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Article abstract

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Negotiation Issues for Part-Time Workers
The Impact of Occupation

Isik Urla Zeytinoglu

Focusing on 117 union locals that had collective agreements for part-time and full-time workers in Ontario, this study showed that negotiation issues varied for part-time workers depending on their occupation. Those in non-professional occupations wanted to limit the number or percentage of part-time work in their bargaining units, while for professionals this was an unimportant negotiation issue. Negotiating the same wages and benefits for part-time and full-time workers, and equality in filling full-time vacancies, were similarly important for both groups of workers.

Traditionally, in negotiating a new agreement, unions primary concern was to fulfill the demands of their full-time working members. As the percentage of part-time workers in their jurisdictions increased, unions in Canada started to organize these workers (Zeytinoglu 1987a). Consequently, demands in negotiations changed to include issues that are specific to part-time work.

The purpose of this paper is to examine issues that are considered important in negotiating an agreement covering part-time workers and to show that negotiation issues vary depending on occupation of workers. Results of this study are based on a survey of 117 union locals in Ontario[1] that had collective agreements covering part-time workers either in the same agreement with full-time workers or in separate but substantially similar agreements. Part-time and full-time workers covered in these agreements are in the same occupation and

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1 Sixty-three percent of the surveyed locals had the same agreement for full-time and part-time workers, and the remaining covered each group separately.

perform the same or substantially similar tasks.[2] The two groups of workers covered here are professionals, that is nurses and elementary school teachers, and non-professionals consisting of clerical, office, sales and service workers and some nursing assistants.

ISSUES IN NEGOTIATIONS

In negotiating an agreement for their members, unions are primarily interested in delivering two types of benefits: providing higher wages and benefits, and giving members a 'voice' in management decisions which might have a direct impact on them, such as in layoffs and dismissals (Balkin 1989; Estey 1976; Freeman and Medoff 1984; Gunderson 1989). The literature on part-time work also presents equitable wage and benefits, and job security as issues of foremost concern for most part-time workers (ILO 1989; Labour Canada 1983; Zeytinoglu 1987a, 1987b). Thus in analyzing negotiation issues for part-time workers one would assume that the following list of issues would be considered important:

Same Wages and Benefits. It is well known that part-time workers' hourly wages and benefits are lower than their full-time counterparts, whether they are unionized (Labour Canada 1983; Zeytinoglu 1987a, 1987b) or nonunion (Statistics Canada 1990; *The Worklife Report* 1989). Since a union's major goal is to negotiate one pay level for all workers in a job category (Balkin 1989) and same benefits for their part-time and full-time working members (Zeytinoglu 1987b), I would expect that having the same hourly earnings for part-time and full-time workers would be an important negotiation issue.

Same Seniority Clause. Job security is important for all workers. In unionized environments, collective agreements attempt to provide job security primarily through seniority clauses. Studies on part-time workers show that these workers tend to have less job security than their full-time counterparts (ILO 1989; Kassalow 1989). Since part-time and full-time workers are members of the same union, I would assume that their union would like to negotiate an equal treatment for its members in job security. Thus, I would expect negotiating the same seniority clause would be an important issue.

Equality in Filling Vacancies and Access to Training. In addition to the well-known union demands listed above, there are other negotiation issues which seem to be important, particularly for part-time workers. Part-time

2 Collective agreements, interviews with union representatives, and occupation-specific legislation and/or literature, all clearly show that in the organizations these collective agreements refer to, full-time and part-time workers are in the same occupation and perform the same or substantially similar tasks during the hours they are employed.

workers are known to have less access to promotion opportunities and to receive little investment in training by the organization (Beechey and Perkins 1987; ILO 1989; Pierce *et al.* 1989; Zeytinoglu 1992). The most probable opportunity for promotion for a part- time employee would start with filling full-time vacancies and having access to employer-sponsored training programs (for advancement to higher grades or other job opportunities). Therefore, I would expect the equality in filling full-time vacancies and access to employer-sponsored training programs to be included in negotiations of part-time workers. However, relative to the typical 'bread-and-butter' issues listed above, I would expect these issues to be of lesser importance.

