

Book Review

Schnall, Dobson and Roskam (2009), *Unhealthy Work: Causes, Consequences, Cures, Amityville*: Baywood Publications.

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True the international computation and globalization, it became more and more important to improve unhealthy work.

This book has many important articles which are dealing with some problems of man-machine system in a very fertile point of view.

That was an edited collection of work from an interdisciplinary group of authors including researchers in occupational health, epidemiology, sociology and anthropology as well as key labour and public health activists concerned about the impact of working conditions on the health of working people.

This interdisciplinary book examines the changing nature of work, new evidence linking working conditions with ill-health, "*Unhealthy Work*" as a significant public health problem, and provides case studies that inform recommendations for prevention.

In this connection Part I, has the title "*The changing nature of work*". This part has 4 chapters. This section of the book, examines contemporary labour trends in the United States and elsewhere as they are shaped by economic globalization. In this part, Chrisy Moutsatsos' argues that the important changes taking place in today world of work within the context of the global economy. She introduces an Economic Globalization and its effect on labour.

In her chapter, she places current workplace conditions in a larger context of global economic changes since the 1970s. According to Moutsatsos, the changes in workplace conditions since the 1970s and the introduction of neo-liberal policies have affected the welfare of workers. Therefore in the future, underemployed and part-time works would be affected on workers health.

In his chapter, Jeffrey Johnson's explains how increasing inequality of social class, work and health is. This parts overview of class in the global economy, which looks at the era of globalization as one of globalized of work and neoliberal practices of the changing nature of work. He describes and defines the varying definitions of social class as it is used to understand the ongoing association between socioeconomic status and health. He is presenting some data on the relationships between social class, occupational grade and cardiovascular disease. Johnson claims that, income inequality is being fuelled by the larger global economy through increasing part-time work and underemployment.

Other chapter on "the changing nature of work in Canada and other developed countries" by Peter Smith & John Frank's take up the issue of impact of globalization on job characteristics in Canada and Edward Yelin addresses in his chapter "*The changing Nature of Work in the United States*" the impact of globalization on the U.S. workforce from two perspectives. 1. Changes in employment and 2. The distribution of jobs by occupation and industry.

The first four chapters of the book analyse the structure of work in the USA and Canada over the last ten years, and changes in the workforce and labour contracts. The language used in the first part of the book enables readers to assimilate the concepts easily. Introducing the basic definitions in the first part also facilitates comprehension. Not enough institutional foundation about some issues is provided and the lack of statistical data is noticeable. The data regarding the USA and Canada dates back to 2003 is and thus cannot explicate the impact of the global financial crisis experienced since 2008. Moreover, the fact that the data is limited to the USA and Canada, and that there is no comparison with other developed and developing countries are noticeable deficiencies of the book.

Part II, under the title of "*The Health and Economic Cost of Unhealthy Work*" presents scientific findings about the effects of particular forms of work organization and stressors on the health of employees identifies unhealthy

work as a major public health problem and estimates its costs to employers and society.

In this part of the book, the case of psycho-social stressors is examined from the point of view of company owners and workers. The concept of psycho-social stressor has been examined since 1970s by many scientists and how unhealthy working conditions affected the workers has also been emphasized. Some physical problems such as cardiovascular illnesses and hypertension have been observed in many workers. Incidence of psychological stress, anxiety, fatigue and depression has been on the rise. The workplace demands on individual workers also seem to be increasing. The changes in the work shift hours, the impact of downsizing and the problems of flexible workforce all negatively impact health. It has been concluded that psychological stressors (what the job expects from an individual and the control of an individual over the job) have a strong and negative effect on cardiovascular illnesses and hypertension. In addition, some studies reveal a relationship between ethnic origins and potential illnesses. In chapter6, Paul Landsbergis, Peter Schnall and Marnie Dobson's present of the research showing a strong relationship between psychosocial stressor exposures and cardiovascular disease and hypertension. In their article, Marnie Dobson' and Peter Schnall's are introduces of the literature on the effects of job strain, mental health, emotional labour, long working hours, psychological distress, anxiety, burnout and depression. In his chapter, Haiou Yang, argues that race-ethnicity as another dimension of social inequality and health disparity. Hhe is presenting some data from 2000 California Health Interview Survey. According to Yang the costs of poor working conditions and ill health are borne by some of the most socially vulnerable populations, many without health insurance. in their chapter, Maritza Jauregui and Peter Schnall's are argues that unhealthy work environments are ripe with stressors that will cause illness and eventually take their toll on workers and on the bottom line.. They are claims that the relationship with cost of health care and the work related stressors and occupational injuries and illness.

