

# Summaries

## **Differences in job levels of ethnic minorities and indigenous Dutch**

*J.M. Dagevos*

Despite the fact that much labour market research on minorities has been done, we know surprisingly little of the factors explaining the differences in job levels of ethnic minorities and indigenous Dutch. In this article we examine to what extent human capital characteristics explain these differences. The outcomes of the analyses show that the differences in job levels are not only determined by human capital characteristics but also by inequalities in opportunities, the so-called ethnic labour market and different orientations of minority groups towards the labour market.

## **Job valuation and the myth of inflexibility**

*R. Peeters*

In Dutch industry there is a lot of criticism on the dominant system of wage determination. Many critics want to reduce the position of job valuation, as the most important basis, in exchange for some bases which are supposed to serve the desired flexibility better. Like personal competences or output. Job valuation and procedures which belong to it would hinder a more flexible organization and performance of employees. And also it would have a negative effect on motivation.

But is this criticism justified? This paper takes 'the' job valuation into consideration. What is the situation in Dutch industry? Which applications are possible? Based on its experience with job valuation in practice Dutch trade-union Industriebond FNV gives its opinion.

Although some criticism is justified, 'modern' job valuation offers possibilities which comes to meet the demands of flexibility and rapidity: shortened job descriptions, reference surveys,

future oriented surveys, support of computers, job ranges. 'Management' can make a much better use of these possibilities.

## **Quality of work as well as coping strategies**

*K.G. Tijdens and N. Goedhard*

This article examines complaints of workers in the cleaning business concerning the quality of work as well as their coping strategies. Based on a review of literature, a questionnaire and group discussions with a hundred workers, the study showed that their major complaints concerned low wages, disagreement about wages, high working pace, directive leadership, ignorance of knowledge on cleaning matters, and insufficient cleaning materials. Several coping strategies were studied. Work related complaints were addressed to supervisors, but the majority of the complaints were not treated seriously. Hardly any coping strategies are left over for the workers, f.e. threatening with turnover is not seen as a powerful tool. Too high working pace is answered by sick leave. Wage related complaints usually were addressed to trade unions. The union representative is expected to deal with complaints directly with management. Workplace based union activities are hardly tolerated in the firms at stake.

## **Difference in patterns of absenteeism between men and women**

*B. Cuelenaere, B. Jetten and G. van Kooten*

Most of the research concerning sickness absence reveals a difference in patterns of absenteeism between men and women. Three general explanations applicable to this difference can be distinguished. One explanation concerns the nature of the job: women are more likely to be employed in jobs with characteristics which readily lead to absenteeism. A second explana-

tion focuses on the tasks a lot of female employees have with regard to child care and housekeeping, their so called 'double burden'. A third explanation points at a different medical judgement men and women might receive in case of illness.

The former explanations regarding the nature of the job and female employees' double burden appear to be rather inadequate upon confrontation with sickness absence data gathered among 382 employees working at the Foundation for Care and Service for mentally and/or physically handicapped in Leiden. Although the analysis shows a significant difference in absenteeism percentages of men and women, a significant relation between both explanations and the duration of absenteeism can not be proved.

#### **Differences between spouses on the wife's labour force participation in the countries of the European Union**

*J. Smits, W.C. Ultee and J. Lammers*

Using data from the Eurobarometers, effects of occupational status differences between spouses on the wife's labour force participation and on her occupational achievement are studied for the countries of the European Union. The results show a tendency towards occupational status similarity within marriage. Labour force participation of wives is highest when their occupational status is equal to their husbands' occupational status. Furthermore, both a ceiling effect and a facilitating effect of husband's occupation on the wife's occupational achievement

are found: wives of professional and managerial husbands achieve better and wives of manual labourers achieve worse than single women. The strength of these effects differs somewhat between the countries. For wife's labour force participation these differences are related to dominant religion.

#### **Work, housekeeping and children**

*K. Sanders, A.W. Hak and Y. Roseboom*

The subject of this study are co-working women in the self-employed and their attitudes with respect to work, housekeeping and children and the amount of time spend to these tasks. Co-working as a form of labor is only visible in the statistics to a certain extend. This study tries to explain differences in experiences and in time spending behaviour of these co-working women, as well as their spouses, over (a periode of) time in terms of the theory of a pattern of generations by Becker (1985a; 1985b; 1992). Interviews were held with 72 co-working women of self-employed chemists born between 1911 en 1962 in the Netherlands. On the whole, there appear to be hardly any differences between the co-working women. However, there are differences in the sense of responsibility for housekeeping and childcare: women of the older generations feel themselves more responsible for these tasks than women of the younger generations. Furthermore women of earlier generations appear to be co-working more often when the children are small than women of the younger generations.