Limiting Part-Time Work. The literature demonstrates that, while unions generally accept part-time work, they simultaneously oppose the expansion of part-time work at the expense of full-time employment (ILO 1989; Lever-Tracy 1988; Zeytinoglu 1987a). In some cases, the union opposition is an important barrier to the growth of part-time employment in organizations (Nollen, Eddy, and Martin 1978; Nye 1988). My interviews[3] with union representatives suggested that the increase in part-time work in their jurisdiction was a major concern of their membership. They wanted to regulate and limit the number or the percentage of part-time work within their bargaining units, and considered this an important negotiation issue.

While all the issues listed above might be important for some workers, for others some of these issues might have decreased in importance particularly if their collective agreements already cover them. For example, if collective agreements of the surveyed unions had clauses treating both part-time and full-time workers equally, then negotiating equal wages and benefits, same seniority clauses, or equality in filling vacancies and access to training might become unimportant or not applicable issues. Similarly, if the agreements had a clause limiting the number or percentage of part-time work, then for the union membership, it might not be an important negotiation issue any more.

The importance of the issues in negotiations might also change depending on the occupational coverage of the agreement. Part-time workers in professional occupations might have different interests and goals than their counterparts in non-professional occupations. Recent studies on part-time work (Blank 1990; Kahne 1992; Tilly 1991, 1992) suggest that variations exist in part-time occupational labour markets. Non-professional part-time jobs resemble the characteristics of secondary labour markets and those in skilled professions could be placed in primary labour markets. As defined by the labour economists, the secondary labour market is composed of low paying, unskilled or semi-skilled, insecure and unstable occupations whereas the primary labour

3 See Research Design section.

market consists of high paying, skilled and stable occupations. Thus, in responses to my survey I would expect to find differences in the importance of negotiation issues depending on the occupation variable.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Method. A questionnaire was designed to seek information from union locals in Ontario on issues that were considered important in negotiations.[4] Their membership consisted of part-time and full-time workers. The questionnaire also asked for the number of part-time and full-time workers covered by the agreement and the number of females in each group. Information on the occupational coverage of agreements was obtained from the Ontario Ministry of Labour (OML).

Before sending the questionnaire, I conducted semi-structured interviews with ten union executives, research staff or collective bargaining directors. These unions had the largest number of agreements covering the largest number of part-time and full-time workers in Ontario. Interviews provided me with in-depth information on the part-time phenomenon; they also amounted to pre-tests of the survey.[5]

Selection of the Sample. A complete listing of collective agreements (1,844) covering part-time and full-time workers, the union name and the local number were obtained from the OML. Of these 1,844 agreements, 25 percent covered professionals. In order to keep the sample size manageable and within the budgetary limitations, agreements which covered less than 100 workers were excluded. Also excluded were agreements with an expiry date of 1988. Since the questionnaire was to be mailed in 1988, I did not expect unions to respond at a time when they might be in negotiations. After these exclusions, the survey group consisted of 258 agreements of which 140 were for professionals. In terms of the total number of workers, the survey group (258) covers 49 percent of the workers in the total of 1,844 agreements.

Procedure and Analysis. Addresses were obtained from the *Directory of Labour Organizations in Canada, 1986* (Labour Canada 1986). After contacting each unions' national or regional office and obtaining their approval of the contents of the questionnaire, it was mailed to union locals that were signatories to agreements.[6] At my request, a letter of national or regional

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4 The questionnaire is available from the author upon request.

5 Prior to the interviews, a copy of the questionnaire was sent to each union in the interview group with a request that they fill in the questionnaire and return it with their comments on the day of the interview. Minor revisions of the questionnaire resulted.

6 Unions generally do not provide the mailing addresses of their locals. They also prefer to be informed on any questionnaires their locals will respond. The questionnaire was approved by the national or regional officers and was mailed by them.

unions' acknowledgement was included with each questionnaire. With the help of a contact person in the unions' national or regional office, I followed up with a second mailing. This procedure resulted in a response rate of 48 percent.[7] In the analysis of the data 11 responses were excluded, decreasing[8] the total number of analyzed responses to 117.

After an aggregate analysis, the data was separated into two groups according to the occupational coverage of the agreements. Responses referring to professionals (N=71) were analyzed separate than non- professionals (N=46). The respondents were predominantly (96 percent) local union presidents or staff representatives who were involved in negotiating the most recent agreement.

