

EUROPEAN NETWORK OF ORGANIZATIONAL AND WORK PSYCHOLOGISTS—ENOP

ENOP Newsletter

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The next ENOP Newsletter will be published in December 1986. Information about events or current issues in your country would be of great interest to ENOP colleagues. Please send a brief note to Peter Warr for inclusion in the next issue. His address is MRC/ESRC SAPU, University of Sheffield, Sheffield S10 2TN, England. Material should be received before the end of November.

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SIXTH ENOP SYMPOSIUM: Paris 7 and 8 March 1986

Twenty-four people attended this year's Symposium. In addition to two interesting scientific sessions and a valuable business meeting, informal conversations were also generally felt to be pleasant and productive.

A brief account of the three formal parts of the Symposium is as follows:

1. YOUTH PROBLEMS

(a) Bernhard Wilpert presented a paper on "Past and present research foci". He introduced this through an examination of the concept of "youth" and by stressing both regional differentiation (e.g. there is a greater expansion of young age groups in developing countries than in those which are more developed) and social differentiation (e.g. the need to distinguish between racial groups, and the need to study handicapped people, immigrants, and young women).

He identified seven principal research foci, noting that research was disproportionately conducted within more developed countries. The foci covered: new technology and professional structures; job analysis and skill requirements; preparedness for mobility; education and training; unemployment; cognitive structures and new technology jobs; and variations across time and across groups in particular work ethics.

(b) Pol Coetsier considered "Future research needs" from the standpoint of seven different studies, primarily of blue-collar workers, and in the light of the project on Work Socialization of Youth (WOSY).

His paper was organized around five principal research findings. The nature and implications of each were considered, and inferences were drawn about future research needs in each case. The findings were as follows: there has been a reduction in work hours; work systems, technologies, organization and relations have changed; there is a lack of organizational training theory; there exists a crippled interaction between school and industry; and there is an evolution in the meaning of working.

(c) Henk Thierry acted as initial discussant for this session. His remarks covered issues of technological determinism, motivation and reward structures, and the consequences for society of large numbers of unemployed young people.

The general discussion was particularly concerned with possible polarization between those workers in permanent, secure jobs and those in peripheral and temporary roles. Much interest was also expressed in the notion of "flexibility", with possible links to more holistic (rather than analytic) styles of thinking.

2. PROBLEMS OF ADULTS

(a) Peter Warr presented an account of "Adapting to jobs after unemployment". He described longitudinal findings of a rapid improvement in mental health after regaining paid work, and discussed some results from a study of reported re-entry problems. The latter were quite common, but appeared to be brief in duration.

He then described a developing model of environmental features and mental health. This attempts to identify principal elements of an environment which can affect mental health (e.g. opportunity for control, or availability of money). Transitions between environments can then be analyzed in terms of the model's features, in order to predict the impact of the change. This perspective was applied to the transition between unemployment and employment to illustrate differences expected to arise in particular cases.

The discussion was opened by Don Wallis, who noted several limitations of current data and some problems associated with the concept of "adaptation". Other members of the symposium were concerned about procedures to assist the unemployed, and noted the difficulties of measurement of mental health (especially in interview studies of unemployed people). The need to extend research from self-report to behavioural indices was emphasized by several contributors.

(b) Anna Borkowsky described a study of married women's return to paid work after a period as full-time housewives. Her paper was entitled: "Easing in or taking a big step? Transition in work biographies of Swiss women".

Six principal motives for finding a job were observed, with different women emphasizing different themes, and sometimes identifying additional motives at later times. These were: financial reward; wanting to contribute to society; seeking variety, especially away from children; wanting to be appreciated as a worker; seeking an occupational role identity; and the challenge of meeting job demands.

Initial re-employment was often tentative and provisional, and the transition into an acceptable job was often a lengthy process. This involved early self-concept assessments, training decisions, the making of extended plans, and acknowledgement of a role change in advance of its actual occurrence.

(c) Gerhard Steiner set the previous paper into the context of a national programme, Education et la vie active. His talk was entitled "EVA: A Swiss national programme for the study of transition into work". This programme aims to improve vocational education through collaboration between industrialists, trade unions, training institutions, universities, researchers, and the government. (The last of these has contributed the equivalent of 4 million US dollars.)

The programme is investigating three main areas: personality development in professional and vocational education; the organization of vocational education; and transitions made by several groups (housewives, handicapped people, unemployed people, prisoners, etc.).

A number of booklets have been produced, covering a wide range of topics. Some are general (e.g. social competence and understanding one's own learning; how to teach psychology to master craftsmen). Others are more localized, covering topics such as the self-image of the nurse and counselling for farmers.

It was concluded that the programme had been useful, with vocational education improved in many ways and progress being made in bridging the gap between science and practice. However, there inevitably remained further problems to be solved.

3. ENOP BUSINESS MEETING

(a) Future workshops

Details of the workshop on the Evaluation of Management Training were now settled. Arranged by Pol Coetsier and Peter Herriot, it would be held in Paris in June.

Gaston de Cock, Karel de Witte and Goran Ekvall proposed a workshop on Organizational Climate and Culture. Details will be agreed later.

Henk Thierry and Uwe Kleinbeck were intending to arrange a workshop on Work Motivation.