There are several studies on the great costs of work-related stressors and occupational illnesses. The cost of a work accident can not only be assessed by the loss of workforce. There are also direct and indirect monetary and time-related costs. While continuing to work, in the case of a headache, leads to inability to work at full performance or a loss of productivity on the part of the worker, it also has some hidden costs and facilitates social breakdown.

This part of the book attempts to explicate the problems scientifically; however, this is not sufficient. Therefore, the problems have been tackled with examples in the third part and efforts have been made to establish a path to solutions of these problems.

In this part of the book some of the technical information is too difficult for social scientists to comprehend. The classical theory explication of work life stressors is absent. Concepts have been explained in detail in some parts, but they have either not been compared or not supported by sufficient statistics, or the statistics do not go back far enough; therefore, some of the sections in some parts of the book are poor in content. For instance, while data have been provided from studies carried out on ethnic groups in the USA, but data about the general composition of the population of the USA have not been placed in the study. The lack of measures or suggestions in each section means the study stalls at the level of merely identifying problems.

Part III presents a number of case studies and various approaches to improve working conditions, prevent disease, and improve health. In this section shown that laws and regulations alone are not enough to protect workers health.

The last part of the book has been designed to determine the necessary measures in order to protect the workers from working in unhealthy working conditions, which have more recently become chronic in the USA. Some successful approaches are proposed to minimize these issues which are both physically and mentally threatening the workforce. The first approach is the institutional foundations of collective movements. The second one is balance of power between the employees and the employers. It is well known that there are some companies that have developed these methods and succeeded. This success has been enabled through the collective movement of the administrative relationship between the employees and the employers. The most significant finding here is the undisputable superiority of the collective movement in comparison with all other conditions. Together with legal regulations, the control of the implementation of OH&S laws also provides important advantages to the workforce. Some Western countries implement this exceptionally well. Unfortunately, in the USA, similarly to many countries, the health of workers is not one of the issues of priority. The reason for this is anaemic legal regulations. Even though many regulations have been introduced over the last 20 years in an attempt to improve this as a cultural process and their

practices have been monitored indicating positive results, they have not earned the deserved respectable position.

In chapter 10, according to Deborah Gordon, Maritza Jauregui and Peter Schnall's, 'The results of non-collective movements can have significant negative impacts on workers' health. The replacement of the health standards together with the new economical order with the notion of "any job is good enough" has caused this issue to be handled in a non-efficient manner. There does not exist a commonly-agreed definition of the concept of work stress and this case of non-availability of a functioning definition comes from the lack of dialogue between the employees and employers. Authors of this chapter, suggests that this issue stems from the differences of experience between the shareholders and the workers. According to them, the fact that the community at large pays special attention to this issue is somewhat expediting the solution to this problem.

In his article, Paul Landsbergis' reviews the various levels of work organization interventions and different stages of prevention, exploring collective work alternatives in contrast to Fordism and lean production in automobile manufacturing. According to him, when Fordizm and the changes in the automobile industry are examined according to the notion of collective working, the most important finding is that the power balance is an important variable in producing a healthy working condition. Furthermore, the factors such as the workload and working hours, which are likely to be the sources of stress, are also identified. Some regulations aimed at preventing stress-related problems of through programmes are suggested. The main recommendation however includes the right of workers to have a say, the ability of workers to control their work, and the provision of support for high level administration.

Multidisciplinary research methodology for the epidemiological study of health issues in worker populations, is presenting by Ellen Rosskam in chapter 12. She is discusses about measurable improvements in worker health and working conditions. Her recent work with airport check-in workers is related with public health and occupational health. According to the results of this study on the health conditions of workers it has been found that some changes between the collective movement and the health of the workers and the working conditions are necessary. For instance, in this study, check-in officials, reported that the new regulation offered to the

workers had generated great advantages for occupational and social health conditions.

Another study in the state of San Francisco where the impact of the problems of working life on the transport workers was analysed in chapter 13 by Ray Antonio, June Fisher and Ellen Rosscam. The results demonstrated a significant correlation between the trade-union movements and political rights. It should be noted that this study focused on the working environment rather than individual behaviours. Mike Casey and Ellen Rosscam presenting some survey results in chapter 14. The chapter outlines the affects of downsizing, cost-cutting and the resulting intensification of workloads on the health of hotel workers and the organizing efforts of union members in San Francisco. In this chapter, when the wages and other legal rights of non-unionized hotel cleaners are compared with those of unionized ones, it is alleged that collective movement contributes significantly to the housekeepers.

Lilia Garcia presents *Accomplishments of the Maintenance Cooperation Trust Fund* Employers and unionized workers in her chapter 15.

In chapter 16, Dean Baker, Marnie Dobson and Peter Schnall's explore the role of occupational and environmental medicine as a location of intervention.