In addition, relevant clauses in a random sample of agreements (84) from the respondent organizations (117) were also analyzed.

Limitations of the Study. The present study has some limitations. First, since bargaining units with less than 100 workers are excluded from the study, results represent larger bargaining units. Second, surveying workers rather than their union representatives might have provided more accurate results in examining the issues important in negotiations. However, due to the budget and staff limitations of the study, I had to restrict the number of questionnaires distributed. Rather than limiting the survey to all the members of one or two unions, I decided to have a broader coverage of unions but survey only the local union presidents or staff who were involved in negotiating the most recent agreement. My assumption was that as elected or appointed union representatives, they would truly represent the interests of the union members.

Characteristics of the Employee Groups Respondents Referred To. The majority of the respondents (61 percent) referred to union locals that covered professionals (nurses and elementary school teachers). Remaining respondents referred to non-professionals, such as nursing assistants, clerical, office, sales and service workers. For the aggregate data, collective agreements covered on the average 1166 workers (std.dev.=2486, median=457, N=117), of whom 484 were part-time (std.dev.=1562, median=127, N=115). In the professionals'

7 There were 258 collective agreements. However, 32 of those agreements were signed jointly by two unions, one representing female, the other male workers. This increased the number of questionnaires to be sent to 290. One union's national office declined to distribute the questionnaire to its 23 locals that were included in the survey sample. Thus, 267 questionnaires were sent out. 128 responded.

8 In selecting the sample I used the list obtained from the Ontario Ministry of Labour. However, responses showed that in 11 organizations the two seemingly separate agreements were actually substantially similar agreements, but one for full-time and the other for part-time. Thus, the respondents provided the same response for both agreements. These repeated responses were combined into one, decreasing the analyzed responses to 117.

collective agreements the average coverage was 825 (std.dev.=879, median=542, N=71). Agreements covering non-professionals had larger coverage ($\bar{x}$=1692, std.dev.=3777, median=340, N=46).[9]

A large minority of the workers (42 percent) covered by these agreements were working part-time. Although the percentage of part-time workers covered by these agreements may seem quite high, these workers were mostly from the heavily unionized nursing and teaching professions in Ontario, or from non-professional occupations in the few predominantly unionized retail food stores, hotels and restaurant chains. A large majority of the workers covered by these agreements are female (63 percent); and within the professional group the percentage of females are much higher (75 percent). Although the survey asked the number of females in the part- time group, in many cases the respondents had no information about this subject. In interviews, however, the union representatives acknowledged that those working part-time were predominantly female.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Most respondents confined themselves to listed issues in their ranking. Only a few respondents (N=10) included 'other' issues and they were: negotiating not to limit the number or percentage of part-time work (N=4), separate seniority clauses for full-time and part-time workers (N=2), pension benefits (N=2), and occupation-specific demands (N=2).

Analysis of the data after excluding these 'other' responses showed that all the listed issues were applicable, though at relatively different levels of importance. In listing the issues that were considered important, monetary issues seemed to take the priority. Negotiating the same wages and benefits for both full-time and part-time workers was ranked as first and third in importance (see Table 1, columns 1-6); and this was despite the fact that most agreements already provided the same wages and prorated or percentage benefits to both groups of workers.[10] This shows that, although most unions covered in

9 For part-time professionals the mean bargaining unit size was 180 (std.dev.=152, median=155, N=71), and for part-time non-professionals the mean was 973 (std.dev.=2457, median=116, N=44).

10 Wage and benefit clauses in 84 agreements (from the 117 agreements the respondents referred to) were analyzed. This showed that 68 of the analyzed agreements provided the same wage to full-time and part-time workers, and the rest (15) provided lower wages to part-time workers. The information was missing in one agreement because I had only the full-time workers agreement. In terms of benefits, 29 agreements provided equal but prorated benefits, 40 added a percentage to the straight pay in lieu of benefits, and 14 provided lower benefits. There was one missing information on benefits.