It was agreed that wider advance publicity should be given to ENOP Workshops via mailing lists, journals etc. Many potential valuable contributors knew nothing in advance of recent meetings, so were unable to attend.

Budget proposals for new Workshops should be sent to Bernhard Wilpert by September 1986. Preliminary discussion with him of outline requirements would be helpful before then.

(b) ENOP Co-ordinating Committee

The Co-ordinating Committee had so far been self-appointed, and its members now thought it appropriate for elections to be held. This was agreed, with the first election to take place in 1987.

(c) Membership of ENOP

Considerable discussion took place about the advantages and disadvantages of expanding the membership of ENOP. The current small size was widely appreciated for the intensive discussions it permitted, and for the fact that travel funds could be made available through La Maison des Science de l'Homme. However, it was felt to be unfair to those excluded, and to be potentially too inbred.

Several forms of possible expansion were considered. Non-academics as well as academics could be admitted; younger academics could augment the current professorial membership; ENOP might remain small but fit within a network of other bodies.

Members of the symposium described briefly what they hoped to get personally from ENOP. Themes from different participants included: meeting other work psychologists; a task-oriented focus; not too comfortable; producing outputs (research reports; reviews of a field, etc.); be different from other groups; link into other activities; develop an information base, about people, events, interests, trends, etc.; joint research; exchange of students and staff; produce books; develop better training for students of work psychology; strengthen European applied psychology; increase the influence of applied psychologists in European countries.

It was agreed that the Co-ordinating Committee would consider these and other themes, and draw up an interim document for response by members. This would include a fresh statement of ENOP objectives, implications for membership, links with MSH, and procedures for entry into ENOP.

(d) The Joint Study Programme of the EC Commission

Funds had been made available for a summer school in 1987 on New Technology and Work. This would be for post-graduate students, residential for four weeks. The school was being organized by colleagues from Paris, Delft and Berlin.

(e) ENOP Newsletter

Peter Warr agreed to continue as Editor until the end of 1986; Peter Dachler had already offered to take over the role thereafter.

Co-ordinating Committee members noted that results from their next meeting would be needed for inclusion in the December 1986 issue of the ENOP Newsletter.

(f) Exchanges between countries

Several visits had been arranged as a result of ENOP initiatives. Particularly notable were developments in Spain and exchanges to and from that country.

(g) ENOP and IAAP

The Jerusalem meeting of the International Association of Applied Psychology was shaping up well. Many European contributions were planned.

(h) 1987 ENOP Symposium

It was decided to seek to link the 1987 Symposium to the West European Congress to be held in Antwerp from 13 to 15 April. However, it was necessary to check first whether travel funds outside Paris would be available from MSH for this special occasion.

Robert Roe and Enzo Spaltro agreed to meet in June to develop possible themes for the 1987 Symposium.

(i) Directory of European Work Psychologists

Charles de Wolff reported that a new edition of the Directory was now available. Copies could be obtained from him, at a price of 10 guilders each.

VISITS AND EXCHANGES

Several visits and exchanges between European countries have taken place or are planned. Those notified to the Newsletter are summarized here; please send information for inclusion in future issues to Peter Warr.

- (a) From 1/10/83 to 30/6/84 Drs. H. Van den Broeck of the Laboratory for Sociopsychology of Work and Organization, University of Ghent, stayed for his doctoral program in the research group of the Department of Behaviour in Organizations of the University of Lancaster (S. Shimmin).
- (b) From 26 to 30 April 1986 the Second Meeting on Work Socialization of Youth (WOSY) was held in Valencia (local co-ordination by J. Peiro). The first meeting of this group was an ENOP Workshop in October 1985, held in Ghent.
- (c) Drs. Dirk Buyens of the Laboratory for Sociopsychology of Work and Organization, University of Ghent, will stay for his doctoral program in the Department of General Psychology, University of Valencia (J. Peiro) in July and August 1986.
- (d) Staff and about 15 students of the Technical University of Berlin (B. Wilpert) plan a one-week scientific visit in June 1986 to several institutes: Paris VI (C. Levy-Leboyer), Paris XIII (M. de Montmollin), Laboratoire de Psychologie du Travail (J. Leplat), Conservatoire des Arts et Metiers (H. Wisner).
- (e) Dr. Nigel Nicholson (SAPU, University of Sheffield) visited the University of Osnabruck (S. Greif) and the Max Planck Institute in Berlin during April 1986.
- (f) Professor Bernard Six (Erziehungswissenschaftliche Hochschule Rheinland-Pfalz) spent January to March 1986 at the University of Sussex.
- (g) Professor Peter Warr (SAPU, University of Sheffield) visited the University of Bergen (S. Kile) during May 1986. He also attended a meeting of the Norwegian Society for Organizational Psychology which was held in Trondheim.
- (h) Professor Jose Peiro (University of Valencia) visited the University of Sheffield during April 1986. He is planning a further stay later in the year.

A NEW JOURNAL

The first volume appeared in 1985 of Psicologia del Trabajo y de las Organizaciones. Published in Spain by the Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos, this included articles on the systems approach to job enrichment and on organizational assessment. Shorter articles and book reviews were also presented.

A NEW HANDBOOK

Scheduled to appear before the end of 1986 is the Traité de Psychologie du Travail, edited by C. Levy-Leboyer and J.C. Sperandio (P.U.F., Paris).