
Summaries

Part-time work in the Netherlands

In the past decades, especially in the 1980s, the size of part-time work has increased tremendously in the Netherlands. At this moment 29% of the employed labour force works part-time, which is defined here as working between 12 and 35 hours a week. Of all women working at least 12 hours a week, 59% are employed in part-time jobs, while for men this figure is 11%. In this article an overview is given of the state of affairs of part-time work in the Netherlands. In order to do so, the Labour Force Survey (Statistics Netherlands) is used. First, the historical development of part-time work is described briefly. Secondly, attention is given to characteristics of people working part-time. Finally, characteristics of part-time jobs are discussed. The article will reveal that although part-time work is very common in the Netherlands, it still remains mainly done by women. For men part-time work is still concentrated at the beginning and the end of their working career.

Working and caring: The subjective factor

The number of mothers with young children in the Dutch labour market is steadily growing. In many studies the background of this social phenomenon has been clarified. Personal and household characteristics of mothers, as well as characteristics of the labour position of mothers have been studied to determine their relation to mothers' labour participation. Until now an important explaining factor, however, has been ignored: the subjective meaning of the situation to mothers themselves and its influence on their labour participation. On the basis of a qualitative study among 74 working mothers with small children, this paper sketches a picture of the diversity of meanings mothers give to working and caring and

the combination of both. Besides, the view of the mothers on promotion is being studied, to see if and how this view is related to the specific meanings of working and caring.

Why has employment of lower educated workers in manufacturing declined?

The paper evaluates four different explanations for the fast decrease of the number of lower educated workers in manufacturing industries. These are: (1) low productivity supply characteristics and minimum wage regulation, (2) upgrading of the job structure necessitating changes in demand, (3) displacement of the lower educated by better qualified, and, (4) technological change and innovation policies. The explanations are evaluated on the basis of a detailed description of the process of designing jobs and developing remuneration and employment policies and their development for one MNE for the period 1975-1992. It is found that especially the upgrading of the job structure and technological change, both necessary to meet changed product market conditions, have caused a change in demand in the labor market.

Differences in wage setting between industry and services

Several theorists have discussed the idea that a post-industrial change is taking place in the western world. Employment in industrial production is in relative decline and more and more people find jobs in the post-industrial service sector. This trend has led to many speculations about the differences between work in industry and work in services. One set of speculations concerns the assumption that, due to differences in economic rationality between both sectors, wage setting will differ.

However, from an institutional perspective, there are several arguments against this idea. It can be argued that many social institutions apply equally to both industry and services and that therefore wage setting in both sectors will be similar.

This paper, based on data from the Dutch Social Economic Panel, aims to provide some insight into the controversy. Based on the economic rationality argument, four hypotheses about differences in wage setting between industry and services are formulated. It is then determined to what degree these hypotheses are in line with actual developments in the Netherlands. The conclusion is that although some results seem in line with the hypotheses, the differences are generally small. Given the choice between economic rationalism on the one hand and institutionalism on the other, it seems that in this field the latter approach is the more valid.

The Psychological Contract: A critical discussion of its conceptualization and its operationalization

This article seeks to contribute to a greater conceptual clarity of the psychological contract. It is based on a review of the psychological contract literature. We start the article with a few definitions of the psychological contract. In the second part of the article we discuss the concept by answering the following questions: (1) What is the role of the exchange relationship between employer and employee in the development of the psychological contract?, (2) What is the nature of the expectations and obligations that constitute the psychological contract, (3) What is the role of the individual employee and what is the role of the organization in the development of the psychological contract? In the third part of the article we discuss some issues concerning the operationalization of the psychological contract. Questions that are raised are: (1) How can different types of psychological contracts be distinguished?, and (2) How can we evaluate the psychological contract? We conclude the article by illustrating how future research of psychological contracts can contribute to the practice of HRM.