problem. Companies in public transport are increasingly having problems in recruiting part-time busdrivers. These companies have asked IVA, institute for social research of the Tilburg University, to investigate the causes of this problem. The model proved to be a useful tool in analyzing the problem and in generating solutions for it.

Informal contacts and the occupational position of managers

Ed. A.W. Boxman and Hendrik D. Flap

In his seminal study Granovetter (1974) demonstrated the embeddedness of the job-attainment process within social networks. The ensuing research effort and theoretical discussion left two points unclear: to what extent do people of higher social rank employ informal channels to find their job, and, if they do make use of social relations, do they receive positive returns in

terms of income? A replication of Granovetter's analysis in a large 1986/87 sample of 1402 managers of larger companies in the Netherlands, i.e., with 50 or more employees, not only shows that Dutch managers generally rely on social contacts to find their job, it also shows that they do so more frequently at higher executive levels. Moreover, Dutch managers receive higher earnings while using informal job-finding methods. Granovetter's weak ties-argument, however, is refuted: weak ties proved to be the most important way through which managers did find their present job, but those that did use a weak tie as a relay did not reach a higher income level.

Public employment offices handling job vacancies

J.C. van Ours en W.G. van der Bij

Whether or not employers use public employment offices in their search for new employees depends amongst other factors on the way the offices handle the job vacancies. This article presents an analysis based on public employment office vacancy data. From the analysis it appears that an intensive care, which includes for example a preselection of suitable candidates for the vacant job, reduces average vacancy duration substantially and increases the share of vacancies filled by the public employment office.

Quality of working life as a matter of definition

S. Dijkstra

In this article, the debate between the Dutch branches of the Labour Process Approach and the Sociotechnical Systems Approach is commented from a philosophical point of view. Based on the work of Hegel, Marx and Ahrend on Labour, the author develops a theoretical/philosophical framework for the definition of the Quality of working life. Commenting the debate from this framework, the inference is drawn that the theoretical positions taken in the debate tend to lead the participants to neglect the importance of discussing their basic assumptions within their client system, before translating them into measures to be taken on behalf of some or all of the parties within that system.

Secondly there is concluded that none of the two approaches mentioned seem to consider such a discussion as a condition for the enchan-

cement of the quality of working life, which is nevertheless one of the inferences from the philosophical framework.

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Daniel Vloeberghs

Human Resource Management

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HRM – Human Resource Management betekent een innovatie in het management van en met mensen. Deze publikatie legt systematisch, zorgvuldig overdacht en met alle aandacht voor de praktijk uit wat HRM is en hoe dit werkt.

Precies omdat HRM zo nieuw en tegelijk zo ingrijpend is, moeten bedrijven en not-for-profit-organisaties goed uitkijken om maximaal te profiteren van alle pluspunten. Dit boek toont overtuigend de noodzaak van een stevige HRM-professionalisering aan. Want een effectief HRM zal in toenemende mate het succes van de onderneming bepalen.

HRM onderscheidt zich duidelijk van het traditionele personeelsbeleid. In plaats daarvan hanteert HRM consequent een 'strategische' invalshoek, zowel bij het opstellen van een human resource plan als in de toepassing ervan – bij beoordeling, beloning, functionering, ontwikkeling, communicatie enzovoort – tot en met bij de realisatie van een 'organisatiecultuur' met haar vele stuurbare mogelijkheden maar ook grenzen.

De auteur besteedt ruime aandacht aan de werkelijke praktijk. Hij maakt inzichtelijk en becommentarieert heel concreet hoe een tiental Belgische en Nederlandse bedrijven HRM, of onderdelen ervan, toepassen en met welk effect en wat daaruit te leren valt.

Deze uitgave is bestemd voor iedereen die te maken heeft met het management van de menselijke factor in bedrijven en organisaties of zich daar op voorbereidt.

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