The important point in collective bargaining that needs to be determined by those who work in the service sector which is developing fast within an innovative approach is referred to as "front line". Those people have to be cheerful continually as part of "emotional labour" in order for the business to improve. Stephen Smith's suggests ways to mitigate the possible negative human costs for emotional labourers by recommending a "Commission of Inquiry" to better understand the conditions of emotional labour in his chapter 17.

It has become apparent that the working conditions have to be improved in a society. However the processes of globalisation and economical liberalism present some challenges to this. Nevertheless, occupational illnesses and security or right-based polices are important. Workers need to have healthy working conditions as part of their citizenship rights and they should not suffer any discrimination. Ellen Rosscam proposes in her chapter 18, an expanded concept for the way in which "occupational health and safety" is

understood and defined. A work security index is presented as a benchmarking system for evaluating how well local, state or national level governments perform in protecting workers' health. A work security index is a scale in which states and national administrations compare and classify the issue of protecting workers' health. Accordingly, while the countries on the top of this list include Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland and Iceland, other countries such as Tunisia, Panama, Philippines, Romania and Uzbekistan together with Turkey appear toward the bottom of the list.

The subject of the final chapters of the book is *Curing Unhealthy Work* by Peter Schnall, Marnie Dobson, Ellen Rosscam and Paul Landsbergis. At the concluding, presents the results all together. Accordingly, healthy working conditions, political proposals and methods of treatment have been determined and it has been emphasised that these are the key characteristics. Besides, the study, while offering some suggestions of solutions, has compiled all of the existing findings together and enabled the most efficient ways of improvement to be determined. In this part, the descriptions about work stress and trade-union movements are attention-grabbing. However, the fact that stress has been considered only as an element creating negative effect makes it difficult to make comparisons with other institutions. Besides, the lack of current data is also quite clear in this part. Nevertheless, it is important to present the data comparatively in order for it to gain universal significance. The fact that there are no comparisons in the studies carried out here is an indication of the fact that the results only depict the America.

As a results, according to the latest studies show that 74% of the employees are working under stress. It is known that unhealthy working conditions result in injuries, mental problems, cardiovascular illnesses, low productivity and poor working performance. Simultaneously it is worth noting that the productivity of workers in Europe, the USA and Japan have increased in the last 10 years. The basic reason for this is not that the individuals have become more productive, but that the wages have dropped in the past ten years or the working hours have increased. As a result, 30% of the workers suffered from hypertension and 1 in 6 workers were diagnosed with depression. The wages of many workers in the USA have been dropping as manufacturing has been moving to countries such as China and India where it is cheaper to produce and informal employment opportunities are rife. The western countries have opted for competition rather than the protection of their own workers. As a result, jobs requiring

skills, the feminisation of the workforce and insufficient employment have increased, the place of blue-collar workers in the service sector has started to disappear, and the gap between the rich and the poor has widened. Many studies have concluded that when workers act collectively, the working conditions become more humane and fair. However, there has been a noticeable drop in the number of workers who are members of trade unions for the last 40 years. As a result, mental and physical illnesses have increased, the time devoted for families has fallen, incomes have dropped, poverty rates have increased and the dialogue between the employees and employers has almost diminished.

As has been defined by the WHO, healthy work is not far only from stress and psychological problems. This means that workers should be employed at the job they deserve, work at a place where respect is considered as a basic principle, and earn enough to live on without fearing poverty. In order to create such an environment, healthy working conditions have to be defined, collective movement has to develop and the social cost of unhealthy conditions has to be determined. Further, minimum working and income practices have to be introduced and the gap between the rich and the poor has to be narrowed. It is equally important that legal regulations are introduced. For instance, dangerous working conditions should be banned, protective measures for women and minorities should be introduced, weekly working hours should be limited, balance between family and work hours should be struck, minimum health requirements for the entrepreneurs should be determined, and finally, legal regulations prohibiting unionization should be abolished.

At last, this book argues that to improve working conditions it is essential to identify connections between work and health, and then bring together the multiple stakeholders for collective action with the ultimate goal of levelling the playing field between workers and management. Without a more powerful voice, workers will continue to experience unhealthy conditions at work.

The book argues that the many different aspects of work. It is an advisable book in different areas working like following: 1) employees, unions, and worker-oriented organizations; 2) employers, management, and human resources staff; 3) policy makers, including legislators; 4) funding agencies, including government and foundations; 5) occupational health professionals and public health leaders; and 6) researchers and students in public health,

occupational health, ergonomics, labour relations, sociology and psychology of work, business, human resource management and related academic disciplines. *“Unhealthy Work”* is a valuable source for employee, employer and government. A number of its chapters would also be useful readings for labour and society. This book is a solid introduction to promising new field.