TABLE 1

The Importance of Negotiation Issues

	Aggregate Data (N=117)						*Professionals (N=71)*						*Non-professionals (N=46)*					
			Ranked Responses						*Ranked Responses*						*Ranked Responses*			
Issues[a]	*NA*[b]	*M*[b]	*N*[b]	*Mean*	*SEMean*[b]	*Rank*	*NA*[b]	*M*[b]	*N*[b]	*Mean*	*SEMean*[b]	*Rank*	*NA*[b]	*M*[b]	*N*[b]	*Mean*	*SEMean*[b]	*Rank*
Same Wages for Full-Time and Part-Time Workers	17	—	100	2.06	(0.16)	1	13	—	58	1.43	0.12	1	4	—	42	2.93	0.31	2
Same Benefits for Full-Time and Part-Time Workers	24	1	92	3.11	(0.19)	3	17	1	53	2.57	0.22	2	7	—	39	3.85	0.29	4
Same Seniority Clause for Both Groups of Workers	16	3	98	3.65	(0.20)	4	11	1	59	3.07	0.20	4	5	2	39	4.54	0.34	6
Equality in Filling Full-Time Vacancies	17	5	95	2.96	(0.15)	2	13	1	57	2.77	0.18	3	4	4	38	3.24	0.25	3
Equality in Access to Training	27	4	86	3.71	(0.17)	6	20	1	50	3.26	0.22	5	7	3	36	4.33	0.24	5
Limiting the Number or Percentage of Part-Time Work	47	1	69	3.65	(0.29)	4	35	1	35	5.31	0.28	6	12	—	34	1.94	0.30	1

[a] Respondents were asked to rank the issues in order of importance with 1=most important, ..., 7=least important; and to write NA if the issue was not applicable. Since very few listed 'other' issues, it is not included in this table.

[b] NA= not applicable, M= missing, N= number responded, SEMean= standard error of the mean.

this survey have already achieved equality in wages and some improvements in benefits for both part-time and full-time workers, they want to continue to provide the same monetary gains to their members. Furthermore, for those who were unable to achieve equality in wages and benefits, bread-and-butter issues are important negotiation items.

Unions responding to my survey also seemed to consider equality between part-time and full-time workers in filling full-time vacancies to be an important negotiation item (ranked 2nd). Such an equality would give part-time workers a chance to enter into the full-time labour market, if and when they wanted, and as long as there were vacancies. This might ultimately provide part-time workers with a chance to progress in their organizations,[11] since all positions permitting promotions in their employing organizations required full-time commitment. Analysis of the agreements showed that in filling vacancies the majority[12] covered part-time and full-time workers under the same clause, thus, providing equal treatment. In all of these agreements, however, the final decision of filling vacancies resided in the management. It seems that, similar to the wage and benefits issues, equality in filling full-time vacancies is also an issue of continued importance for those part-time workers who were able to achieve it as well as for those who are still attempting to include it in their agreements.

The other three items listed in my survey, namely negotiating the same seniority clause, limiting the number or percentage of part-time work and providing equality in access to training, were considered to be relatively less important issues by the respondents.

Negotiating the same seniority clause for part-time and full-time workers might be considered as less important for union membership for following reasons. First, the majority[13] of the agreements already have the same clause for both groups of workers with a single or interchangeable list. Therefore, for these workers and their unions negotiating the same seniority clause might have lost its importance. Second, it is a well-known fact that part-time workers have low seniority in their employing organizations because they work fewer

11 All of the analyzed agreements (84) required vacancies to be posted and priority to be given to internal candidates as long as they are qualified. The final decision was, however, the employer's.

12 Of the 84 agreements, 64 provided equal access to part-time and full-time workers in filling vacancies, 17 considered full-time workers first, 2 did not have a clause on this issue and there was one missing information.

13 Thirty-nine of the 84 analyzed agreements had single seniority list. Thirty had separate but interchangeable lists. These interchangeable lists referred to agreements which had a clause requiring full-time and part-time workers to be considered equally in any employment decision, if seniority were to govern. Thirteen agreements had separate seniority lists, and 2 considered full-time workers senior to part-time workers.

hours (Statistics Canada 1990). Since seniority in collective agreements is generally based on the number of hours worked, even if full-time and part-time workers had exactly the same seniority clause with a single list, in practice it will not provide any significant improvements in job security for part-time workers. Therefore, part-time workers who do not have the same seniority clause in their agreements might be preferring their unions to devote their energy to other more tangible issues such as equal wages and benefits and consider negotiating the same seniority clause a low priority issue.

