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Alexander J. Matejko

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[See table of contents](#)

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concern for the common basis of data. Actual gravity of injuries and illnesses has to be evaluated. In order to develop adequate prevention policies it is necessary to have a much more analytical statistical basis, and this actually should be expected at the federal level.

**Alexander J. MATEJKO**

University of Alberta

**The Working Conditions in Canadian Hospitals. Constrains and Opportunities**, by Joan Kahn & William A. Westley, Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1984, pp. XV + 112. ISBN 0-662-52924-3

Hospitals need to redesign their work systems in order to improve the motivation of the personnel and make the organization more responsible to change. The survey of 392 hospitals across Canada done in the Spring of 1983 concentrated on the leading personnel: directors of nursing, personnel directors, and union representatives. They were asked about professional nurses, remaining nurses, medical support staff and non-medical support staff.

Taking the perspective of the last three years, the adherence of recommended work standards has increased quite often among the nurses, but rarely among the support staff. In around one fourth of cases willingness of nurses to help co-workers and supervisors has decreased (much more often in the teaching hospitals than in the non-teaching hospitals). Willingness to follow directives of co-workers and supervisors has decreased among professional nurses in one fifth of cases and among non-medical support personnel in one fourth of cases (again more common in teaching hospitals). Willingness to assume responsibility has decreased in one fourth of cases in all categories except among the medical support staff. Willingness to perform duties not specifically part of one's job description has diminished among three fifth of cases regarding the pro-

fessional nurses, a half of cases regarding non-professional nursing staff and non-medical support staff, and among one third of cases regarding the medical support staff. Willingness to work overtime has declined in 30 percent of cases regarding the nursing personnel and the non-medical support staff, and in 20 percent of cases regarding the medical support staff.

It is significant that in all the above mentioned cases the work morale of the non-medical support staff was much worse in the teaching hospitals in comparison with the non-teaching hospitals. According to the authors, «such evidence of stress is not surprising, since teaching hospitals must be most responsive to change, to new developments in technology, and to community demands» (pp. 15-16). In the areas where there are no norms of professional behaviour a decrease has been reported in the general willingness to work towards organizational goals. However, even among the professional personnel, the level of organizational commitment is far from being satisfactory.

The expectations of the hospital personnel are growing. Over a half of union officers acknowledged the often complaints of the workers about the lack of opportunity to make decisions and the lack of opportunity for advancement. The same was valid for two fifths of union officers regarding the lack of opportunity to learn new skills. Only one fifth of union officers never had complaints about the lack of mutual respect and support among co-workers. Among the non-medical support staff, the frequency of such complaints seems to rise with an increase in the size of the city in which the hospital is located. One fifth of the union officers acknowledged often complaints about boredom with their jobs, as well as about the lack of meaningfulness of their tasks. With an increase in hospital size, an increase was found in the percentage of directors of nursing who reported complaints by professional nurses about boredom of their jobs.

According to the survey data, there is definitely the growth of sick leave absenteeism, complaints about the quality of

food provided at staff meals, symptoms specifically attributed to stressful working conditions, work related staff injuries, grievances related to contractual issues etc. All these phenomena mentioned above show the need to look closer into the social systems of Canadian hospitals in order to propose some modifications.

The second part of the publication enumerates the innovations started with more or less success by various hospitals in order to make things better. It would be necessary to encourage adequately broad organizational policies in order to stimulate improvements. (See on this subject Chapter XI on hospitals of my book **Beyond Bureaucracy?** Cologne: Verlag für Gesellschaftsarchitektur, 1984.) There is a need of a training and systematic consultation focused on cooperation between various categories of the hospital personnel. With the growth of education and the higher level of expectations, the organizational reality needs to be adequately modified.

**Alexander J. MATEJKO**

University of Alberta

**Une majorité laborieuse.** Les femmes qui gagnent leur vie, mais à quel prix, par Pat et Hugh Armstrong, Ottawa, Conseil consultatif canadien de la situation de la femme, 1983, 329 pp., ISBN 0-660-91026-8

Le travail des femmes est un sujet qui a fait l'objet de nombreuses publications ces dernières années. On serait porté à croire qu'il est difficile de publier un nouveau livre original sur le sujet. Pourtant, ce défi, Pat et Hugh Armstrong l'ont relevé avec succès. Les auteurs veulent, dans cet ouvrage, étudier d'abord la qualité du travail des femmes. Comme ils le précisent eux-mêmes, «ce livre porte sur la nature et les conditions du travail féminin rémunéré, sur les structures, les rapports et les idées qui maintiennent les femmes à leur place, sur le changement ou l'absence de changement» (p. 2).

Rejetant l'argument de la femme-alibi présente dans certaines professions libérales ou perçant dans certains emplois traditionnellement «masculins», les auteurs se sont concentrés sur les emplois que la majorité des femmes occupent.

Le volume se divise en quatre chapitres distincts. Après une brève introduction qui contient certains renseignements sur les sources utilisées (statistiques et entrevues), les auteurs brossent, dans le second chapitre, un tableau complet du travail féminin à l'aide des statistiques et des résultats de recherche disponibles, le tout illustré par des extraits des entrevues, ce qui contribue à enlever un peu de la sécheresse des données statistiques.

On y apprend qu'il existe encore des emplois d'hommes et de femmes, des rémunérations d'hommes et de femmes. Autrement dit, il n'y a pas eu de déplacement marqué de l'emploi féminin vers des occupations traditionnellement occupées par des hommes. Le travail à temps partiel a augmenté dans toutes les catégories professionnelles mais beaucoup plus chez les femmes que chez les hommes et ce, malgré le désir d'une majorité à occuper des emplois à temps plein. Les femmes se retrouvent le plus souvent à l'emploi de petits établissements qui sont généralement non syndiqués où les conditions matérielles de travail et les possibilités d'avancement sont moins bonnes. Les auteurs critiquent les textes législatifs qui, selon eux, demeurent inefficaces pour éliminer l'inégalité.

Le troisième chapitre porte sur le processus de travail, sur le vécu des femmes au travail. C'est surtout dans ce chapitre que l'on retrouve la matière recueillie lors des entrevues puisque l'objectif est de faire parler les femmes. Comme le disent les auteurs: «Nous avons mesuré ce qui était quantifiable et comparé ce qui prêtait à la comparaison, mais ce ne sont que des chiffres qui ne tiennent pas compte de la fatigue nerveuse, de l'ennui, des varices, du sentiment de culpabilité, de l'insécurité et de la colère» (p. 148). On y découvre que la majorité des femmes fait sensiblement face aux mêmes conditions de travail: travail ennuyeux, répétitif,