Limiting the number or percentage of part-time work was considered 'not applicable' by 40 percent of the respondents, and for those that provided a rank it was a relatively less important issue. There might be a number of reasons for such a response. First, a small number of collective agreements[14] already include clauses restricting the number or percentage of part-time work, thus making this item an unimportant or not applicable issue. Second, some might argue that the decision of 'limiting the number or percentage of part-time work' is within management's rights and therefore, cannot be a negotiations issue. Third, as my interviews, statistics and the literature on part-time work suggest (Beechey and Perkins 1987; ILO 1989; Labour Canada 1983; Statistics Canada 1990), the gender of the part-time work force and the social roles expected from female workers might be an additional factor in the relatively low importance or non-applicability of the limitation issue. Since most part-time workers covered here are women, and many with family responsibilities, it is possible that some cannot cope with two full-time jobs of paid-work and house-work, and therefore, seek part-time work. Under these circumstances, they would not want their unions to negotiate limitations on part-time work.

For the respondents to this survey, negotiating equality in access to employer-sponsored training programs was considered the least important issue in negotiations. It seems that, for part-time workers, basic bread- and-butter issues and fulfilling immediate needs are more important than negotiating for issues that might provide long-term benefits. This might be because some part-time workers are not interested in training, and some others might not believe that training would provide them with promotions since in their work places promotions in part-time positions do not exist. Some others might not believe that such a demand could be achieved for part-time workers, particularly when the employer is not providing this type of training to full-time

14 Only 15 of the 84 analyzed agreements had a clause limiting the number or percentage of part-time work. The rest did not include such a clause.

workers either.[15] Therefore, most workers and their unions might not want to put an effort in negotiating this issue.

Analysis of the data according to the occupational coverage of agreements (see Table 1, columns 7-18) showed that some issues were similarly important for part-time workers regardless of the occupation they were in, and others were substantially different. For example, although ranking was slightly lower for respondents representing non-professionals, monetary issues (wages and benefits) and equality in filling full-time vacancies seemed to be important for both professionals and non-professionals. In addition, negotiating equality in access to employer-sponsored training was relatively low in importance for both groups.

However, the issue of limiting the number or percentage of part-time work was the opposite in importance when the data was analyzed according to the occupational coverage of the agreement. While those representing professionals considered it the least important negotiation issue or 'not applicable' to their negotiations, the majority of those representing non-professionals gave it the highest ranking unless they had a limitation clause in their agreements. Furthermore, none of the collective agreements covering professionals included a clause restricting the number or percentage of part-time work, and agreements that had a limitation clause were all from the non-professional group.[16]

Unionized part-time professionals covered here are from the two female-dominated professions of nursing and elementary school teaching. Recent studies on nurses (Goldfarb Associates 1988; Meltz and Marzetti 1988) and teachers (Zeytinoglu 1990), and teachers' unions membership surveys[17] showed that part-time workers in these professions prefer to work part-time. Therefore, it is possible that many might not want a limitation on this issue to be included in their agreements. These are 'good' part-time jobs. They are in occupations that pay well; and according to collective agreements, part-time workers in these occupations earn the same wages as their full-time counterparts. These part-time professional jobs have close to half of full-time hours, and most are regular (permanent, retention) part-time. In terms of benefits, part-time positions in the teaching profession provide prorated benefits, and in

15 In both professional and non-professional occupations covered in this study, training for advancement to higher grades or other job opportunities is perceived as primarily the individual's responsibility and therefore, generally not covered in collective agreements. Only 2 of the 84 analyzed agreements required management to provide training for advancement. These two agreements also required equal treatment of part-time and full-time workers in terms of access to training.

16 See footnote 14.

17 Representatives from the two teachers unions were kind enough to share the preliminary results of their membership surveys they were conducting at that time.

the nursing profession a percentage in lieu of benefits is added to the hourly wage. Most part-time workers in these professions are married and covered by their spouses benefit plans (Meltz and Marzetti 1988). In addition, professionals in these part-time jobs seem to be interested in fulfilling their personal goals while actively participating in the labour market (Goldfarb Associates 1988; Meltz and Marzetti 1988; union membership surveys). Therefore, as the low importance or 'not applicable' responses indicate, these professionals do not want their unions to negotiate and limit the number or percentage of part-time work in their employing organizations.

On the other hand, unionized part-time workers in non-professional occupations are mostly in low paying jobs where part-time hours of work are short, and consequently these part-time jobs do not provide them and their families with sufficient income to live on (Labour Canada 1983). In addition, the trend in their occupational labour markets in the last decade is that full-time jobs are increasingly being replaced by two or more part-time jobs (CLC 1982; CUPE 1985; OSWC 1982; Yalnizyan 1986). Therefore, in order to protect full-time jobs, the respondents representing non- professionals seem to consider limiting the number or percentage of part- time work as the most important negotiation issue, and those that consider this issue as 'not applicable' are the ones that already have a limitation clause in their agreements.

In analyzing the responses according to the occupational coverage of agreements, negotiating the same seniority clause seemed to be relatively low in importance for both professionals' and non-professionals' unions, but I believe for different reasons. In the case of professionals, agreements provide the same seniority clause and a single (or interchangeable) seniority list. In addition, according to these professionals' agreements seniority is important primarily in layoffs. At the time this survey was conducted, there were labour shortages in nurses and elementary school teachers labour markets, and therefore, these professionals and their unions did not foresee any layoffs in the near future, and for the time being, seniority was a relatively less important item. The professional characteristics of these employee groups might be another factor in considering the seniority a low priority item. As professionals these employees might consider qualifications more important than seniority. For example, in Québec this seems to be the case in the history of union affiliation for various groups of nurses.[18]

For non-professionals, negotiating the same seniority clause is also a less important item. Even if part-time and full-time workers in these organizations had the same seniority clause, non-professionals and their unions know that such a clause would not necessarily provide them job security.

18 This important information was provided by a reviewer.

Non-professional jobs covered in this study are increasingly being redesigned and equipped with new technology so that the work can be performed by one or more persons with minimal or no disruption in the quality and the quantity of the service or goods produced. Thus a worker can be replaced easily by another full-time or a few part-time workers. Part-time workers in non-professional occupations also tend to have a higher (voluntary or involuntary) turnover rate than their full-time counterparts. As a consequence of this, they accumulate lower seniority. Therefore, the seniority clause is not much of an interest for them. In addition, having a high seniority in the organization does not provide substantial wage increases. Thus, the respondents representing non-professionals probably perceive that an issue that does not provide substantial improvements in working conditions is not important to negotiate.

CONCLUSIONS

Focusing on unions that have collective agreements for part-time and full-time workers, this study examined negotiation issues considered important for part-time workers. Results suggested that earning the same wages and pro-rated benefits, and equality in filling full-time vacancies, were important for membership. Equality in access to employer-sponsored training programs to prepare for advancement to higher grades and other job opportunities was the least important negotiation issue for all respondents. However, negotiating to limit the number or percentage of part-time work was substantially different in importance according to the occupational coverage of the agreement. While unions representing professionals considered limiting part-time work as either 'not applicable' or not important, for those unions representing non-professionals it was the most important negotiation issue. Negotiating the same seniority clause was relatively less important for both professionals and non-professionals, but for different reasons.

The results of this study should be considered tentative. Additional research is needed to support the findings of this study. The results of this study are based on the views of union representatives rather than individual employee views. Future research is recommended to broaden the data base and focus on individual workers in addition to union representatives. An analysis of employers' perspectives on the subject is also recommended.

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Revendications et travail à temps partiel
L'impact professionnel

Traditionnellement, en cours de négociation, la préoccupation première des syndicats concernait la satisfaction des demandes exprimées par les travailleurs et les travailleuses à temps plein. Depuis que le travail à temps partiel augmente, la nature des revendications syndicales se modifie pour inclure des demandes touchant plus spécifiquement cette forme d'emploi.

Le but de cet article est d'examiner les questions qualifiées d'importantes dans la négociation d'une convention collective couvrant du personnel à temps partiel d'une part et, d'autre part, de montrer que la nature des revendications varie selon la catégorie professionnelle. Les résultats présentés sont basés sur l'étude de 117 syndicats locaux ontariens ayant négocié séparément ou intégralement des accords couvrant des travailleurs et des travailleuses à temps partiel et à temps plein qui exercent la même fonction et qui remplissent les mêmes tâches ou des tâches de même nature. Les deux groupes retenus incluent du personnel professionnel (personnel infirmier et enseignant du

niveau primaire) et non professionnel (personnel de bureau, de service, de vente et de soutien au personnel infirmier).

L'on peut présumer, dans l'analyse des revendications des travailleurs et des travailleuses à temps partiel, de l'importance conférée à l'égalité avec le personnel à temps plein, des salaires et des avantages sociaux, des clauses d'ancienneté, de l'accès aux postes vacants et à la formation et, également, de l'importance accordée à la limitation du travail à temps partiel. Le poids de ces revendications peut aussi changer selon la catégorie professionnelle couverte par la convention collective.

Un questionnaire fut construit afin d'obtenir de l'information concernant les questions jugées importantes par des syndicats locaux ontariens. Aussi, une liste complète des conventions collectives couvrant des travailleurs et des travailleuses à temps plein et à temps partiel (1844) fut obtenue du ministère du Travail de l'Ontario. Les conventions collectives à l'étude figuraient d'abord au nombre de 258, dont 140 couvraient du personnel professionnel. Le questionnaire fut posté en 1988 et, suivant les procédures d'enquête habituelles, le taux de réponse atteignit les 48 %; 117 questionnaires complétés furent analysés.

La majorité des personnes qui ont répondu (61 %) proviennent de syndicats locaux représentant du personnel professionnel. Dans l'ensemble des données agrégées, les conventions collectives couvrent en moyenne 1166 salariés (écart-type = 2486, médiane = 457, N = 117) dont 484 travaillent à temps partiel (écart-type = 1562, médiane = 127, N = 115). Chez le personnel professionnel, le nombre de travailleurs couverts est, en moyenne, de 825 (écart-type = 879, médiane = 542, N = 71), tandis que dans la catégorie non professionnelle, il atteint 1692 (écart-type = 3777, médiane = 340, N = 46). Une majorité (63 %) des personnes couvertes par ces accords sont des femmes, et à l'intérieur du groupe professionnel, leur proportion est plus élevée (75 %).

L'analyse des données montre que la liste des revendications retenues aux fins de l'étude est applicable, bien qu'à des niveaux relatifs d'importance. La négociation de salaires et d'avantages sociaux égaux pour ceux et celles qui travaillent à temps plein et à temps partiel figure au premier et au troisième rang dans l'ordre des priorités et ce, malgré que les conventions prévoient déjà des traitements équitables pour les deux groupes. Le second item d'importance constitue, pour la partie syndicale, l'égalité dans le droit de postuler sur des emplois vacants à temps plein. Ainsi, les personnes travaillant à temps partiel ont la chance d'entrer, si elles le désirent et lorsqu'elles le désirent, au sein du marché du travail à temps plein. Les autres revendications, soit celles concernant la négociation d'une même clause d'ancienneté, la limitation du travail à temps partiel ainsi que l'égalité dans l'accès à la formation, sont considérées, dans l'ensemble, comme des questions de deuxième ordre.

L'analyse des données selon les catégories professionnelles montre que certains sujets sont d'égale importance pour les travailleurs et les travailleuses à temps partiel et ce, sans égard à la nature de leurs fonctions respectives, tandis que d'autres soulèvent des réactions qui diffèrent substantiellement sur ce plan. Par exemple, bien que les questions de salaires, d'avantages sociaux et de postes vacants soient classifiées à un rang légèrement inférieur par les personnes occupant des postes non professionnels, elles sont qualifiées d'importantes à la fois par les employés professionnels et non

professionnels. De plus, la négociation d'un plan équitable d'accès aux sessions rémunérées de formation retient peu l'attention des membres des deux groupes. Toutefois, la limitation du travail à temps partiel divise ces deux mêmes groupes; alors que les professionnels n'attachent que peu, sinon aucune importance à la question, la majorité des personnes occupant des postes non professionnels en font une priorité bien qu'elles bénéficient déjà de clauses limitatives à cet égard. Aussi, aucune convention collective touchant exclusivement des membres du premier groupe ne prévoit de telles clauses; seules les conventions visant du personnel non professionnel en prévoient. Finalement, la négociation d'une même clause d'ancienneté semble être d'une importance relativement moindre, bien que pour différentes raisons, de part et d'autre.

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